

Are you being responsible to yourself?



Personal Responsibility

A pivotal point in my life came when I was 24 years old. After I endured some challenging circumstances, I decided that I would make sure that I didn't contribute to the difficulty that life was already going to bring. Life didn't need my help in presenting me with obstacles. Surely, you too have had a situation where your inaction or faulty decision-making caused a problem for you. We've all been there at sometime or another in our life. For me, I realized that if I took personal responsibility for my choices, actions and decisions that I could live a life that was better and less stressful.

The lesson for this week will focus on a few different areas of our lives that we are directly responsible for controlling. Much of what happens to us—we have no control over. However, there are some things that we can do to create change in our lives and ultimately have the kind of life that we desire.

Personal Responsibility

Understanding that ultimately, you are responsible for yourself...

1. You are responsible for *Taking Good Care of Yourself*

- Genesis 2: 1-2, Mark 6: 30-32
 - We see examples that God rested from His work after Creation
 - Jesus emphasized the importance of rest when He told His disciples to withdraw from their work and to go to a solitary place with Him
 - Life Lesson: It's okay to take a "time-out" from working hard or even from serving others. Sometimes the person who needs us the most is *ourselves*. Each of us is responsible for making sure that we take good care of self.
 - Question for Thought: Name something you do regularly to *take care of yourself*. Can you think of something you need to do to take better care of you?

*If you don't give your body and mind
a break, your body and mind might
just take a break on you...*

2. You have a responsibility to *Do What You Can Do*

- Mark 5: 25-34
 - This woman, who was suffering with a blood disorder, had done what she could do. The Bible says that she had been under the care of *many doctors*. So she didn't just try one or two physicians...but she tried a number of them. The Word also says that *she spent all she had* trying to get the right treatment for her disease. She didn't just spend some of her money, but she spent all of it. **She did all that she could do in her situation.** She, then, took the next step and looked for Jesus. She realized that He was the answer to her problem.

She had done all she could do...



Learning from the sick woman

- Life Lesson: Faced with a major issue, this sick woman didn't stand still. She did what she could do.
- Question for Thought: **Have you done everything you can do about your situation? If not, why not?** You have the responsibility to try everything in your power to make things better. Once you've done all you can do, realize that you can do nothing more. You must, then, leave it with God.

Have you done all you can do?

- Prayed about it?
- Tried counseling?
- Looked for a second job?
- Tried all possibilities?
- Stuck to a budget?
- Apologized to the one you hurt?
- Forgiven the one who hurt you?

Once you have done everything that you can to make your situation better, you must totally and completely give it to God. When there's no more that you can do, *then there is no more that you can do*. Worrying won't solve your problem. Allow God to solve the situation in His time, but again, make sure that you've done your part.

3. You are responsible for *Controlling Yourself (But You Do Not Control Others)*

- The Hebrew boys, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego refused to abide by a law that required them to bow down before a golden image that King Nebuchadnezzar set up. The punishment for their defiance to the King and loyalty to God was that they were to be thrown into a fiery furnace.
- Daniel 3: 13-21, 24-25
 - Notice that Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego did not spend time trying to talk Nebuchadnezzar out of having them thrown into the furnace
 - The Hebrew boys knew that they could not control the actions of the king. *They knew that he was going to do what He was going to do.* The boys were only in control of their decision not to bow down to the golden image.

*Realize that you control yourself,
but not others...*

- Life Lesson: Stop trying to control what other people do. More than likely, you are wasting your time. Instead, focus on what you are going to do. You don't control others actions, but **you have a responsibility to make your own decisions and choices—and hopefully, they are good ones. You have a responsibility to act on your own behalf.**
- Question for Thought: Do you have a King Nebuchadnezzar in your life? Do you have someone you know who is determined to do something that you don't want them to do? How are you reacting to it? Are you focusing on changing them or are you focused on your own actions in the situation and what you are going to do?

Eventhough King Nebuchadnezzar did what he planned to do and had the boys thrown in the fiery furnace, the Lord was there in the furnace to protect the Hebrew boys.

Life Lesson: If you are faithful to God, no matter what anyone else does to you, He will be there in your time of need.

4. You have a responsibility to *Connect with God*

- John 15: 4-7, John 14: 23-27
 - We are made the promise that if we remain in Him that He will remain in us
 - We are made the promise that if we are obedient that God will love us and come and make His home with us
 - God always does His job to keep our relationship with Him strong. If you feel distant from God, it's because you need to do more to connect with Him.
 - Life Lesson: We are responsible for our relationship with God. We can be close to Him if we choose to do the work that it takes.
 - Question for Thought: What more can you do to connect with the Lord?

Want a Stronger Connection to God?

- Pray more
 - Study His Word more
 - Attend Church regularly
 - Attend Bible study regularly
 - Have Christian friendships
 - Avoid sin and try to live a Christian life
 - Rid yourself of things that hinder your relationship with the Lord
 - Serve others through good deeds
- Question for Thought: Are you willing to take responsibility for your relationship with God and do the work that it takes to be closer to Him?

*You are not Helpless,
You Do Have Some Control*

- Take Good Care of Yourself
- Do What You Can Do
- Control Your Own Actions (and realize that you don't control what others may do).
- Connect with God
- *...and when you've done all that you can,
Give Your Situation to the Lord*