



The Simple Gospel | Chad Bruegman | 3.4.18
LG Weekly

START

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

Would you rather be rich? Or would you rather be famous?

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 preached on the story of the rich young ruler.

Let's read Mark 10:17-22

This is one of the only times in the Bible where someone encounters Jesus and walks away sad. The big question is why? What is he holding onto that makes it so hard for him to accept the invitation Jesus gives him?

Let's start with what we know about this man. He is successful enough to acquire many possessions at a young age. He is zealous enough to run up to Jesus to ask him this question, and he is humble enough to fall on his knees before Jesus. In other words, this man has it all together. On paper, it looks like he is doing a fantastic job. But there is something else going on here. From this interaction, we can also deduce that at a deep level, this man is clearly unfilled. There seems to be something deeper that his external wealth cannot satisfy fully. The question he asks Jesus reveals that he is missing something in his life, and can't figure out what it is.

This young man is excellent at building his resume. He loves how successful he is, and is running up to Jesus hoping to add another line item to it. The problem is, his felt need to build his resume is the very thing keeping him from finding true freedom.

Jesus graciously shows him that the life he is seeking is found in laying down this resume. So he invites him to sell everything and follow Him. He invites him to stop hiding behind his accomplishments and realize he is loved and accepted for who he is, not what he has done.

This man tries to add some wisdom from Jesus, who he knows to be a “good teacher” to both justify his current status and satisfy his empty longing, but instead, Jesus invites him into something far more radical. He invites him into grace.

GROW

Read Mark 10:23-31

The story of the rich young ruler strikes a chord with all of us. The takeaway is not to sell everything we own this week, but rather to ask the difficult but essential question: *where am I finding my self-worth?* There is nothing wrong with having a lot of possessions, but there is something wrong with thinking our belongings and our efforts create the reason we are “good.”

The rich young man was hiding behind his possessions. Jesus knows this and loves him enough to shine a big spotlight on his heart and expose the problem. He helps the man see the thing keeping him in this pseudo-reality of safety and security.

Can you imagine the look on this young ruler’s face? *“Are you serious? You want me to do what?”*

Think about the fear that ran through his veins as he hears this invitation to let go of everything. He has spent his entire life becoming a man of success, influence, and good character. But now he is asked to let it go, and he can’t do it. He just will not do it. He walks away in sorrow because he isn’t ready to give it all up and experience true freedom in Christ.

How often do we find ourselves doing the same thing? We knowingly and willingly walk away from the fullness of Christ because we are afraid to give up the resume we have built. Which is fair, because let’s be honest, this is a hard thing to do. In fact, it is a lifelong process of learning how to walk with God. A few verses later, when Jesus is asked who could possibly

pull this off, he replies “with man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God.”

This week we have an opportunity to take a step in the right direction. Our call is to do what the rich young man was not able to do in this moment, let go of the things we think make us “good” and accept the invitation of radical grace.

What area in your life do you find yourself hiding behind? What would it look like to hand that thing over and walk in true freedom this week?

What are some reasons why it is difficult for us to surrender all in order to experience the true freedom found in Christ? (*Fear? Unbelief?*)

If “that” (*the one thing we hold so tightly*) was gone...What would it do to you or who would you be without those things?

MOVE

“Being a Christian is more than just an instantaneous conversion - it is a daily process whereby you grow to be more and more like Christ.” - Billy Graham

Of course, the rich young ruler couldn’t see his problem. It was a blind spot for him. That is one of the reasons why it is so important we have a community around us. The christian journey was never intended to be done alone. It is essential that we surround ourselves with people who love us enough to help us see the places in our life where we fall short.

What do you find yourself hiding behind? Maybe it’s your accomplishments, how smart you are, a job title, a degree, a spouse, your kids, the list goes on and on. Of course, these things aren’t bad in and of themselves, but when they become the reason we think we are “good,” we miss the invitation of Jesus. The truth is, we are not “good” because of anything we have done, but because of what God has done for us. We need only to acknowledge the truth and stop finding your self-worth in anything except God.

Easier said than done. This invitation is a lifelong journey for all of us. This week we have a chance to take another step. The step may be as simple as acknowledging a thing in your life that has taken the place of God.

Just as the rich young ruler, we have “blind spots” in our life. To experience the fullness of God we need that spotlight to shine into our hearts to expose the things we are holding tightly. When those “blind spots” are graciously exposed and revealed, we too have the choice to allow God to redeem or to walk away just as the young ruler. This is the beauty of

doing life together in Life Groups. As we grow closer to one another and to God, we help each other see our blind spots. This is the beauty of the church and the gift of real and true community.

Do you have anyone in your life who has permission to point your blind spots?

What would it look like to sit down with them this week and ask them to lovingly help you see them?

PRAY

As a group, spend some time praying with and for each other. Ask God to reveal the “blind spots” in your life so that you may live in the freedom of life that only God provides. If you are in a coed group, consider breaking up into men and women’s groups to share more freely.

TO GO

Billy Graham

“Some day you will read or hear that Billy Graham is dead. Don’t you believe a word of it. I shall be more alive than I am now. I will just have changed my address. I will have gone into the presence of God.”

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