



THE Storyteller

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Week 5

Day 1: Counting the True Cost

Reading: Luke 14:25-33

Jesus doesn't offer us a comfortable religion; He offers us transformation. When He speaks of "hating" father and mother, He's revealing a radical truth: nothing can compete with our devotion to Him. Like Charles Ponzi's investors who calculated potential returns, we must honestly assess what we're investing our lives in. Are we chasing immediate gratification while missing eternal gain? Today, examine your life's investments. Where are you spending your time, energy, and resources? Jesus isn't asking you to give up good things to punish you; He's inviting you to release lesser things to receive something infinitely better. What "sand" are you clutching while God offers you "ice cream"?

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Day 2: The Off-Limits Audit

Reading: Matthew 6:19-24

Jesus declares, "No one can serve two masters." Yet we often try, creating "off-limits" zones in our lives where God isn't welcome. Our finances, sexuality, comfort, or future plans become untouchable territories. But Jesus isn't safe—and that's precisely the point. When we compartmentalize our faith, we miss the fullness of what God offers. The disciples didn't hold anything back, and most paid with their lives. Why such radical commitment? Because they discovered Jesus was worth it. Today, ask yourself: What areas of my life have I declared off-limits to God? Your bank account? Your relationships? Your body? Your dreams? True freedom comes not from protecting these areas, but from surrendering them.

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Day 3: Release to Receive

Reading: Philippians 3:7-14

Paul writes, "I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord." This is the paradox of the kingdom: we must release to receive. Like a child clutching sand while ice cream waits, we often cling to what's familiar, missing what's extraordinary. The only way to receive all God has for you is to release control of everything to follow Him. This isn't about earning God's love—it's about removing the barriers that prevent us from experiencing it fully. What temporary returns are you banking on that will never produce long-term fulfillment? Success without God leads to emptiness. Comfort without purpose leads to restlessness. Today, identify one thing you're holding too tightly, and practice opening your hands to God.

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Day 4: Recognizing the Con

Reading: Colossians 2:6-10

The world offers a Ponzi scheme of promises: success equals happiness, possessions equal satisfaction, achievement equals purpose. We invest heavily in these lies, surprised when they don't deliver. Even worse, we've become so accustomed to the con that God's truth sounds like the lie. Scripture warns us not to be taken captive by "hollow and deceptive philosophy." Yet daily, we're bombarded with messages about what we need to be fulfilled. The proof is everywhere—celebrities who have everything but contentment, success stories that end in emptiness. Are you listening to the wrong voices, investing in the wrong things? Today, evaluate: What cultural messages have you accepted as truth? What investments are you making that consistently fail to deliver what they promise?

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Day 5: Believing Jesus Is That Good

Reading: Psalm 34:8-14

"Taste and see that the Lord is good." The disciples' willingness to suffer and die wasn't rooted in obligation but in discovery—they found Jesus was so good that everything else paled in comparison. Our interpretation of Jesus' demands hinges entirely on our belief in His goodness. If we see Him as a cosmic killjoy, His call to surrender feels cruel. But if we truly believe He is good—infinately, perfectly good—then giving Him everything becomes the most logical response. The question isn't "How can God demand that much?" but "Do I believe Jesus is that good?" Today, reflect on God's goodness in your life. Where have you seen His faithfulness? When has surrender led to blessing? Build your confidence not on feelings, but on the proven character of God.