

What Is Stopping You From Living With Jesus?

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”

Matthew 11:28-29

When I think about this verse, one word stands out to me—**come**.

Jesus doesn't say, “Fix your life first.”

He doesn't say, “Once you've been sober long enough, come.”

He doesn't say, “After you've earned forgiveness, come.”

He simply says...

Come.

That invitation is for every single one of us.

Many of us know what it feels like to carry heavy burdens. Addiction. Trauma. Broken relationships. Regret. Shame. Fear. We become so accustomed to carrying these things that sometimes we forget we were never meant to carry them alone.

I want to ask each of you one question:

What is stopping you from fully living with Jesus?

Not just believing in Him. Not just knowing about Him. But truly surrendering every part of your life to Him. Sometimes we immediately think our addiction or hardship is what's standing in the way. But I wonder if sometimes it's something even deeper.

- Maybe it's shame.
- Maybe it's believing you're too broken.
- Maybe it's believing you'll always be “that person.”
- Maybe it's fear that if God really knew everything about you, He wouldn't want you.

But he already knows. And he still calls you.

Shame Keeps Us Hidden

One of Satan's greatest weapons isn't addiction.

It's shame.

Shame whispers:

- *"You're too far gone."*
- *"You'll never change."*
- *"God is disappointed in you."*
- *"People might forgive you, but God probably hasn't."*

But listen to what God says instead.

"There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."

Romans 8:1

Notice it doesn't say, "Less condemnation." It says no condemnation. Jesus didn't die so that we would spend our lives punishing ourselves. He died so we could walk in freedom.

God Specializes in New Beginnings

Every day is a new beginning. Every decision to keep fighting is a new beginning. Every prayer is a new beginning.

And that's exactly who God is.

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come."

2 Corinthians 5:17

Did you notice it doesn't say you're a repaired version of your old self?

It says you're a new creation.

- Your identity is no longer your addiction.
- Your identity isn't your worst mistake.
- Your identity isn't your relapse.
- Your identity isn't what someone did to you.
- Your identity is found in Christ.

The Story of the Prodigal Son

One of my favorite stories in the Bible is the story of the prodigal son. The son had made terrible decisions. He wasted everything. He hit rock bottom. He believed that if he went home, maybe his father would simply tolerate him as a servant. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him. He didn't wait. He didn't lecture him. He didn't make him prove himself.

He ran to him. That's God's heart toward us. Many of us think we have to crawl back to God after we've cleaned ourselves up. But God is already running toward us. He isn't waiting with crossed arms.

He's waiting with open arms.

Grace Changes Everything

The world says:

"You have to earn love."

Jesus says:

"You already have Mine."

The world says:

"Your past defines you."

Jesus says:

"I have made you new."

The world says:

"You'll always be an addict."

Jesus says:

"So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed."

John 8:36

Freedom doesn't always happen overnight. Sometimes freedom looks like choosing Jesus today. Then choosing Him again tomorrow. And the next day.

Faithfulness is often found in taking one surrendered step at a time.

God Uses Broken People

Sometimes we think our past disqualifies us. But throughout Scripture, God consistently chooses broken people.

- Moses was insecure.
- David failed in major ways.
- Peter denied Jesus.
- Paul persecuted Christians.

Yet God redeemed their stories and used them powerfully.

God doesn't call the qualified. He qualifies those He calls.

Your testimony may one day become the reason someone else believes healing is possible.

As Paul wrote:

"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."

2 Corinthians 12:9

Notice God doesn't say His power is made perfect in our strength. He says it's made perfect in our weakness. That means the very places you feel weakest can become places where God's strength shines the brightest.

What Is Jesus Asking You to Lay Down?

Maybe Jesus isn't asking you to have everything figured out. Maybe He's simply asking you to trust Him with one more piece of your heart.

- One more fear.
- One more wound.
- One more secret.
- One more burden.

He says:

“Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you.”

1 Peter 5:7

Not some of it. All of it.

Reflection Questions

- What has been standing between me and Jesus?
- What lie have I believed about myself?
- Is there shame I need to surrender?
- Do I believe God can truly redeem my story?
- What is one thing I can trust Jesus with this week?

Your story is not over.

The same God who met people in prisons, deserts, storms, and graves still meets people in recovery meetings.

He isn't afraid of your past. He isn't shocked by your failures. He isn't keeping score.

He's inviting you into a relationship where grace is greater than guilt, hope is stronger than addiction, and love is deeper than shame.

Remember these words:

“Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?”

Isaiah 43:18-19

God isn't finished with you.

He's just getting started.