

TRUEish Series – Part 5

SELF-EMPOWERMENT OR CHRIST EMPOWERMENT?

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Introduction:

Today is week 5 of our TRUEish series. We're giving you a series of 6 tests to help you discern the difference between TRUTH and what is mixture that our culture has concocted.

III: Birkenstocks verses Tirkanstocks

- Tirkanstocks were counterfeit. Truth will always cost more up front but serve you better in the long run.

Does this message encourage self-empowerment or Christ-empowerment?

Is there a subtle eclipsing of Jesus by man or ministry? Is this person teaching me to rely on self-improvement more than living in dependence on the life of Jesus?

Hard work. Personal excellence. Motivation. These are good virtues to have. But in the kingdom of God these are secondary.

Mantra of this Age: TV commercials, Disney princess, pop songs

- "You can be anything you want to be. Don't let anyone stop you. Reach for the stars. Believe in yourself."
- The American gospel says, "If you work hard enough. Think smart enough."
- Grow your leadership skills, stop hitting the snooze button, get up at 4:30 in the morning.
- You can milk the cows, flip 3 houses, train for a marathon, and sell your showroom inventory all before breakfast.
- All you have to do is plan better, invest in a team, sacrifice more... you got this girl...
- If we're not careful, we become self-reliant--it becomes about my hard work, my ingenuity, charisma, research, my personal growth.
- Even in the church we can fall into the trap of thinking we always need to work harder: Do more. Read more. Give more. Reach more.

Our culture tells you to start with hard work. Jesus teaches us to rest in his hard work.

The journey of being transformed into the likeness of Jesus begins from the posture of rest and not a posture of activity.

- God worked six days. Rested on the seventh. Man was created on the sixth and his first day was a day of rest in the Father's presence.
- God did all the work so that we could be blessed. We simply rest and receive the abundance of his blessings, and then we labor out of abundance.

- We started from a posture of God's abundance and not my abundance.
- Spiritual principle as well.
- [Ephesians 1:3 blessed in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing.](#)
- We think that when we get saved, we need to start by "doing" something. But with-- God has already "done" something. And the hardest lesson for us to learn.
- That means everything I need to succeed, God has already put into my bank account.
- *Ill: client, I don't have compassion or patience for this person. But you do.*
- [John 15:4 "No branch can bear fruit by itself, it must remain in the vine."](#)
- I have to learn to live connected to my Vine – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In the abundance of life that He provides me.
- That's why prayer, worship, time in God's Word is not an activity of striving and contriving!
- They are the grape drinking life out of the vine.
- The goal of life isn't to make an impact. It's to grow strong in the Father's love. The Father's love puts oxygen and poetry into everything we touch. Everything is filled with the vitality and life and meaning. In the quiet things. The small things.
- [Those who wait on the Lord will renew their strength...](#) (in him we have a renewable energy source.)

Jesus is at the tipping point of his ministry. What's motivating and empowering him? If success is motivating him then he's about to make the bigger wrong choice of his life!

What does it mean to be a people motivated and empowered Jesus?

Matthew 16:21-28

Vs. 21-22

- On a list of things you should never do. When the wise creator of the universe tells you his plans, don't feel the need to correct him.

Vs. 23

Our culture teaches us to pursue our dreams. Jesus teaches us to pursue God's dreams.

The believer's life begins from a place of "having in mind the things of God."

- It's normal to have dreams about your career, dreams for your family. You're a creator.
- We don't start with those; they aren't big enough. The human imagination is a beautiful servant and a lousy master. God wants to redefine what's worth living for. We need to see ourselves through a bigger kingdom picture.
- God wants to give you New Dreams—His dreams.
- The believer's prayer journey begins by taking my mind off of myself and placing it on God and His dreams, and His kingdom.
- Puts new passions that start to spawn in your life.

- **Ezekiel 36:26**

I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.

III: Seeds of Hope

God puts new dreams in His people

- You've watched Dementia whittle out your aging parent's mind and you have a passion to support others.
- God saved your marriage from the brink, and you just want to help him save others.
- You know how artistry lifted you out of depression and you have a passion to see the majesty and beauty of God restored to the arts community.
- When you talk to the Father, what is he awakening in your heart?

V.24

The culture teaches us to promote ourselves. Jesus teaches us to promote the Father.

- The world tells you to get noticed. Stand out. Make something out of your life. Make it count. It's got to be extraordinary. (Implying that everything that is ordinary is insignificant.) We grow dissatisfied with normal life. There's a subtle performance lie in this.
- And what happens when my dreams flop. Live in disappointment. Lose eternal perspective.
- When we grow in the Father's love, there is a satisfaction that comes in the smallest moments—helping your kids with their homework.
- **V.24 "follow me..."**
- **John 5:19**
the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing.
- There's hiddenness. There's quietness in pursuing my Father's assignment regardless of whether it's public or private. There's a humility that I'm here for the Father for no other reason. We all play a part.
- Our assignment, our ambition, is to demonstrate God's perfect sacrificial love and justice to whoever we find ourselves in front of.
- The Father calls some people to stand on a stage and give their testimony, and some to sit behind a wheel and drive the blessings from one town to another. Some people to shake a nation with their pen (like Harriet Beecher Stowe), and some people to be a supportive friend who catches you in your hour of faltering.
- *III: Bernita Gilbert – prayer warrior*
- **Revelations 7:9-12** The great multitude from every nation, tribe, people, and language. That really, we're all just a great multitude proclaiming that all "Praise, and glory and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever."

- If true significance comes from expressing perfect love then we'll discover that no one has done that greater than our Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- My story is really not about me. We're God's cheerleaders, His spokesman.

Our culture teaches us to be self-empowered. Jesus teaches us to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

- We have a well at Petra. Many of us have been baptized in the Holy Spirit.
- **Ephesians 6:10**
Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.
- In our mission to fulfill God's assignment for this community, let's not lose our dependence on the Holy Spirit.
- The Holy Spirit gives us supernatural resources to reach hearts faster. To cut through clutter.
- *Cameron's vision of his sister taking caffeine pills & of a picture of a medicine box.*

So, one night at the dinner table he blurted out, "so how long have you been taking caffeine pills?"

- *Prophetic gift:* a guy who moved in the prophetic gift was meeting with a gentleman.

The world has a message. It says that until you get noticed, you're unimportant.

God has a very different message. When you learn to walk in my love—you become everything I dreamed you could be. Big or small. Public or private no longer matters. You are filled with my love, and you can give it away to the people around you.