Session 2: Why Is Control So Enticing?	
SESSION GOALS	
Every session has a point—what each participant should walk away from the discussion knowing, feeling, and doing.	
Main Idea: We trust in God and his sovereignty by giving up our illusion of control.	
Head Change: To know that the emotional benefits of control are an illusion.	
Heart Change: To feel freedom from the pressure to fix everything in our lives.	
Life Change: To allow God's sovereign control to override any false reality we've believed.	
OPEN	
When have you seen an illusion or magic trick? Were you able to guess how the illusion was done?	
Just like a magic trick, control gives us the illusion that we can gain comfort and security through a set of actions. But control actually deceives us and stunts our spiritual growth.	
In this session, Sharon is going to talk about the illusion of control and how we can live in the truth of Christ instead of a disjointed reality.	

VIEW		
Before viewing the session, he things to look for in Sharon's t pay attention to how she answ questions.	eaching. As you watch,	
Where did Sharon say we infoontrol?	erited our desire for	
How did Sharon describe the	illusion of control?	
Watch Session 2: Why Is Cont minutes).	rol So Enticing? (12	
REVIEW		
Like Maurissa, many of us feel we have everything in our life Maurissa's story shows us that have control, everything can dabout Maurissa's story did you tried to map out the deta a particular outcome?	mapped out. But t even when we think we change in a day. What ou relate to? When have	
After Maurissa experienced artermination in the middle of he on her own effort to fix her find She believed that all her check planning would get her the extensived. When has an unexpersion own issues with control trust God after that unexpect	er pregnancy, she relied ances and job situation. klists, due diligence, and pected outcome she ected change highlighted? How did you learn to	
Sharon opened the session by psychologists call "the illusion describes our tendency to this over our circumstances than whabits have you formed that of control?	of control." This term nk we have more control ve actually do. What	
Sharon listed different example to the illusion of control—athle article of clothing for games of dice a certain way. What other	etes wearing the same r gamblers shaking their	

How does this passage describe the way the Israelites took control of their situation? Where did the illusion of control lead them, and how did it affect their relationship with God?	
The Israelites became concerned when Moses took longer than expected to come back down from the mountain to meet with God. Instead of waiting patiently, the Israelites acted rashly when didn't have the answers they wanted. When has God's "slow" timing tempted you to control your life instead of trusting God?	
God had a plan for the Israelites, but because of their impatience, they took control of the situation by forming their own plan. Sometimes, when we're consumed by control, we conflate the plans we've created with God's desire for our lives. In what ways is it easy to mistake your plans with God's will? When have you ever conflated the two like the Israelites did?	
When it feels like God is moving slower than we'd like, it's easy to turn to a false god we think will fix our problems. Like the Israelites to the golden calf, we sacrifice our most precious resources (time, energy, money, relationships) to the false god of control. Where do you turn when it feels like God is being too slow? What kinds of resources (time, energy, finances, etc.) do you try to control?	
Instead of trusting God in his silence, the Israelites turned to an idol—something they could control—to satisfy their anxiety. In what ways have you turned to control for comfort from anxiety?	
While we don't bow down to golden cows, we still struggle with idolatry. An idol is anything other than God that we turn to when we feel like life is out of control. What could it look like to cultivate a more accurate view of why and when you turn to control instead of turning to God?	
Through the Israelites idolatry, we've learned how important it is to never seek refuge in an illusion. We must seek refuge in what is real and true—God himself. As Sharon said, we can find the answer to our illusion	

problem by listening to the words of Jesus in John 8. Read John 8:31–32.	
In these verses, Jesus tells his followers that if they abide in his word—his teaching and commandments—that they are his disciples and they would know the truth. His word is secure because it is true. What does it look like to abide in Jesus's words?	
Being disciples of Jesus means we are not disciples of an illusion but of the truth. In verse 32, Jesus says that it is the truth that will set us free. What in your life could change if you clung to the truth of Jesus rather than holding onto what you're trying to control? In what ways might letting go bring you freedom?	
Like Sharon explained, these verses help us see that our joy, our peace, and our hope is in the truth of Jesus and his Word. What he offers is not an illusion but truth we can cling to. What's one area of your life where you might be falling for the illusion of control? What could you do this week to trust the truth that God is in control and you are not?	
LAST WORD	
Sharon reminded us of an important truth at the end of the session: when we hold on to the teachings of Jesus, we will know the truth and the truth will set us free. We don't have to walk around believing a self-inflicted illusion, because we serve a God who is full of truth.	
As you continue to assess the things you're trying to control in your life, ask God to reveal to you any ways that you've been seeking refuge in an illusion and not the truth of God's Word. Ask him to help you prioritize his truth in those areas and give you the grace to learn how to focus on the truth.	

DEEPER WALK	
Read: Read chapters 1–2 in Sharon's book <i>The Cost of Control</i> .	
Memorize: Memorize John 8:31–32, "' If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.'"	
Pray: Pray that God would reveal any habits or behaviors you have that are contributing to the illusion of control in your life. Ask him to give you grace as you wrestle with what he reveals to you.	
Write : Take a notecard or grab a journal and write down three to four ways that taking control gives you a sense of comfort. Ask God to replace those ways with his peace as you learn to seek him for comfort instead.	

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