

REDLINED • Week 4: Control

Daily Briefing • Day 2 of 5 • Lead or Dominate

WEEKLY MEMORY VERSE

Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. ⁶ In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

Proverbs 3:5–6

This is the second briefing of the week. You can watch or listen to the sermon at 1mso.church or on the One Missoula app.

OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, help me to lead by example and winsomeness rather than through domineering, intimidation, or manipulation. My unwillingness to turn control over to You and to trust You for outcomes drives the people I love most the farthest away. God, help me to see the cost clearly and to respond decisively. I pray these things in the name of Jesus. Amen.

TODAY'S TEACHING

Nobody wants to be controlled. Not your spouse, not your kids, not the people you work with, and not the people sitting near you at church. That is not rebellion, it is how God made people. So when you set out to control someone, you are not only failing to get the outcome you wanted. You are handing that person a reason to put distance between the two of you.

King Rehoboam found that out the hard way. King Solomon's heir inherited the throne, and Israel came asking him to lighten the load his father had laid on them. He had two sets of advisors. The old men who had served his father Solomon told him to ease up, and the young men he had grown up with told him to come down harder. Verse 8 says "he abandoned the counsel that the old men gave him and took counsel with the young men who had grown up with him." He heard the first answer, went looking for a second, and took the more controlling option.

Then he answered the people harshly, promised them scorpions in place of whips, and ten of Israel's twelve tribes walked out on the spot. When one king tried to control through intimidation, the people who were free to leave left. The text adds that this was "a turn of affairs brought about by the LORD," which does not get Rehoboam off the hook for one word of it. God did not work around his folly. He let it run its course, and He used it.

People rarely leave controlling intimidators and manipulators all at once. They leave in the order they are free to leave. The capable coworker has somewhere else to go, so he goes first and he goes quietly. The talented player transfers. The friend stops calling back. These are people with options. The ones who cannot leave stay and go silent instead, which is harder to see and worse to live with. Your spouse has more to lose than your coworker does. Your fourteen-year-old cannot leave at all, so he waits until he turns eighteen and bolts for the door.

Then look at who is left. Rehoboam kept the men who already agreed with him, and yes-men are where control-hunger reliably lands. The people who would have told him the truth had somewhere else to be, and telling him the truth was going to cost them, so they went. The ones who stayed had learned that agreement is cheaper than honesty. Their agreement then becomes the evidence that you were right all along, which is how a man ends up certain and alone at the same time.

Peter wrote to men who held real authority in a church, and he did not tell them to stop leading. He told them how to do it. The instruction is "not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock." He validates the authority but still forbids the domineering, so the alternative to control is not passivity; it is example. That means today's question is not whether you have authority over anyone. It is what you are doing with it. Are you leading by example, or are you controlling through dominance or manipulation? The way out is the one Sunday named. Find what God actually assigned you, work it as hard as you can, and leave the outcome and everyone else's response to Him.

1 Kings 12:13–16

And the king answered the people harshly, and forsaking the counsel that the old men had given him, ¹⁴ he spoke to them according to the counsel of the young men, saying, “My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke. My father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions.” ¹⁵ So the king did not listen to the people, for it was a turn of affairs brought about by the LORD that he might fulfill his word, which the LORD spoke by Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat. ¹⁶ And when all Israel saw that the king did not listen to them, the people answered the king, “What portion do we have in David? We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse. To your tents, O Israel! Look now to your own house, David.” So Israel went to their tents.

1 Peter 5:2–3

shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; ³ not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.

Read them together. Rehoboam shows what control costs a man who had every right to lead, and Peter names the alternative.

REFLECT

Reminder: honest introspection and Scripture-informed self-assessment are far more beneficial than self-delusion and wishful thinking.

Start with the text. Verse 16 gives the people’s own reason for walking away. Write it in your own words.

Fill in the blank from 1 Peter 5:3:

not _____ over those in your charge, but being _____ to the flock.*

*These fill-in-the-blank questions use the ESV text. Your Bible may use different words for the same idea.

Control has a loud version and a quiet one. The loud one overrules and intimidates people out in the open. The quiet one manages them with mood, with guilt, or by withholding information.

Which one is your preferred method, and who receives it most often?

The people who can leave, leave. The people who cannot leave go quiet instead.

Who has gone quiet around you? Name one person, and the last time they brought you something hard.

The next question names five places. The one worth answering is where your control is costing you the most, not the one that is easiest to write about.

In your family, your work, your church, your neighborhood, or your team, what would leading by example look like this week, and what would you have to stop doing?

Do some honest introspective self-assessment before moving on.

PRAYER

Write your prayer or pray out loud. Name the person who has gone quiet around you, and ask God for the honesty to see your part in it.

MEMORY VERSE

Write or recite Proverbs 3:5–6 from memory:
