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SERIES: THE BREAKTHROUGH PROCESS

Part 3: "Embrace His Will"

Matthew 11:28-30

Recently, I heard a story about a pet-store delivery truck going down the road. And every stoplight he came to, he'd run to the back of the truck, grab a 2x4 and start beating on the side of the truck. Nobody could figure out what he was doing, so finally somebody asked him, "What are you doing?" He said, "This is only a two-ton truck, and I'm carrying four tons of canaries. I've got to keep two tons of them in the air all the time."

When I heard that I thought, "That reflects many people's lives. How many of us are out there beating ourselves, trying to keep it all in the air from all crashing down. We have a tendency to get stuck in life. We get stuck in relationships. We get stuck with habits. We get stuck in grief when we lose a loved one. We get stuck in anger. We get stuck in our work, in a sexual relationship. And then we can't get out of it and then on to a cycle. Once you get stuck, then you start feeling guilty that you're stuck. You say, "I wish I could get out of this but I can't." And then you have a lot of guilt after you can't get out of it and you don't change, and then you say I should be able to change, and you get angry at yourself. I ought to be able to get out of this. But you don't. And then your anger turns to fear that I'm never going to get out of this. It's got control of me. I'm going to end up in the hospital.

Then your fear eventually turns to depression, and you start feeling sorry for yourself and having a pity party, and you resign, “I give up I can't change.” And you start the cycle all over again and get further stuck. How do you break through the barrier of being stuck in a rut?

## **B.R.E.A.K.T.H.R.O.U.G.H.**

**Step 1: Become Clear. I'm not God which means I'm not all powerful, all knowing and every present. My life is out of control. Admit it, I've got a problem. Reality step.**

**Step 2: Realize God is God. We believe that Jesus Christ is all powerful and He can restore us to wholeness and the breakthroughs we desire and need. He's offering to help me to change. And that's the Hope step.**

But it's not just enough to know that God will help you. You've got to take action. You've got to make a decision. You've got to walk across the line.

**Step 3: Embrace His will. I make a decision to surrender my will to Father God's care. This step is based on what Jesus said in Matthew 11:28-30, “Then Jesus said, ‘Come to Me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.’<sup>29</sup> Take My yoke upon you. Let Me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls.<sup>30</sup> For My yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light.”**

When Jesus says, “I will give rest to those who are weary and carry heavy burdens,” this reflects the daily labor of carrying a pack on one’s back. Tired workers need refreshment and renewal. Jesus equates a relationship with Him as spiritual rest.

Jesus uses the image of the yoke to demonstrate how your life will be different when you enter into a personal relationship with Him. Just like the yoke that would unite the oxen together so that they could plow together, Jesus says, “When you enter into a relationship with Me, you put My yoke on, and I will see that the work of My Kingdom will be accomplished through you as you are in constant relationship with Me.”

Jesus did not escape the hard life, but He experienced rest and refreshment in the midst of His suffering, persecution and obedience because of His relationship to His Father. When you **“Embrace the Father’s will and choose to surrender your will to the Father’s care,”** that means that **He will be with you to strengthen you so that you can obey His purposes and plans for your life.**

There is an inherent tension in committing your life to Jesus Christ. He gives you profound privilege along with responsibility. The more we know, the more we are responsible, both to be obedient to God’s knowledge and will and to share His love and wisdom with others. Yet in all of our privilege and responsibility, we are to never forget that Jesus says that our yoke is easy and our burden is light. Why? Because Jesus says, “I share the yoke and the burden with

you.” Whatever Jesus calls you to be and do, He promises that He will be with you and give you His strength, wisdom and power.

**Doug Webster** in his book, **The Easy Yoke**, does a wonderful job of explaining both the challenge and the promise of the easy yoke and the light burden that Jesus promises us.

**“His easy yoke is neither cheap nor convenient. The surprising promise of the easy yoke was meant to free us from a self-serving, meritorious, performance-based religion. It is easy in that it frees us from the burden of self-centeredness; liberates us from the load of self-righteousness; and frees us to live in the way that God intended us to live...The easy yoke sounds like an oxymoron. Plowing a field or pulling a load is hard work! And nowhere does Jesus promise soft ground for tilling or level paths for bearing the load. What He does promise is a relationship with Him. The demands are great but the relationship with Jesus makes the burden light.”**

It's God's invitation. “I will make your life easier. I will lighten your load. You will have relief. You will have release. You will have rest. You will have rejuvenation. Give Me control and care of your life and watch what I do. You will gain so much more joy, peace, purpose and passion.”

