CONTROL, SUBMISSION, AND THE CHICAGO AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL CENTER

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I used to be categorized as a pretty flexible, undemanding, mostly spontaneous person. Gone are those days. I have become sort of type A. Not by nature, by absolute necessity. Because I have kids — whom I love and adore and would like to see into adulthood; so the name of the game is "make a plan and pay attention." Now, my days revolve around how close to nap time we are, if we consumed a vegetable yet, who is jumping off of what, and how tired are we going to be tomorrow because the kids do not know how to sleep in. DO NOT know how. And they jump off of everything.

Control. I love you, control. But, alas, you belong to NO ONE.

"In their hearts humans plan their course, but the Lord establishes their steps." — Proverbs 16:9

Last Friday I was reminded that 99% of us wake up without knowing, REALLY knowing, how our days are going to play out. We make plans, book our calendars,

set alarms - but really there is only so much we can plan for, so much we can make proactive efforts towards.

Why was I reminded? The hubs and I gave each other a long look of "are you kidding me right now?!" as an announcement was made by our airline steward that we would be *deboarding* the plane — about 5 minutes after we had boarded.

The plane that was taking us to our long anticipated trip to Napa valley.

The plane that we tiptoed out of toddler populated rooms at 4 in the morning to get to.

The plane that I wanted to hug in excitement 5 minutes before.

Next, he clarified he didn't know if the delay would be 5 minutes or 5 hours, but things did not look good in Chicago. If you haven't heard what happened in Chicago (lucky you, you probably weren't flying); the short version is that there was a fire at the Federal Aviation Administration wire traffic control facility in Illinois. So **more than 1300 flights were cancelled or delayed *that day*.** Do you know what that does to people?! What that does to THOUSANDS of people?! There were stories that made my *"but I have a reservation at a winery today with my super fun friends and a husband who works like crazy - we need this!!"* sound pretty lame.

We stood in lots of lines. Talked to lots of "customer service" representatives. Rebooked 3 times (crazy story I promise you don't want to hear).

Here's what I noticed (I had a lot of time to people watch, and by the way, there are some CRAZY outfits out there); **generally speaking, the less control we have, the more you see what hearts are made of.** What we trust and what we value is revealed. It's easy to celebrate when something good happens to someone when our lives are on the up and up. When things are going our way, we're a super sweet and thoughtful species to be around. Kind even. But when our happiness, or comfort, or plans are threatened, so also are the people who act as hurdles to our end goal; and other's needs are often irrelevant. Take away our "right" to have it our way and you might as well witness an adult version of stealing a toy from a toddler. Plans disrupted, control gone; and the Dukes. Are. Out.

I am not above this, people. In all honesty, though exhausting and initially disappointing, we had a great day together with a LOT of unexpected laughs. But

before we decided to make a mental decision about our attitudes, mine was not so gracious. We passed a booth set up next to the ticket counter which was full of materials supporting something I have STRONG opposition to. In my shock and horror of seeing it on display, my gut reaction was to shamelessly drag my hand across the top of the table, scattering the materials in every direction rendering them useless, dirty and in submission to my feelings. Thankfully I did not, to the great relief of my dignified and wise husband.

It's easy to say "your will be done," until what he wills contends with our wants.

"Many are the plans in a person's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails." — Proverbs 19:21

It's a powerful thing to exercise discernment in our reactions to uncontrollable circumstances - because God gets glory when we represent him well — and since we don't get the same brilliant perspective that he does, we don't always get the luxury of knowing why things shift before us. In these moments, I observe that out of the overflow of the heart, *mouths speak*. **The world captures glimpses of an intriguing truth when we are steadfast in maintaining trust and integrity despite disappointments.**

Here's what's cool. **While much of life is quite uncontrollable - some things *are*.** We decide what we do with Jesus. We decide if we want eternal paradise or her opposite. We decide whether we pursue the unseen and the eternal. And there are eternal treasures that hang in the balance when we are faced with a response. So let's shift into the things we *do* control, protect and persevere for. Next time.