

Relational Vampires

Controlling People

Key Scriptures

From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life. Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. "Never, Lord!" he said. "This shall never happen to you!" Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns." Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. Matthew 16:21-24 NIV

Start talking. Find a conversation starter for your group.

- On a scale of 1-10, how controlling was the home you grew up in? How has this shaped you?
- Are you more of a controller or a people pleaser?

Start thinking. Ask a question to get your group thinking.

- Why do you think some people are so controlling? What drives this kind of living?
- What do you think the motivations are for someone who allows themselves to be controlled?

Start sharing. Choose a question to create openness.

- Read Matthew 16:21-24 together. Discuss this story's lessons on control, trust, and following Jesus.
- What areas of your life do you try to have the most control over? What would you like to do differently?
- Are there any unhealthy relationships you've allowed to control you? How will you begin to draw boundaries?

Start praying. Be bold and pray with power.

God, You are in control. Teach us to trust you enough to let go. Show us the ways we have either controlled or allowed control to come into our relationships. Give us strength to draw a line in the sand and follow after you with everything we've got. In Jesus' name, amen.

Start doing. Commit to a step and live it out this week.

- Ask the Holy Spirit to help you see any ways you have controlled others or have been controlled by others. Tell friends you trust, and take action to find freedom.
- Choose one relationship in your life that causes the most worry and anxiety. Then, start each day asking God to bring freedom to that relationship.