What a deal! Why would anybody turn that deal down? Yet some of you have heard this before and you've never acted on it. It's like having an unopened gift. God says I want to give

you this gift of reconciliation, restoration, release, recovery, and breakthrough, and you've done nothing about it. What keeps us from taking this Third Step, this important step? What causes me to procrastinate giving my problems to God and to delay surrendering my life to the care and control of Christ?

## **I. Five barriers that can keep me from taking this step**

### **A. Pride: I don't want to admit that I need help**

Proverbs 18:12, **“Pride first, then the crash, but humility is precursor to honor.”** (MSG) How many men will not stop to ask directions? Proverbs 10:8, **“The wise are glad to be instructed, but babbling fools fall flat on their faces.”** Maybe you're not ready to take this step. Maybe you're not ready to say, “I give control and care of my life to Jesus Christ.” All you need is a greater dose of pain. God will gladly allow it to get your attention.

### **B. Guilt: I am either ashamed to ask God for help or feel unworthy of His help**

Psalms 40:12, **“For troubles surround me--too many to count! My sins pile up so high I can't see my way out. They outnumber the hairs on my head. I have lost all courage.”** Ever felt that way? I'm ashamed to look up. I don't want to ask God for help. You know how many times I've asked God for help, and I've made a promise, and I've broken the promise? God, if You just get me out of this... I'm

embarrassed to ask God for help. You don't know all the things I've done wrong. You're wrong. Don't let pride or guilt keep you from taking this step. He wants to forgive your guilt.

### **C. Fear: I'm afraid of what I'd have to give up**

One of my favorite stories is about the guy who falls off a cliff, and half way down he grabs a branch. He's hanging on for dear life. Five hundred feet down. Five hundred feet up. He cries out, "Somebody help!" He hears the voice of God, "This is the Lord, trust Me, let go and I'll catch you." He looks back down the five hundred feet down; he looks up. "Is there anybody else up there?" God is the last resort. I'm afraid to let go. Some of you are hanging on for dear life to that branch and saying, "This isn't that bad. No problem, really, I'm fine."

What are you afraid of if you commit your life to Christ? What are you afraid will happen if you give God care and control of your life? You say, "I don't want anybody controlling me." Who are you kidding? You're being controlled all the time. It's just that you choose who you're being controlled by when you let God control your life. You're controlled by the opinions of other people. You're controlled by hurts you can't forget. You're controlled by habits, hang-ups, by the way your parents brought you up.

Do you know what freedom is? **Freedom is choosing who controls you. When you give your life to the care and**

**control of Jesus Christ, He sets you free.** Jesus said in John 8:31-32, **“You are truly My disciples if you keep obeying My teachings. <sup>32</sup>And you will know the truth and the truth will set you free.”** Jesus says, “I set you free.” Bob Dylan used to say, “You're going to have to serve somebody.” Even if it's your own ego. Real freedom is choosing who your master will be. So what are you afraid of? What are you holding on to that you think, “I can't let go of this in order to give my life to God”? A relationship, ambition, a habit, a lifestyle, a possession?

Jesus says in Mark 8:36-37, **“And how do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul in the process? Is anything worth more than your soul?”** The answer is no.

When you take this Third Step, you give up everything, and then you never had it so good. Because He takes what you've given Him, He turns it around; He adds new meaning, new significance, new vitality, and gives it back to you in a whole new way.

If you've been afraid to open your life to the care and control of Christ that He might make you some fanatic, some nut or something, that you might have to give up something—don't worry about the specifics of what you might have to give up. Don't worry about that. If you focus on the specifics, you'll never make the greater decision, which is the step to reconciliation with God and breakthrough. Just come to God: “God, I don't even know what I want to give up, but I do

know I want my life to be under Your control—so, God, here is my life. I give my life to You.” Let Him take care of the rest. Don't worry about it.

