

Lost Control

by Russell DeLong

The sermon 'Lost Control' by Russell DeLong emphasizes the importance of spiritual control and the dangers of losing it, highlighting the consequences of sin and the need to turn one's life over to Christ.

Scripture: Luke 15:11, Romans 6:16, 1 Corinthians 6:12, Galatians 5:1, 1 Peter 5:8

Topics: "Sin And Consequences", "Surrender To Christ"

Description

Russell DeLong delivers a powerful sermon on the consequences of losing control in our lives, drawing parallels between physical and spiritual loss of control. He emphasizes that the root of all moral and spiritual wrecks is sin, highlighting that all spiritual tragedies are the result of personal, willful choices. DeLong challenges the congregation to reflect on what controls them, whether it be temper, habit, addictions, peer pressure, or worldly desires, and urges them to regain control by humbly surrendering to Christ, who can break the chains of sin and provide purpose and direction in life.

Transcript

Scripture Reading: Luke 15:11-24

One of the most frightening, helpless experiences one can have is to be driving a car and

suddenly to realize that you have lost control. You have your hands on the steering wheel but you cannot steer. You put your foot on the brake but you cannot stop. The automobile is out of control. It is free from your guidance. You now have to trust to nonhuman factors, hoping the crash will not be fatal.

It is a terrible moment -- that instant when I know that the direction of the car and the lives in the car are no longer in my hands. I have lost control. From here on the machine is at the mercy of other forces. I sit back, helpless, and wait for the consequences. I can do nothing about it. It is out of my hands. Whether these other powers will bring the car to safety or disaster I do not know; but, worse, I cannot determine. I had control but I lost it. Some other power took over -- I merely await results. Gravitation, velocity, winds, trees, stones, precipices, bridges, fences, other cars and trucks, telephone poles may play their part in wrecking or saving my car, killing or sparing my life. Impersonal forces now take over. I am their prisoner and victim. I no longer call the signals. I have lost my grip; the controls are no longer mine.

But -- I am responsible for this horrifying situation.

Lost control may be due to mechanical difficulties; I should have had them checked.

Lost control may be due to excessive speed; I should have slowed down.

Lost control may be due to carelessness; I should have been more attentive.

Lost control may be due to foolhardiness; I should have been more cautious.

Lost control may be due to drunkenness; I should have remained sober.

Lost control may be due to boisterous, wild companions; I should have warned them.

But, no matter what may be the cause of my lack of control, I am now helpless. I can do nothing -- nothing but wait for the consequences of my careless acts.

The car is now swerving, bouncing, careening on two wheels -- no personal control, only the fate impersonal things may have for me. If I'm lucky, I may escape. If not, I have killed myself. In reality, I'm a suicide because I had control and lost it.

Such a situation as described is bad and tragic. It has to do only with material machines and human bodies.

More horrifying and more alarming is the fact that many persons have lost control of their lives. They are careening through life, bringing destruction to others, and finally will commit spiritual suicide and be lost forever. The end -- the wreck -- is only a matter of time. They are out of control, they have lost their grip. Their will is no longer at the wheel; something else pulls the stick. Their chart and compass and rudder are determined by other forces.

The serious, sobering question of this sermon is this: What controls you? Temper?

Have you given way so often to outbursts of passion that you now fly off and do irrational things without intelligent control?

Habit?

Have you so permitted yourself to follow certain courses of activity that now you have lost the ability to change?

For years you have imbibed alcohol until now your body cells are so drenched you no longer control the intake -- alcohol controls you.

Is it true that nicotine has so saturated your body chemistry that you can no longer call the signals -- nicotine signals the call?

Have narcotics so debauched you that they are in control and you are just an obedient servant?

Are you a slave of habit? Do alcohol, nicotine, and dope control you or do you control them?

Possibly it is neither temper nor habit that controls you. Maybe it is the gang. You do what they want. They call the tune and you dance to it -- and then pay the fiddler. Do you control the activities of your clique or group or gang, or do they control you?

Does your love for money or for pleasure or for position or for power or for social approval cause you to be controlled by them, or do you control them?

Have you decided where you are going on the highways of life? Do you have an objective and goal? Are you heading that way? Do you have your hand on the wheel, your eye on the road, and your mind on the objective; or have you lost control of your personal soul and are being shoved, pushed, by bad habits, evil pals, sinful desires until it is only a matter of time until you crack up? Lost control!

At the bottom of all moral and spiritual wrecks is sin. There are no moral accidents. All spiritual tragedies are the result of personal, willful choices. One gives himself to sinful practices and continues such until his habits, his inner nature, his evil companions take him over, body and soul -- lost control.

And when one loses control he then tries to make up in speed what he lacks in direction.

He will compensate by speed for what he loses in purpose. So he goes twice as fast toward nowhere and crashes fatally. His motto is, "Go faster -- eat more, drink deeper, for tomorrow we die."

Yes, but what about the day after tomorrow -- the Judgment?

There is only one way to regain control of your life -- turn it over humbly to Christ. He will break the fetters of sin. He will snap the chains of sinful habit. He will cleanse from carnal desires. He will bring back to your life purpose and objective and meaning. He will adjust your rudder, release your steering wheel, and give you a road map, a chart, and a compass.

And in addition, He himself will be your constant personal Guide.

An ocean liner was crossing the Atlantic. A terrific storm struck. The lightnings flashed, thunders roared, winds blew. The ship climbed the mountainous waves and plunged to the watery depths. It seemed that the vessel would break in two or sink. Everyone was frightened -- that is, everyone except one little girl who sat rocking her doll and singing.

Someone asked, "Little girl, aren't you scared?"

She replied, "No. My father is captain of this ship. His hand is on the wheel. All is well."

Listen, friend. If you have lost control, let Christ, the great Pilot, become your Pilot. Thus you can gain control here and hear God say, "Well done," hereafter.

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