



Dgroup Discussion Guide for January 31, 2016

## **Make It a Habit to Respond in Faith**

There is a difference between reacting and responding. A *reaction* is an involuntary or unconscious action caused by a physical or emotional stimulus; a *response*, on the other hand, is generally a conscious decision that is an element of free will and forethought.

**Scripture: Genesis 26:1-14**

*Habit:* A disposition or condition of the mind or body acquired by custom or a frequent repetition of the same act. Habit is that which is held or retained, the effect of custom or frequent repetition. Hence, we speak of good habits and bad habits. Habits are results of your choices. Stephen Covey said, “Sow a thought and you reap an action; sow an action and you reap a habit; sow a habit and you reap a character; sow a character and you reap a destiny.” It’s not easy to either get rid of or develop a habit.

In Genesis 26, there was a famine across the land. Instead of leading him to Egypt—which would have been the most practical move—the Lord told Isaac to stay in Gerar. God tells Isaac in Genesis 26:3-5, ***Sojourn in this land and I will be with you and bless you, for to you and to your descendants I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath which I swore to your father Abraham. I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven, and will give your descendants all these lands; and by your descendants all the nations of the earth shall be blessed; because Abraham obeyed Me and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes and My laws.*** Abraham’s blessing was passed on to Isaac, who, in turn, did not react to the famine by going to Egypt; but responded in faith by obeying the Lord and staying in Gerar. Consequently, the Lord blessed him by allowing him to flourish in the midst of the famine. Genesis 26:13-14 says, ***the man became rich, and continued to grow richer until he became very wealthy; for he had possessions of flocks and herds and a great household, so that the Philistines envied him.***

Although Isaac demonstrated obedience to the Lord in this chapter, he also stumbled in his faith when he was faced with fear. While in Gerar, he lied about his wife being his sister because he was afraid that the men might kill him for how beautiful Rebekah was. In this, Isaac demonstrated that fear cancels out faith. However, faith similarly has the power to cancel out fear. Psalm 56:3-4 says, ***When I am afraid, I will put my trust in You. In God, whose word I praise, in God I have put my trust; I shall not be afraid. What can mere man do to me?***

God can bless us regardless of the situation that we are in. We just have to remember to make a habit of responding in faith. God’s triangle of blessing, after all, is an intersection of knowing the Word of God, having faith in Him and subsequently obeying what He says.

How do we respond in faith? **PRAY.**

Pause

Resist the impulse to react

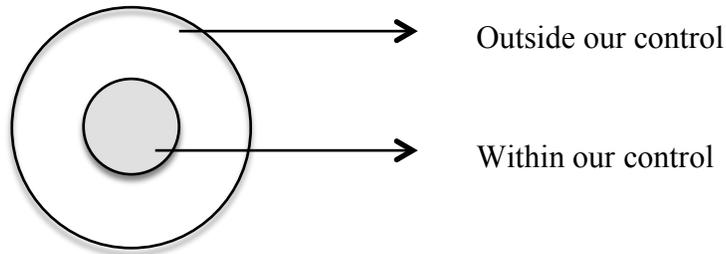
Ask the Holy Spirit

Yield your will to what the Holy Spirit is telling you

### **Circle of Concern**

Our circle of concern contains everything that bother us. There are two controlling circles in our circle of

concern. One which contains the concerns that are outside our control and a smaller one containing the ones that are within our control.



God wants us to be responsible for what is within our control. What is outside our control is God’s department. We have no control on what happens to us and around us, but we have control over our response to it. We have to learn to surrender to God what is outside our control, but take responsibility for what is within our control. Proverbs 3:5-6 says ***Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways, acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.***

There is a reminder in this for all of us. That inspite of our fears and worries; and despite or failures and frailties, we should continue to respond in faith and not depend on our own understanding of things. Let us work on knowing God’s character, that He is faithful, loving and gracious and as we learn more about who He is we will also learn to surrender more and more.

**APPLICATION:**

Patiently listen as God reveals where you can apply the passage’s lesson in your life. Write down specific action points to what He has revealed to you.

	<p>Personal: Name the habits that you have. Identify the habits that you need to surrender to God. Make an a plan on how you can intentionally break these habits with specific steps of action.</p>
	<p>Family: What is the most difficult thing to love about your spouse? Your children? Children, what is the most difficult thing to love about your parents? Your siblings? Do you respond or react to each other? What can you do to stop this habit/cycle and start a new way of responding to each other that reflects Christlike characteristics?</p>
	<p>Discipleship: Discuss with your disciple the ungodly habits that you want to break and the plan of action you have come up with. Also discuss your plan of action of how you can learn to respond instead of react.</p>
	<p>Church/ Ministry: In the light of all that is happening in the world today, how am I actively and intentionally sharing the gospel to those who are around me?</p>

**PRAYERS:**

Lift all the things that you learned back to God. Share your thoughts to Him. If He is impressing a sin in your life, confess it to Him. He is always ready to forgive.