#### **D. Worry: I confuse the decision phase with the problem-solving phase**

It keeps you from surrendering your life to the care and control of Christ. Back in 1963 when JFK announced publicly, “We're going to put a man on the moon by the end of the decade,” that was the decision. Had all the problems been solved when he made that decision? No. If you're a good manager you know you never confuse decision making with problem solving. If you confuse them, you never make the decision. You have to make the decision, then solve the problems Kennedy said, “We're going to go to the moon,” then it was NASA's problem to figure out the problems' solutions.

This is the most important thing I'll say today: **The Christian life is a decision followed by a process. Same with breakthroughs. It is a decision followed by a process.** All I'm talking about today is the decision. OK, let's do it, let's go for it. Here at CVC we have a process, the Life Development Process. It helps you become all God wants you to be. What we're talking about today is just getting to first base.

In World War II the Marines had a definite strategy they used in the Pacific when they went to retake the Pacific from the Japanese. They used the same strategy on every island and it



worked every time. First, the Marines would go to the island that had been taken captive, and they would start bombing it, and they would just pelt it with bombs and grenades and all kinds of explosives. That was called the softening-up period. Many of you are in the softening-up period right now. And all kinds of explosions are going off in your life that are just sending fragments everywhere and you're saying, "This isn't working." You come to a point where you say, "Yes, I need something beyond myself." It's softening up your pride. "I need help. I need God in my life. There's too much stress." The second phase, the Marines would come in and establish a beachhead, maybe only twenty yards deep and two hundred yards wide but they would just get a presence on the island. When they had established the beachhead, had they completely liberated the island? No. They had just gotten in. From there they began to fight the battles. Sometimes they'd move one hundred yards forward, and sometimes they'd get pushed back. And, sometimes they'd win the battle, and sometimes they'd lose it. But everybody knew that once they'd established a beachhead, total liberation of the island was inevitable, just a matter of time. And in the history of WWII once the Marines had landed and established a beachhead, they never lost an island. It was just a matter of time that the entire island would be set free.

When you make this step, what's happening is God gets a beachhead in your life. The Bible calls it conversion or being born again. It just means God gets a presence in my life. Does that mean everything in my life is perfect? Absolutely not. It means God's in your life, He's got a beachhead, and the rest

of your life He's going to be setting you free, little by little by little. It's a process. So don't worry about it. Just trust God.

Maybe you worry that in this battle you couldn't hold on and hold out. God says, "Don't worry. It's not your job to keep it." He says, "I do the keeping." Please read out loud with me 1 Peter 5:7, **"Give all your worries and cares to God, for He cares about what happens to you."**

"He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day." God's says, "I do the holding on so you don't have to worry about it." Whatever God asks me to do, He'll enables me to do it. Philippians 1:6, **"And I am sure that God, who began the good work with in you, will continue His work until it is finally finished on that day when Christ Jesus comes back again."**

### **E. Doubt: My faith seems so small**

In Mark 9:23-24, Jesus asked the father of a boy who was demonized how long this spirit had seized him and would throw him violently to the ground, and he would foam at the mouth and grind his teeth and become rigid. He asked Jesus' disciples to get rid of this spirit, and they couldn't. The father said, "Please have mercy on us and help us if you can," Jesus responded, **"What do you mean, If I can? Anything is possible if a person believes."** What I want us to see is the father's response in vs. 24, **"The father instantly cried out, 'I do believe, but help me overcome my unbelief!'"** This father was asking Jesus for a breakthrough in his own life and

faith and for his son's healing. "God, I want to believe that You will help me with my life. Help me with my unbelief." That's good enough. Don't you have to have a big faith? Look at what the Bible says. Matthew 17:20 says, please read out loud with me, **"You don't have enough faith," Jesus told them. 'I tell you the truth, if you had faith even as small as a mustard seed, you could say to this mountain, "Move from here to there," and it would move. Nothing would be impossible.'"** It's not so much the size of your faith that matters, it's the size of what you put it in, the size of your God. You can have giant faith, put it in the wrong thing and get no results. **A little faith in a big God gets big results.** Don't let any of these things keep you from taking this step.

