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QUESTION - How would you feel if I came down the stage and asked you stand up and look me in the eyes, and I said...

- Let me make something abundantly clear, I own you!

What would you do or say?

- When is Monty getting back?
- You got real issues, man.
- You probably need to know my grandfather is a boss in the Italian mafia
- Oh, this works well, I'll beat the crowd to Rudy's today – you walk out

Surprise you – you know, Donnie, I do respect you. I think you are spiritually mature person and have a lot of experience. Sure, I will let you own me.

PROPOSAL TO MY SON – who was making bad decisions, hated being in our home, difficult time finding his way, pretty miserable person.

What do you think about letting me be your master for one week?

Found this in a book, Loser Parents.

Let me plan every hour of each of your days and you must do everything I ask

Plans I had in mind were like...

- Get up at 7 am and go to bed by 11.
- Read the bible and pray each day and go to church on Sunday
- Volunteer to help somebody – pets on vacation, widow - chores
- Write thank you notes galore - friends, teachers, coaches, g pa's
- Go to a museum. Read a biography of a famous person you like.
- Build something. Draw something.
- Play video games for one hour per day not 4 and more
- Put your phone away during any social times

He said no. Maybe it was because of my requirement for him to do a little bow after each command and reply, "Oh Yes Master Daddy"!

TRUTH IS - I think it would have been one of the best weeks of his life.

Title - Not My Own

The bible is very clear that if you are a Christian – **WHO IS YOUR OWNER?**

Therefore, the relevant issue is, “Will you surrender to God’s ownership?”

Will you possess a mind and heart that declares, God, you own me. **I am glad** you own me. Whatever you want me to do, consider it done.

Are you that kind of a Christian? – lead a “Not My Own” lifestyle?

This is the kind of believer God desired for His disciples shortly after He raised Jesus from the dead and this is the kind God still wants today!

Grab your preferred vehicle of reading the Bible/Message outline

SERIES IN JAMES – a letter we have in our Bibles today, inspired by God and written by Jesus’ half, brother. James was the leader of the church in Jerusalem.

This letter written around 50 A.D. was circulating to all the believing Jews who were exiled from their homeland because of persecution and dispersed throughout the Mediterranean area and - Egypt, Syria, Asia Minor, Greece, Italy, and more.

Less than **20 years before**, Jesus arose from the dead and He gave them a profound mission; to make disciples of all nations (going, baptizing, teaching, loving, being salt to the earth, light to the world). But the truth was these exiled Jewish believers had veered way off course from this mission.

Let’s study this some more and **BIG ASK** - listen to what God has to say to you.

Read James 1:13-18

¹³ When tempted, no one should say, “God is tempting me.” For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; ¹⁴ but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. ¹⁵ Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

¹⁶ Don’t be deceived, my dear brothers and sisters. ¹⁷ Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. ¹⁸ He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, **that we might** be a kind of first fruits of all he created.

Why did they need to hear this?

Because both their beliefs and behaviors were drifting away from the teachings and passions of Jesus.

Their drifting off course included **“forgetting their highest purpose”**. And that highest purpose was sharing the greatest news ever known to man! God loves the people of every nation they were living in and salvation could be theirs through faith in Jesus Christ, God’s son who arose from the dead!

And God knew that nothing short of total consecration to Him would be required to accomplish this mission!

James 1:18 – don’t know certain OT teachings – weird

¹⁸ He chose to give us birth through the word of truth that we might be a kind of first fruits of all he created.

Birth – our second birth as Christians, our new spiritual birth into the family of God. And this new birth was experienced when each person responded to the word of truth. The word of truth is the gospel, the good news I just described.

New birth - a purpose – **THAT WE MIGHT BE** - a kind of first fruits of all he created.

What does it mean to be a kind of first fruits of all God created?

In Old Testament times, one of God’s ceremonial laws required that the first sheaf(bundle of grain stalks tied together) of the new harvest was collected, preserved and then presented in the temple. And no other part of the harvest was permitted to be used for food until after this ceremony was experienced.

