

COMING OUT OF VEGAS

PART I / EVERYTHING HAS CHANGED BUT NOTHING IS DIFFERENT

DAY 1 — THE GAMBLE

MAIN IDEA

Transformation will not happen until Jesus is Lord of your life.

SCRIPTURE

“If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.”

Romans 10:9

In Las Vegas, many come from all over the world to experience one thing, gambling. Let me tell you, the casinos have lots of money because gambling is not in your favor, but theirs.

Most gambling has no skill to it; it is all based on chance. I have watched my father gamble countless of times, hoping this time he will win the big bucks. There were a few times I can remember him wining anything, but most of the time it was big losses.

Unfortunately, in the last 10 years I have seen many people approach the altar in the exact same way. When they come to respond to accept Jesus in their heart and make Jesus Lord of their life, they are really unsure, they come with fingers crossed thinking by saying this “magical” prayer and by saying the right things, this will save them from Hell or God will forgive them and everything will be all good and they can go back to life as normal.

There is no surrender, there is no giving God any place in their life, there is no repentance (turning away from sin) and most of all there is no transformation.

Before we really get started on this 21day journey this is the first issue we must address, because transformation cannot happen unless you give God access to your entire life. If your anything like I was maybe you said that prayer and you meant it, you really do believe Jesus is Lord and you want him Lord of your life. I truly believe when I said that prayer that I became a child of God, that I was “saved” and my eternity changed.

I’m not saying this didn’t happen for you or your not going to heaven but many of us do not know how to surrender completely or know how to make Jesus “Lord”. I have known people that have grown up in church their whole entire life and say they believe in Jesus, but there is no evidence that Jesus is Lord of their lives. Why is that?

To say Jesus is Lord of our lives is saying he has access, control, and Lordship, in every part of our life. It is an act of surrendering our will for his. It’s saying because you are God, Master,

Savior, I give you my heart and my life.

In our generation no one uses the word “lord” to describe people, but in biblical days it was very common term to address certain people who had servants or slaves. In the Greek the term is defined as “the owner; one who has control of the person, the master.” Or “he to whom a person or thing belongs, about which he has power of deciding; master, lord”(BLB).

Many who say Jesus is Lord do not understand they are confessing that Jesus is now the rightful owner and master of their life. Were giving him power to decide matters in our lives and we follow. Many have confessed this, but never really believed in there heart or gave God access to their entire life.

In the book of James 2:19 states, “You say you have faith, for you believe that there is one God. Good for you! Even the demons believe this, and they tremble in terror.”

Obviously the demons believe, but they choose not to serve God and they work actively against his will. We are no better than the demons that know God exists and believe who he is, if we have no transformation in our lives and if we don’t serve him or make him Master of our life.

We are no better than the demons if we believe in Christ redemptive work on the cross, but than not allow that redemptive work to transform our hearts. It is useless and a contradiction to say that Jesus is Lord and give him no authority in our lives.

God doesn’t want us just to know that he exists, that Jesus is real and what happened on the cross really happened. It’s because of this truth that is to motivate us to give him our hearts, our trust and to put our Faith in him.

In poker terms we must be “all in.” It’s time to put all your chips in. Take a gamble on God. The Bible says those that loose their life in the end will save their life and those that hold on their life will end up loosing their life.

For those of us that have never experienced the love of God, what I have said so far can seem like a big risk, that by doing this we are going to loose our life. That by doing this means were going to become a monk who only reads the bible all day and only talks about Jesus. That God just wants us to become enslaved to religious rules and make us have boring lives.

This is far from what this means. When we choose to give up our life and give it to Jesus we are putting ourselves in the position to experience the fullness of what God has for us. In the end by giving up our life to God we end up gaining a fuller more satisfied life (John 10:10).

Jesus died to give back to us what the enemy and sin stolen from us since the beginning. We wont become religious robots but unique individuals walking out his will as we continue to know him deeper.

He wants to be our Father and for us to be his children who follow him because we trust him. He is not looking for slaves, but the affection of our hearts. It is only in this surrender that we will experience freedom, life, wholeness, peace, joy and purpose.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

If you feel like you have said Jesus is Lord, but never made him Lord of your life and now have a better understanding of what that means, I want you to pray this prayer below.

Remember it's not how you say this or the way you say it but it's about the intent of your heart.

SALVATION PRAYER

"Jesus,

I believe that You are the Son of God
and that You died on the cross for my sins
and rose again.

I confess that I have sinned
and that I need You.

I'm sorry for my sins,
and I choose to turn away from my old ways
and follow You.

Jesus, I invite You into every area of my life—
my heart, my thoughts, my words, my choices,
my friendships, my family, my school, and my future.

Be my Savior and my Lord.
Lead me, change me, and help me become
the person You created me to be.

Today, I give my life to You.
I choose to follow You
and live for You.

Thank You for forgiving me,

loving me, and giving me new life.

In Jesus' name,
Amen."

CHALLENGE

Tell someone in your life that you made this decision

Congratulations, welcome to the beginning of transformation!