



Live.Free | Chad Bruegman | 2.11.18

LG Weekly

START

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

What's the best thing that's happened to you this week?

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!

This week, Chad tilted the message, "Buffalo Soldier" as he likened the spiritual battle to be courageous to the bravery of the buffalo soldiers in the civil war. Each of us have a battle worth fighting for and we are able to walk into the storm knowing the God is with us, for us and will give us strength to face any giant. If we are to truly live free, then we need to be free enough to walk through the storms of life. Jesus said that in this world we will have trouble. No one is exempt from facing storms in life, regardless of how they end up coming.

As Chad talked about first responders being the first to run into storms, he pointed out that we need to be prepared to face those storms. We need to know the Word of God and how to apply it. We aren't encouraged to just run head first, without relying on God, meditating on his word and following his ways.

2 Timothy 1:7

For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline.

Which of these do you feel that you most need God to help you with most these days and why? (Power, Love, Self-disciple)

Why do you think it is so important to allow God to make us disciplined people? What can we learn from first responders when it comes to discipline?

GROW

Let's read Joshua 1:1-9

In Chad's message, he reminded us that "fear is the great slave driver of the human soul." When we give power to fear we may find ourselves paralyzed by or we might run from it. Either way, we can give it more power than it deserves. This is where we tend to exchange our freedom for fear. Fear can contaminate every part of our being. The way we view ourselves, the way we love others, and ultimately the way we experience God. John tells us that "God is love; there is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment..."(1 John 4:8,18).

Often times it's easy to see the storms in life as punishment, yet scripture is clear that punishment has to do with fear not love. Does God discipline those he loves? Yes. So this truth allows us to experience storms through a new perspective, a gospel perspective, because we are gospel people.

The invitation is now to run toward and into the storm. This is the command that was given to Joshua, "Be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law..." Joshua is being commanded to immerse himself in truth. What keeps our perspective centered on truth? The Word of God. This deepens our understanding of who God is and His deep love for his children. If left to ourselves, we will struggle with a small view of God. The Word of God allows his love to wash over us and our fear. "Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go" (Joshua 1:9). And this is the same command for us and now we no longer have to allow fear to drive our soul.

In her book, *You are Free*, Rebekah Lyons speaks into the preparation for what is ahead. She says, "There will be a moment in your waiting that God says, "it's time." There is a season for each of us, where we will reap if we do not faint. He shows us the way. We need grace and wisdom to sit in the places prepared for us, because we've been given an anointing to be revealed in time. God has something in store for you and only you. Waiting is a critical part of

your anointing. It prepares you, strengthens you, equips you and trains you to step up when the moment comes.” God is preparing us for the storms ahead. He is strengthening us to run toward and into the storm as He goes before us. So let us trust that there is something for us on the other side.

Do you tend to feel that the storms of life are punishment, discipline or a trial for you? For those of us who have followed Christ for a long time, what advice would you give someone about the difference between these?

Can you recognize ways in which you see God equipping you in preparation for what is ahead? If so, what is an example?

MOVE

To have courage we must have faith. Faith comes from knowing who God is. Believing that God is who He says He is and will do what He says He will do. He is a promise keeper and He is for us. He runs towards us. He is passionate about being with us and seeing us set free!

Chad shared a story about the buffalo being the only herding animal that runs towards the storm not away from it. They are strong and bold; they charge into the storm together and take new ground. There is strength in the word together. Not only do we stand firm in the promise that God is with us, we stand firm together as the church. There are people in our lives who have gone before us with faith and courage into the storms. And these are the same people who will charge into the storm with us. Community is one of the most significant gifts of grace we have been given on this side of eternity. We don't have to go alone. We are not alone.

The voice of fear will try to convince us that we don't have what it takes, we are not good enough, we are not strong enough, you fill in the blank. The voice of fear will attempt to drive us away from the storm, but the voice of God says, “stand firm, I'm with you in the storm.” You see, the voice of fear gets a little smaller each time we face another storm until we cannot hear it anymore. As gospel people, standing firm on the promises of God, we charge

ahead together, in faith and full of courage knowing that “greater is He that is in us, than He that is in the world” (1 John 4:4). Fear cannot and will not have the final say if we are to be a people who live in freedom. God knows what is on the other side. He knows because He is already there. So, let us trust this. We will grow in trust as we continue to get to know His steadfast love and faithfulness.

What storm are you walking from and what fear keeps you from avoiding it?

Have you had someone walk through a storm with you, how has community helped you face storms?

This week, what is one thing you can begin to do to start walking through the storm, is there a verse, a friend, an accountability person that can help you?

If you are not in a storm right now, think of someone who is and see how you can help them through it?

PRAY

As a group, spend some time praying with and for each other. Ask God for freedom and faith to have courage to run through whatever storm may be ahead! If you are in a coed group, consider breaking up into men and women’s groups to share more freely.

TO GO

Psalm 16:8-9

“I have set the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken. Therefore, my heart is glad, and my whole being rejoices; my flesh also dwells secure.”