



Life “Out of Control”

by Shari Miller

The term oxymoron is used to describe words that seem to contradict each other but are used side by side. In fact, the word oxymoron is an oxymoron itself, because it is derived from two Greek words meaning sharp and dull. (Examples: alone together, big baby, or living end.) Think of one example and share with your group. Would you consider the phrase “cruise control” an oxymoron? Explain why or why not.

During this Bible study, we will look at the life of Joseph and some of the seemingly “out of control” events that God used to shape his life and ultimately the lives of his family and descendants. We will also see how God uses some of those “out of control” events in our lives for our good and the good of those around us. Yes, our God is in control, and we are thankful for it.

Opening Prayer

Dear Father, You created us and sustain us. We know that even though You have given life to each one of us, often the circumstances of our lives appear “out of control” as a result of our daily sins. We confess those sins and ask Your forgiveness for the sake of Your Son’s perfect life, suffering, and death in our place. We praise You that because our Lord and Savior lives eternally, we can look forward to eternal life in heaven with You. We thank You for sending us Your Holy Spirit who gives us faith and the power to believe and to share our love for Jesus with those around us. Please let the love of Christ control us and use us, O Lord, for Your purposes. Bless our study of Your Word. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

“Out of Control”

The early life of Joseph could appear to be “out of control” from Joseph’s point of view. Read the following three Scripture accounts and identify (1) what circumstances happened in Joseph’s life;

(2) who appeared to be in control of those circumstances; and (3) what sin(s) caused his problems.

Genesis 37:3–5, 8, 23–24, 28 _____

Genesis 39:1, 6–12, 16–20 _____

Genesis 40:1–8, 14–15, 20–23 _____

Read **Genesis 4:6–7**; **Matthew 15:18–19**; and **James 1:15**. How does sin specifically influence the “out of control” events in life?

Who experiences the effects of sin? See **Romans 3:23**; **Ephesians 2:1–3**; and **1 John 1:8**.

If time permits

Read **Psalms 31:9–10** and **32:3–4**. What physical and emotional effects does sin wreak in every life?

Faith Talk

Share with a partner or in the small group about a time when your life appeared to be “out of control.” Why did it seem that way?

God is in Control!

Let’s look at Joseph’s account once more. Read the rest of the story in **Genesis 41:38–49**; **53–57**. What happened to Joseph?

How did God specifically use the circumstances in Joseph’s life for the good of Joseph, his family, and God’s people? See Joseph’s own summary of events in **Genesis 45:1–15**.

Faith Talk

Share with a partner or in the small group how you know that God has taken the seemingly “out of control” events in your life and used them for the good of yourself and others. Be specific.

How did our Savior take our “out of control” lives due to sin and save us from eternal death? See **Hebrews 4:14–16** and **John 3:16–17**.

What means (tools) does the Holy Spirit use to sustain our faith until life’s end?

Colossians 3:16

1 Peter 3:21

Mark 14:22–25

Faith Talk

Read **2 Corinthians 5:14–15**. Share with a partner or in the small group what the words of Paul in **verse 14**, *For the love of Christ controls us*, mean for you as a Christian.

As a group, make a list of specific ways that you can serve Christ in your home, your church, your community, and into all the world.

Too often we might live as if we are on “cruise control,” allowing sin to freely dictate or control our words and actions. What an oxymoron that is! How do Paul’s words in **Galatians 2:20** and **5:16–25** encourage us to live our lives?

Thanks be to God, by the power of the Holy Spirit, you and I are truly free through the saving work of our Savior Jesus to live lives that glorify our Lord. We are Spirit-controlled. What a blessing that is!

Faith Walk

1. Thank God daily for sending His Son Jesus to be your Savior.
2. Daily remember your Baptism and that you are God’s own child.
3. By the power of the Spirit, serve the Lord by talking about the Good News about Jesus with at least one person each day. Identify ways that you can serve God in your home congregation.
4. Be an encourager for the women around you, assuring them of God’s plan and care for each one of them.
5. Read the Bible and meditate on God’s Word every day.

Closing

Sing or speak together:

Abide with me, fast falls the eventide.
The darkness deepens; Lord with me abide.
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, O abide with me.

Swift to its close ebbs out life’s little day;
Earth’s joys grow dim; its glories pass away;
Change and decay in all around I see;
O Thou who changest not, abide with me.

I fear no foe with Thee at hand to bless;
Ills have no weight and tears no bitterness.
Where is death’s sting? Where, grave, thy victory?
I triumph still if Thou abide with me!

Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes;
Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies.
Heav’n’s morning breaks, and earth’s vain shadows flee;
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me. Amen.

(*LSB* #878, v. 1, 4–6; *LW* #490, v. 1, 3, 5, 6; *TLH* #552, v. 1, 2, 7, 8)

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