



Clothing vs. Consequence | Chad Bruegman | 1.21.18

LG Weekly

START

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

If you could witness any event of the past, what would it be?

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!

In this week's message, we look at the other side of the coin in God's invitation to live free. While we are always invited to come to God as we are, with all of our story and without condemnation or shame, we cannot address what it means to live free in Christ without recognizing the presence of sin in this world and in our hearts. It's a topic that easily causes guards to go up and palms to sweat; it's a subject we often prefer to leave hidden under the rug.

Yet in an effort to pursue the abundant life God has for us (John 10:10) and to stand firm (Gal. 5:1), we have to throw off every sin that entangles us (Heb. 12:1)! We cannot go on ignoring or tolerating our sin while at the same time expecting the amenities God promises. Sin demands our attention and requires our action.

How has your background or church experience influenced your understanding of sin?

Why, especially in 2018, is the subject of sin often easier to gloss over than address? If you are a parent, how have you discussed sin with your children?

Read Genesis 3:1-7

Chad outlined the anatomy of sin according to the woman's perception of the fruit in Genesis 3:6. For Eve, the fruit appears to offer 1) practicality, 2) pleasure, and 3) power. It is with these three elements, combined with her proximity to the fruit and the temptation of the serpent, that she convinces herself that indulging in one taste of the fruit is worth transgressing the boundaries God has set.

Which of these three elements of sin is the most appealing and attractive to you and why?

G R O W

Read Genesis 3:11-24

After the fall, when Adam and Eve eat of the fruit and sin first enters the world, they can no longer live in freedom with God as they had in Eden. In God's holiness and perfection, he

cannot allow sin to remain in his presence and Adam and Eve were stained with it. Staying true to his character and nature, God banished Adam and Eve and drove them from the Garden as a consequence for their sin.

With intimacy lost and brokenness now present, Adam and Eve stepped into a new normal—a world awaiting and anticipating a restored relationship with God. Thankfully, God didn't leave them to rot in their sin and separation from him, he had a perfect plan to redeem them and the rest of the world.

Tim Keller writes “God sees us where we are, loves us as we are, and accepts us as we are. But by His grace, He does not leave us as we are.”

But as the Lord disciplines, he also clothes; he generously and beautifully covers Adam and Eve in his grace by clothing their nakedness. In this act of bloodshed, by taking the skin of an animal, God covers their shame and reminds us that no one and nothing is ever outside of his deep love. God perfectly provided for their souls and their bodies and foreshadows the day when his son would redeem all of humanity through his death on the cross as the antidote for sin.

Why is it so natural for us to hide?

Where in your life have you experienced difficult consequences to sin? What growth did you experience through the discipline you received?

Where in your life have you experienced God's clothing provision of love and grace?

M O V E

God meets Adam and Eve while they're actively hiding from him and each other. Because he is a good faithful father, he goes to them in their hiding; in their shame, he pursues and reminds them both of who he is and who they are, but he simultaneously disciplines and does not accept their disobedience. He reminds them of their identity--that they are His. Rather than heaping shame on their shame, he extends grace and clothes them.

In John 4, there is a Samaritan woman who approaches the well in the unbearable heat of the day. The woman intentionally gets water at this hour because she knows no one else would venture out in the heat. Though it sounds like an efficient strategy if she were hoping to save time or avoid lines, that is not her reasoning. This Samaritan woman has a reputation. She knows where she has been and who she had been with and so did everyone else. Her strategy isn't about efficiency, it is about hiding her shame.

But Jesus shows up.

He speaks to her. Jewish men do not speak to Samaritans, let alone Samaritan women. Rabbis don't approach women with reputations, yet here Jesus does both. Jesus not only reveals her current reality but he reveals His character and nature. In the face of shame and regret Jesus gracefully and scandalously invites the woman into a journey where she will no longer thirst again. Jesus knows her story and still pursues her when no one else would. He shows up to heal her and offer her clothes, not shame her. Jesus knows she was not only physically thirsty but spiritually thirsty. The water Jesus offers her makes her whole and gives her the courage

to leave her life of sin--to live free!

If shame is exhausting and grace is liberating, why do we remain in hiding?

Looking to the example and courage of the Samaritan woman, is there a specific temptation or sin pattern you need to walk away from today in order to begin to live free?

What steps will you take in and after this study to get rid of that temptation or sin in your life?

P R A Y

As a group, spend some time praying with and for each other. If you are in a coed group, consider breaking up into men and women's groups to share more freely.

T O G O

Hebrews 12:1-3

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.”

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