

**January 4th, 2026**  
**To the Max - Week 1**

I want us to start the year focusing on the critical disciplines that guide a Believer's journey.

The main point I want to camp out in for the next several weeks is FOCUSING on the critical disciplines while understanding the Idea of CONTROL, maybe more to the point, WHO's in CONTROL?!

I. An Understanding of Free Will

A. Matthew 4: Multitudes FOLLOWED Jesus

B. Matthew 5: CROWDS Showed Up

C. Luke 10: Jesus Sends Out the 72

D. John 6: Many Disciples (*John 6:66-67 NIV*)

E. Matthew 10: The Calling of the 12 Disciples

F. The Inner Circle: Peter, James, John

G. John the Beloved

When we consider Spiritual Disciplines, they are placed in 1 of 3 categories...

1.) Biblical Absolutes

2.) Church Practices

3.) Personal Practices

In this FLESH, we are given a WILL. It's not a totally Free Will, we can't do ANYTHING we WANT, we do have limitations, but we do have CHOICES!

The problem is NOT that we are not free to choose what we want, but that what we choose is severely affected by our desires.

Just as we cannot fly like Superman due to our physical limitations, we cannot obey God due to our spiritual limitations. We are free to choose all sorts of ways to disobey God, but we simply cannot choose to obey God without having our desires radically reorganized — and we are powerless to do this on our own.

Apart from God and left to our sinful selves, we will choose sin!

*Romans 8:5-8 NIV*

*Romans 6:12–13 NIV*

God does not coerce people to reject Him; He simply allows them to do the only thing they want to do (sin), and He allows them to do it with a great deal of variety and creativity. Likewise, God does not coerce people to accept Him, but He persuades them with tactics that cannot be refused. God is in control, but humans make real choices.