



"Come Out!"



"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for he has anointed me to bring Good News to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim that captives will be released, that the blind will see, that the

*oppressed will be set free, and that the time of the Lord's favor
has come."*

Jesus Christ | Luke 4:17-19 (NLT)

What really happened when you accepted Christ as your savior? Were you actually set free as Jesus proclaimed? Do you feel free? Are your actions indicative of a free person? If you're like me, you feel a bit more like a lion who, having been caged for so long, fears exiting in spite of the door being wide open. Deeply entrenched beliefs, errant ones, retain a tight grip.

At the same time, I hear Jesus calling, "Come out! Believe in the promises I've given you and serve me." Yet, the comfort of what I've known holds me and old wounds still create tremendous doubt. The vows I made in response have led me to build protective walls... and they're no longer needed!

Reflect: What entrenched beliefs continue to hold me hostage?

Who can escape this challenge of faith? We accept the grand redemption that comes from Jesus' promise for eternal life, yet struggle to live today in the fullness of his grace and provision. Martha, almost family to Jesus, struggled too.

"Jesus told her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying. Everyone who lives in me and believes in me will never ever die. Do you believe this, Martha?' 'Yes, Lord,' she told him. 'I have always believed you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one who has come into the world from God.'" (John 11:25-27)

Shortly after affirming her belief, Jesus tests her by instructing the people to roll away the stone covering Lazarus' grave.

"But Martha, the dead man's sister, protested, 'Lord, he has been dead for four days. The smell will be terrible.'" (John 11:39)

I envision myself saying the same, wouldn't you? Entrenched beliefs undermine God's plan to demonstrate who he is. Jesus intentionally waited four days so there would be no doubt that Lazarus was raised from the dead. In doing so, Jesus proved that he is the resurrection and the life, both when he returns and today!

Consider: By clinging to errant beliefs, I limit God.

All of this is well and good, but you and I still sit in our cages, bound by our errant beliefs, and the walls look huge! Though a strange thought, what might Lazarus have been thinking while lying there in the grave? I bet those walls seemed beyond huge! Lacking options, what was Lazarus' part in exiting his grave? He had to get up and walk.

"Then Jesus shouted, 'Lazarus, come out!' And the dead man came out, his hands and feet bound in graveclothes, his face wrapped in a headcloth. Jesus told them, 'Unwrap him and let him go!'" Jesus Christ (John 11:43-44)

Likewise, we each have a part to play to exit our cage. Face it, you have no choice but to get up and walk out. Does remaining in a cage offer any other chance at life or testimony?

Imagine: Advancing your Mission is the path out of my cage.

Having charged us with the great commission, Jesus calls, “Come out! Serve me.” Your testimony will demonstrate that he is indeed the resurrection and the life, today! Jesus also made it clear that you cannot remove your “cage clothes” by yourself. As you move forward in faith, serving others strips the tangled mess of errant beliefs from you. Embrace your freedom today. The door is wide open and Jesus is calling...

“Come Out!”

Go off the grid and ask these questions:

Coach’s Questions

- What belief is holding me in my cage?
 - How am I limiting God by staying in my cage? What testimony is being withheld?
 - What can I do this week to take a bold step out of my cage?
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Spirit Talk

Post this where you will see it regularly.

“Obey the Lord and Come Out!”

“The people refused to enter the pleasant land, for they wouldn’t believe his promise

to care for them. Instead, they grumbled in their tents and refused to obey the Lord."
Psalm 106:24-25



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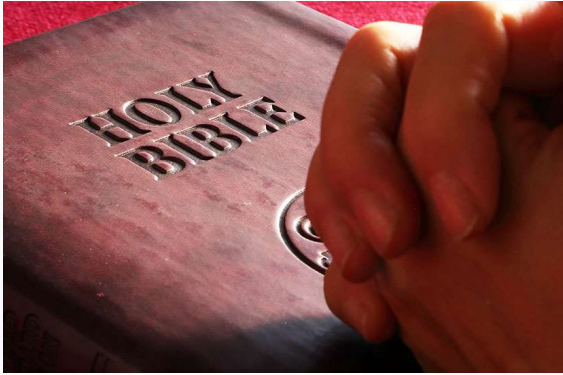
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