

11 letting go

Letting go births true change. When I first came to know the Lord, I knew I had come home. I knew that my searching was over after considering many different spiritual paths. I was searching for meaning in life. I was searching for truth. I looked at all different sorts of religions, cults and new age sects. A Biblical Jesus was the only thing that made sense or had congruence. So when I met Jesus in all His fullness, I knew my searching was over. Jesus became my Savior and Friend. But it was 2 years before He became my Lord. It took me 2 years to let go of my will and trust all of my life to my Savior. And it wasn't until I let go of my will and starting praying, "Ok Lord, Your Will be done," that real change started happening in my life. **Letting go births true change.** Once I relinquished my will, peace began to settle into my heart. I wasn't so worried about the outcome of things going on around me. What are you holding on to that you need to let Jesus be Lord? Is Jesus Lord over all in your life?

Turn with me to Luke 18:18-25 MSG: *One day one of the local officials asked him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to deserve eternal life?"*

19-20 Jesus said, "Why are you calling me good? No one is good—only God. You know the commandments, don't you? No illicit sex, no killing, no stealing, no lying, honor your father and mother."

21 He said, "I've kept them all for as long as I can remember."

22 When Jesus heard that, he said, "Then there's only one thing left to do: Sell everything you own and give it away to the poor. You will have riches in heaven. Then come, follow me."

23 This was the last thing the official expected to hear. He was very rich and became terribly sad. This was the last thing the official wanted to hear because it's the last thing he wanted to do. He was holding on to a self-complacency that he was not about to let go of.

24-25 Seeing his reaction, Jesus said, "Do you have any idea how difficult it is for people who have it all to enter God's kingdom? I'd say it's easier to thread a camel through a needle's eye than get a rich person into God's kingdom." Jesus called it like it was. He was calling this man's self complacency out. This wasn't about money. This man felt justified. This was about self-reliance. I can do this myself. I don't really need a savior. Jesus is going to call you out on your self-complacency. This is what He did with me. This is what He'll do with you. Because He wants relationship. He doesn't want anything coming between the two of you.

God isn't worried about the things you do right in your life. He's calling you out on what you're holding on to. In verse 23, this man was holding ON TIGHT to a

lot of things and he was not about to LET THEM GO. This man could not change until he let go. **Letting go births true change.** What won't you let go of? Where do you feel self-complacent or justified? What do you want? **What do you want more than God?** What are the things you are sad to let go of? The things that you are strongest in and most self-reliant are the things you probably need to let go of. Again in v 23, this man was very rich – he found comfort, security and a sense of well-being and self sufficiency in his well-to-do lifestyle. It's where he found his confidence. But Jesus knew it separated him from God. His self-complacency, self-reliance, self-sufficiency separated him from God. God will always ask for those areas in your life where you feel most confident or have the greatest need, because they separate you from Him. Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal those areas in your life you hold on to that separate you from God. It can be riches, sports, youth, shopping, friends, health, cooking, activities, lifestyle, intelligence, hobbies, even gifts God's given you such as artistic, analytical, career, many different gifts. There are many things we all find our confidence in. But if your confidence lies in what you want instead of what God wants for you, it will separate you from God's best in your life. **This man couldn't change – because he wouldn't change.** He wasn't willing to let go. **Letting go births true change.**

You won't need to try hard to see where you need to let go. I had to let go of my family and my expectations before I saw any change. Jesus knew I had to give Him my family because I was demanding comfort from my family when Jesus wanted to be my Comfort. Letting go brought peace and kept me depending on Jesus. It brought more peace into our family because I stopped setting myself up for disappointment. If you don't set your expectations too high you won't be disappointed. It's ok to expect love and kindness from each other, but I was counting on them instead of God. Whatever you count on more than God separates you from Him. It will keep you from following Him. I had to follow Jesus and not my family. My hope is in Jesus Alone!

Now I see my family from God's eyes. I love with Jesus' love and not my self-love. I give to my family and my friends as unto the Lord. Don't give to expect anything in return. Eternal investments reap eternal rewards. **"Give to him who asks you, and don't turn away him who desires to borrow from you."** **Matthew 5:42.** Now turn to Luke 6:34-35 NLT. Often same story from 4 different Gospels with unique perspective. Matthew, tax collector. Luke an analytical detailed doctor: **"And if you lend money only to those who can repay you, why should you get credit? Even sinners will lend to other sinners for**

a full return. Love your enemies! Do good to them. Lend to them without expecting to be repaid. Then your reward from heaven will be very great, and you will truly be acting as children of the Most High, for he is kind to those who are unthankful and wicked. You must be compassionate, just as your Father is compassionate." Jesus is saying, don't take personally evil inflicted upon you. It's about the other person. It's not about you. This has been one of the most difficult lessons for me to learn. I want revenge! But just as unforgiveness is like taking poison and expecting someone else to die, so is taking personally an evil or offense from someone else. I am taking upon myself and I don't want it! Ew! When you take it personally, you are taking it upon yourself. Let it go! It is not yours to take. This is a form of Godly giving. **Letting go of expectations of one another is a form of giving. What Jesus is saying here is to give whatever wherever without expecting anything in return.**

Ravi Zacharias said true profanity is giving something to God that means nothing to you. Turn to Heb 12:16 NLT: ***"Make sure that no one is immoral or godless like Esau, who traded his birthright as the firstborn son for a single meal."*** It's not swear words. Esau let go of what God gave him because it meant nothing to him. **Letting go becomes worship when you give something to God that means everything to you.** Giving for me isn't giving unless it hurts, it's inconvenient, it infringes upon me in some way, or it costs me something. I've learned through my experiences that all my giving is as unto the Lord. Let's go to Col 3:12-17;23-25 NLT. God wants us letting go of and giving all sorts of stuff: ***"Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience."*** If God wants you to have tenderhearted mercy, you'll have to let go of judgment. If God wants you to be kind, you'll have to let go of being harsh. If God wants you to be humble, you'll have to let go of arrogance. If God wants you to be gentle, you'll have to let go of callous. If He wants you to be patient, you'll have to let go of frustration AND intolerance! **This kind of letting go births true change.**

"¹³ Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. ¹⁴ Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony. ¹⁵ And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body you are called to live in peace. And always be thankful.

¹⁶ Let the message about Christ, in all its richness, fill your lives. Teach and counsel each other with all the wisdom he gives. Sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to God with thankful hearts. ¹⁷ And whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through him to God the

Father." I want you to see not little me, but BIG GOD! We want to see Jesus in each other. Jump down now to v 23:

"Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people." When you give a good attitude, and let go of taking evil personally you are actually doing it for Jesus, and in His Presence.

"²⁴ Remember that the Lord will give you an inheritance as your reward, and that the Master you are serving is Christ. ²⁵ But if you do what is wrong, you will be paid back for the wrong you have done. For God has no favorites." I am so

happy God does not play favorites! Before the Lord it's an even playing field. You will always receive more than you give. Discern between losing and letting go. Losing is giving up. Letting go is giving something to God on purpose,

trusting that God is providing for you what you need when you need it. **Letting**

go becomes worship when you give something to God that means everything to you. God gave you Jesus. And Jesus meant everything to

Him. He loves you so much He always gives infinitely more than what we give up. Will you let go?