Some of you say, "I've tried this before and it didn't work. I've tried giving my life to God, and it just didn't work." My evaluation of that is that you probably didn't fully understand what it all involved, and you gave up and quit. You were involved, you just weren't committed. Like the kamikaze who went on 33 missions. He was involved but not committed.

**- BREAKTHROUGH TESTIMONY HERE -**

## **II. How do I take this step?**

What does it mean to take this step?

### **A. I accept Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior**

I need to be saved. I need help. I realize I need Him in my life. Romans 10:9-11 says, **“For if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raise Him from the dead, you will be saved. <sup>10</sup>For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by confessing with your mouth that you are saved. <sup>11</sup>As the Scriptures tell us, ‘Anyone who believes in Him will not be disappointed.’”** What you need to do is to: **Embrace His will for your life. You make a decision to surrender your will to the Father’s will and care.**

## **B. I accept God’s Word as my standard**

From now on, I've got a manual that I'm going to live my life by. Fortunately, we have an instruction manual. It's the Bible. God says this is your standard by which you evaluate life around you. Please read out loud with me 2 Timothy 3:16-17, **“All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It straightens us out and teaches us to do what is right. <sup>17</sup>It is God’s way of preparing us in every way, fully equipped for every good thing God wants us to do.”**

## **C. I accept God’s will as my strategy for my life**

God, what do you want me to do? The first question I always ask is, “Lord, you woke me up this morning. It obviously means you have another day for me, a purpose for my life. What do you want me to do with it?” King David says in

Psalm 40:8, **“I take my joy in doing Your will my God, for Your law is written on my heart.”** I seek first God's will. “God, I'm willing to do anything, anywhere, anytime. I don't even have to understand it, but I'm living my life on Your terms because You made me for a reason. You have a purpose, and I want to fulfill that purpose that You made me for.” And God's will becomes my strategy for life, whether I understand it or not.

#### **D. I accept God's power as my strength**

Philippians 4:13, **“For I can do everything with the help of Christ who gives me the strength I need.”** No longer do I have to rely on my own energy. Things work better when they're plugged in. You get plugged into God, you're not so tired all the time. God says, “I will give you My power to be all I want you to be.”

Jesus says in Revelation 3:20, **“Look! Here I stand at the door and knock. If you hear Me calling and open the door, I will come in, and we will share a meal as friends.”** Jesus says, “I'm standing at the door of your life, and I'm knocking, and I'm saying I want to come into your life,” but He's a gentleman. He'll not beat the door down. Step Three means to open the door. **The key that unlocks that door is willingness.** You don't need willpower; you need willingness to accept God's power in your life, go by His controls, His system.

Pilots, when they fly planes, fly always either by IFR or VFR. IFR stands for Instrument Flight Rules. VFR stands for Visual Flight Rules. Every pilot is flying by one or the other. IFR is when you taxi out on a runway, you might go over to the control tower, you submit to the controls of the system, you set your instruments, and it's a done deal. You're controlled by the instruments—a very safe way of flying. VFR—Visual Flight Rules—you just kind of taxi on the runway, look around, looks OK, and take off and just fly around and use your sight. VFR is fine as long as you can see everything—if it's clear weather and not a lot of traffic. But one day, if you fly enough, you're going to eventually hit bad weather. You're going to get lost in some clouds, and at one point you have to pick up the microphone and say, “I need to switch over to IFR,” and you submit to the controls of that channel. All airlines fly IFR. All pros fly IFR but a lot of amateurs fly VFR. The FAA says that a lot of these small plane crashes, many of those could have been prevented if the person in the cockpit, when they get lost in the clouds and weather, had simply picked up the microphone and said, “I need help.” Are they going to do that? No. Think a pilot wants to admit he's lost? Admit that he needs help? He wants to control it on his own, be his own boss, set his own destiny even if it does mean flying into that mountain or tree.

You have made it pretty well along to this point in life flying VFR, and you've controlled everything, but it's an inevitable part of life that you're going to have bad weather. You're going to hit the tough spots. You're going to hit the clouds where you flip upside down and you don't even know which

direction you're going. At that point you've got to pick up the microphone and switch to God's system. "I embrace Your will for my life. I decide to surrender my will to Your care, purpose and plan for my life."

It's very important for you to let somebody else know of your decision and making this commitment.