

Jesus' Wild Approach, Ideas, Agenda, and Mission.



...For I'm trained in the secret of overcoming all things, whether in fullness or in hunger. And I find that the strength of Christ's explosive power infuses me to conquer every difficulty. — Paul. Philippians 4:12-13 [The Passion Translation].

We have been wrapping trying to wrap our brains around our true identity as men as we discover how we were ultimately created to roll like Jesus did! Finding a treasure map doesn't mean you will belly up to the challenge of pursuing it! You may stake a claim but never dig in! This example is what I call Gray Exile. We'll talk more about it at the end of our challenge!

Although claiming my true identity as a child of God, I still live as though the God to whom I am returning demands an explanation. I still think about his love as conditional and about home as a place I am not yet fully sure of. While walking home, I keep entertaining doubts about whether I will be truly welcome when I get there. As I look at my spiritual journey, my long and fatiguing trip home, I see how full it is of guilt about the past and worries about the future. I realize my failures and know that I have lost the dignity of my sonship, but I am not yet able to fully believe that where my failings are great, 'grace is always greater.' Still clinging to my sense of worthlessness, I project for myself a place

far below that which belongs to the son.” — Henri J.M. Nouwen, *The Return of the Prodigal Son: A Story of Homecoming*

What was Jesus' approach as a Man?

I have always loved exploring the tensions created by Jesus as He lived out the examples of how we could do life in His Kingdom. The man who brought freedom to all mankind is seen in Luke 19 where His story plays out in the midst of a facade of pomp and glory during His Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem.

But note His approach as the Man/Son of God. Jesus the Man... Wasn't...

- Positioning Himself as the one to *rule* a nation that was oppressed.
- He wasn't about *prosperity or making things better* in the Jews society.
- He didn't even put on a *display that would affirm Himself* as the ruler of the region.

How does that differ from our approach as men?

Also, in the story of Luke 19 we see that once again, the Jews find themselves oppressed, not by the Syrians, but by the Romans. Consequently, what the people were essentially saying when they cried Hosanna and waved palm branches as Jesus rode into Jerusalem, was, 'Deliver us from the Romans.' Right! And, when they realized Jesus had a different agenda than a political one, a different agenda than a national one, a different agenda than a material one — their cry changed from 'Hosanna' to 'Crucify him.'

The same is still true and has played out over and over again throughout history. In fact, it seems to play out over and over again in well meaning Christians who don't follow the path Jesus laid out for setting up His Kingdom.

I have watched Christians individually, and churches corporately, mobilize around causes, personalities, and methodologies to unlock the way to victorious, joyful, christian living. They are all about change or gaining power under the banner of pseudo spirituality gain, power, and even prophecy but, very few are interested in the path that leads to the foot of a bloody cross. Even fewer consider a navigational path that will require dying to self and living for eternity. You see, it's

one thing to shout I'm a son, or to boast of a special inside edge for everyday living, realizing success, power, and the mastery of your domain. It is altogether something else to take the path of Jesus and follow His navigational path to the Cross in the way that He did as He enjoyed his Sonship. Leading in our spirituality, our relationships, and our communities will never be easy! However, there is treasure, not just at the finish line but at every point on the map!

Back to our story. While the people were in the midst of a hopeful government take over, Jesus rides in on a donkey and begins to weep. He weeps because the city-and, by extension, all Israel was looking for the next great man of power who would bring peace and prosperity, and they failed to recognize Jesus and his lordship. They failed to follow His Map of Sonship!

Now, Jesus knew of the impending destruction of Jerusalem and the scene echo's with his previous lament over Jerusalem from (Luke 13:31-35), where He said, "How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!" They were so hung up on their freedom from Roman oppression, the need for a great ruler, someone to fight for them militarily, that they missed the one who could free them in every way and from the burden of sin.

Are you Willing?

His example of a lamb being led to slaughter for the purpose of bringing freedom to all is nowhere taught or found in our "Save Now!" culture. and "The Map of Sonship" (Word of God) is being treated as a childhood fantasy that is fun to dream about.

Now, I don't share these thoughts to discourage you from being everything we should be as men. I share it for the purpose of posing the most important question you may ever ask yourself in these last moments before Jesus returns in all of His glory.

All the mastery of power, success, and authority in the world won't get us into Gods Kingdom.

Here is our Fireside Challenge for Men.

You are being invited to ask yourselves... Has your search for a little more peace, joy, hope, and freedom left you discouraged, dismayed, and even hopeless?

If it has then ask yourself, 'Has my personal expectations caused me to navigate off course? Off course of God's Map for us that was given from the beginning, in the Garden!

Has it caused me to avoid what the map says about the path of greatness that The Son of God laid out for me so that all of the power, authority, and success of God could be made manifest through my life.

Or, have I been missing Jesus all together?

So, Take a Pulse!

The more I look at things on a world, cultural, economic, and social scale, the more I know that things are not getting better. That seems to be the Pulse and Rhythm of things in the Kingdom of the World! But... The more I fix my eyes on Jesus, the more the pursuit of happiness and power in the kingdom of this world becomes less important and all together insignificant and I am becoming less inclined to let life rattle me at my core. This really is the foundational basis for experiencing The Kingdom of God in our lives.

Always remember that we are not hardwired to pursue power; We were however hardwired to manifest His power for His glory and that it has been intent of our Father all along for you to experience it everyday through His Son! He should be at the core of everything we do and everywhere we go. He is the Treasure! Stay the course!

Ask the Holy Spirit to speak on Word as we read *through Psalm 51:10-13 NIV.*

10 Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. 11 Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. 12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me. 13 Then I will teach transgressors your ways so that sinners will turn back to you

Ask the Holy Spirit to give a phrase that resonates in your heart *as we read through Psalms 51:10-13 MSG 10 God, make a fresh start in me, shape a Genesis*

*week from the chaos of my life. 11 Don't throw me out with the trash, or fail to breathe holiness in me. 12 Bring me back from gray exile, put a fresh wind in my sails! 13 Give me a job teaching rebels your ways so the lost can find their way home. **Now Pray through this passage of Scripture!***