



Live.Free | Chad Bruegman | 1.14.18
LG Weekly

START

To get things started, go around the circle and answer the following question:

What was the first music download, CD, cassette tape or record you ever bought?

SHARE

As we set sail into the new year, we all have hopes and dreams for how this year is going to be different than the last. Some of us start this year apprehensive of what is to come since last year was full of difficulty and trouble, while others are optimistic and driven to make the most of what's next. What do you think God thinks of your plans, aspirations and resolutions? What do you think His hopes and plans are for your life?

At Red Rocks Church, each year we seriously pray that God would give us a very specific verse which would encourage every person towards living a more full, rich and surrendered life to God; a timely word that would spark a fire and ignite the body of Christ to live to its fullest potential.

The apostle Paul challenged and encouraged the church in Galatia with this, "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery." Galatians 5:1

Red Rocks Church, we need to stand firm and not allow ourselves to go back to what once enslaved us. Jesus set us free to live in freedom with him. The boundaries God has put in our

lives through God's word is for the sake of our freedom. Though it seems counter-intuitive, God puts boundaries in our lives to keep us free. He is not trying to hold something back from us, but wants to give us abundant life here in the present!

We all desire freedom and we all need it. God promises freedom and wants all of us to experience it in and through Him. Freedom from addiction. Freedom from selfishness. Freedom from fear. Freedom from anxiety. Freedom from comparison. But it will take courage to trust God at his word and in the leading of our lives. It will take self-discipline and accountability to take on that which wants to enslave us. It will take a willingness to trust God who perfectly provides all we need to live a holy life through him.

We can live free through Christ who set us free!

Read Genesis 3:1-13

In this week's message, Chad takes us back to the Garden where it all began. Genesis 2:24-25 says that both Adam and Eve were naked, free and felt no shame. As the story progresses, however, we see deception change everything. The enemy was waiting for Adam and Eve to have a moment of vulnerability. Eve was deceived by the enemy's lies and believed God had been holding something back from her. The freedom and perfection they had lived in and experienced with God was shattered the moment they crossed the line and went against what God had commanded. They suddenly became aware of their nakedness and immediately covered up. They hid from God in their shame.

Their shame paralyzed them.

Yet, God pursued Adam and Eve. He called out for them and gave them the chance to respond. God, being all knowing, was not surprised by any of this. God knew exactly where Adam and Eve were, but they needed to realize how far from God they actually were. He knew they had disobeyed. God knew exactly what their choice set into motion. From that moment on, the inherent freedom man and woman experienced was broken. Adam and Eve and all of their descendants became enslaved to sin. Shame had now entered the world.

Why do you think shame can tend to paralyze people?

How can shame alter the way we live and interact with God?

G R O W

When we don't deal with shame, the natural progression is to run, hide and inevitably build a prison around us from which we lack the power to free ourselves. Like Adam and Eve, we feel trapped, exposed, and unworthy so we hide and shift the blame. When God asked them, "Who told you that you were naked?" Adam blamed Eve, and Eve blamed the serpent. They did not take responsibility or own up to their sin. Pride and fear kept them from sharing their secret, and their secret rooted as shame...enslaved them. Sensing their freedom was lost, they stayed hidden, but God pursued them and he pursues us today with a reckless love.

God is the one who makes a way. Because of God's great and affectionate love, He makes garments to clothe Adam and Eve. He fights for us to free us from our shame.

Read Isaiah 43:1

As God called Adam and Eve in the Garden, he continues to call us today. He calls us by name and reminds us that we are his! We do not have to live in fear because he has redeemed us and given us the opportunity to surrender what has enslaved us. We do not have to live in the captivity of our sin. No more secrets. No more shame.

God knew all along that He would send his one and only Son to walk this earth and live a sinless life, then die a sinner's death on the cross so that we could experience freedom and restoration with God. It is only by him and through him that we are even able to live free. He has ransomed us, but only if we are willing to call out to him and his saving power.

Can you think of a situation in your life that you feel you are hiding from God or a situation in the past where you once hid yourself from Him?

On a scale of 1-10 (10 being absolutely and one being not at all) how would you rate your belief that God desires freedom for you in every aspect of your life?

If you don't think freedom is possible for you, what makes you feel that way?

If you have experienced freedom from shame in your life, what encouragement would you give someone struggling today?

M O V E

Life change happens when we choose freedom over slavery--when we step into surrender and allow God to change us. These are stories of redemption, and it's our responsibility to share them. But we don't have to wait until our story is packaged and tied with up a bow to speak up about the work God is doing in our lives. We speak up and share now, while we are still in progress. It's this courage to share that brings light to the darkness and exposes our secrets. It's through this vulnerability and willing heart that the Spirit can work.

Granted, some of us, because of personality or season of life, share more freely than others. The alternative to sharing our stories, however, is to hide. And in our hiding, our secrets gain power in the shadows of our growing shame. It's here that shame constructs a prison for us. We become shackled with regret and weighed down in disappointment, afraid that if anyone ever really knew the real us, then we would be alone with our secrets forever.

When our God pursues us and we choose to respond and believe his word--we take a step towards freedom. It's where we step out of the shadows and walk through the prison gates, no longer allowing secrets to hold us back.

Read Romans 8:1

..."there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." Our new positional identity is "in Christ," and we are no longer in prison. When we live in the freedom of Christ, we are free to be who we were designed to be without any condemnation. Because of His great love for his children, scripture tells us that nothing will be able to separate us from his love. We are free to step out and live a new identity, because of Christ and his atoning work. This is the invitation of the gospel.

Chad asked us this question as he referred to the movie "The Greatest Showman," what is keeping you from moving out from behind the music stand and saying "this is me?"

What about saying “this is me” and acknowledging your secrets and shame is attractive to you?

If you are not comfortable talking about your struggle with shame in the group today, do you have someone in mind that you can talk to this week? If so, who is it and why do you think he/she would be good to talk to?

P R A Y

As a group, spend some time praying with and for each other, asking God to bring freedom where those need to be set free. If you are in a coed group, consider breaking up into men’s and women’s groups to share more freely.

T O G O

1 John 4:18

“There is no fear in love, but love casts out all fear.”

