



You Can Change | Doug Wekenman | 01.06.2024

Weekly Study

SHARE

As group members get settled, take a few minutes to check in with everyone and see how life is going. Share an exciting story from this week, your highs and lows, an answered prayer, or something you're struggling with. If someone is really struggling, rally the group around them and take a few moments to pray over them.

How was everyone's Christmas break? What was a high, a low, and something weird/interesting that happened?

Reflecting on the past year, how did you experience God's presence in your life? What were significant prayers he answered, miracles you experienced, personal growth you achieved, or anything else for which you feel grateful?

How would you like to see God show up in your life throughout this upcoming year? What prayers are you hoping to have answered, what miracles are you waiting for, and how would you like to grow or be transformed?

GROW

Happy New Year, Red Rocks Church! Welcome to our 2024 kickoff series, The Story You'll Tell. All of us are in the process of becoming something. We each get a chance every January to dream with some vision about "Who I want to become," and in order to become someone new or go somewhere new, we must start with the end in mind. So, what's the story you want to tell at the end of the year? Who do you want to be, and where do you want to go?

In his week one message, *You Can Change*, Doug explains that this series is about “living and becoming by design, so the story you tell at the end of the year is on purpose and not on accident.” You can change. We all can. The more important question, a question posed by Jesus, is, do you want to? If the story we hope to tell is ever going to evolve from a vision in our mind to the reality of our life, we must first let go of the self-limiting stories we tell ourselves over and over that have held us captive for far too long. That thing that happened to you isn’t on you, but how you respond to it from here on out is. Are you ready to respond a different way, write a new story, and start “walking free” in addition to “living saved?”

Read John 5:1-8

What sticks out in this passage to you?

Take a moment to think about how the sick man responded to Jesus’ question. What does his response tell you about his faith, mindset, circumstance, etc?

Jesus sees the situation/condition you’re in just like he saw the sick man in the story, and he’s asking you, “Do you want to get well?”

Have you ever had an encounter with God trying to do something in your life, but you completely missed the point like the sick man in the story? Explain?

M O V E

Every story has three main characters: a victim, a villain, and a victor. We often see these characters as uniquely independent from each other, but as Doug pointed out, the three have far more in common than we think, and all three dwell within us. When we look at the backstory of each character, we see that tragedy, devastation, and brokenness are key characteristics of their story. For that very reason, it can’t be the circumstance of one’s reality that determines whether we become a victim, villain, or victor, but how we choose to respond to our circumstance that determines the role we play in the story.

As Doug mentioned, many of us are “living saved” when we should be “living saved *and* walking free.” A victim might live saved, but they don’t walk free because they can’t, or won’t let go of the past. A victor lives saved and walks free because they have chosen first to let go of the things holding them captive so they have the freedom to go where, and become what God has always called them. We see this all throughout the Bible:

1. In Genesis 12, God calls Abram to “go” to a new land and promises to bless him and make him into a great nation, but before he tells Abram to “go,” he asks him to “leave” everything behind. Abram knew that in order to go somewhere new, you have to leave the old behind. Lot’s wife didn’t understand this. As they were fleeing Sodom to a new place, she looked back at what was, and turned into a pillar of salt.
2. After Jesus protects the woman caught in adultery, he says, “Then neither do I condemn you [salvation], go now and leave your life of sin.” [freedom] (John 8:11)
3. At the healing pools, Jesus says to the sick man, “Get up! [salvation] Pick up your mat and walk.” [freedom] (John 5:8)

It's easy and safe to sit in our situation and do nothing about it, but Doug reminds us that Jesus didn't die on the cross for us so that we could stay the same; he died on the cross so that we can live saved and walk free. Freedom costs more than bondage, just as pursuing your dreams will require more from you than playing it safe ever will.

Read [Philippians 3:12-14 NIV](#), [Isaiah 43:18-19 NIV](#), [Micah 2:10 ESV](#)

You can't arrive somewhere new unless you leave somewhere first. What do you need to forget, let go of, and leave behind? What excuses, mindsets, and experiences are holding you back?

What has God put on your heart this year? Where does he want to take you? Who does he want you to become? What is the story you want to tell on December 31st, 2024?

What is it going to take for you to change? How do you need to fight? What do you need to surrender? How do you need God to show up?

P R A Y

God, thank you for a new year, new mercies, and a new opportunity to know you, love you, and pursue you more. God, we give you this year to do in our lives whatever it is you want to do. Would the stories we tell at the end of this year be a testament to your goodness and faithfulness through all of our brokenness, failure, and flaws. Would you remind us that we don't have to be the victim because you are the victor of it all. When the walls of our situation start closing in, would you remind us that you can and will do the impossible? Will you show us how to draw closer to you this year in a way we have yet to discover? Lord, we love you, we praise you, and we are excited and expectant to see you move this year.

A C T I V I T Y

On Monday, January 8th, Red Rocks Church is starting its annual 21-Day Prayer and Fasting Challenge, and we would love to see you join us. As Doug mentioned, Fasting awakens something in heaven that demands action. Jesus said that he is the "bread of Life," and whoever comes to him will never go hungry. Our spiritual need for God is far greater than our physical need for the things of this world. When we fast, we make a statement to the Lord that more than we enjoy food (or whatever you decide to fast), we enjoy his presence more.

We encourage everyone, especially groups, to participate in our 21-Days of Prayer and Fasting. You can find more information at www.redrockschurch.com/thestory.