Stomachs were growling and some kids were complaining – I’m hungry!!

SLIDE - PICTURE of HARVEST SHEATH – this is it!

The purpose of the law and holding the ceremony was to remind God’s people that all of the harvest came from God and belongs to God.

Read Psalm 24:1

The earth is the LORD’s, and everything in it,
the world, and all *who live* in it; - **every creation, including humans**

Under the new covenant, not through the sacrifices of animals anymore but through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, we were purchased with a price, the costly blood of Jesus.

I Corinthians 6:19 – 20

¹⁹ Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? **You are not your own;** ²⁰ you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.

I am not my own. God, I fully surrender my time, my energy, my money, my talents, my very rights. **Every decision I make runs through you first.**

And **let me tell you what happens** when Christians start leading a “my life is not my own” lifestyle. These are examples I know are happening in our church.

- Orphans are adopted rather than neglected
- Widows and the poor are consistently cared for
- People in crisis receive a wide range of human and spiritual resources
- Teenagers - choose virginity/a drug free lifestyle at the price of unpopularity
- Children – reach out to the outcast when others ignore or tease him
- Forgiven others – significant betrayal, adultery, murdered their loved ones
- Lost their jobs because they were not going to compromise their ethics
- Keep loving God though experiencing unspeakable tragedy
- Utilized nothing short of divine self-control and grace while raising a family
- Extravagant examples of financial giving
- Chosen to submit to authority for the sake of unity within this church
- Emptied themselves in life long, tireless service to God
- Great sacrifices of numerous kinds in order to share the gospel in hard to reach places
- In the Word, in prayer, in church and in Christian fellowship
RELENTLESSLY!

TYPE OF IMPACT – starts with the belief – God, I am not my own – YOURS!

How Do I Become Fully Surrendered to God?

I must work through my crisis of belief that is sabotaging my will to surrender

Fact of Life – when you are in crisis mode, it's difficult to accomplishing your core purposes.

Some crises we bring upon ourselves and other's are out of our control.

Example – FLU – it's a full 7 days – in CRISIS MODE

- How - time spent – at least one doctor appointment, going by the pharmacy, days in bed, even when you start feeling a bit better, watch a TV show with one eye open
- **Not accomplishing your core purposes** – providing for your family, being an involved parent, going to school, praying, in the Word, active in worship, actively serving God, befriending and loving non-Christians.

The crisis has kept you from accomplishing your mission.

SAME REALITY is true in your walk with Christ – when you are experiencing “crisis of belief” – that crisis becomes central rather than the mission of Jesus, sabotages you from becoming fully surrendered to God.

Chief obstacle - dispersed Jewish Christians – doubting the goodness of God.

James 1:13, 16-17

¹³ When tempted, no one should say, “God is tempting me.” For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone

¹⁶ **Don't be deceived**, my dear brothers and sisters. ¹⁷ Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.

Their “Crisis of Belief” involved accepting the idea that God could be responsible for or have a significant role in tempting people to sin.

Proved very difficult – because it is hard to surrender to a leader whose character you question. This is why possessing an ongoing “crisis of belief” is dangerous to your spiritual health.

No denial - going through serious TRIALS.

- Driven out of their homeland, trying to meld their Jewish identity with the culture of Greeks and Romans – **No place like home.**
- Feared for their lives – 10 years later – James was martyred

TRUTH – their crisis of belief had a solid enough solution (thousands of years of observing God, the life of Jesus, God’s inspired teachings). They should not have allowed these doubts to supersede the importance of accomplishing God’s mission. And this holds true for your crisis too.

What are other examples of “crises of belief”?

Biblical teachings that seem hard to understand or resolve

Painful experience in church

Shame associated with a current sin of the past

Overwhelming battle with addiction, anxiety or depression

Encountered firsthand a disturbing act of hypocrisy

Doubts – happy marriage between science and biblical teachings

Ignorance you are afraid to admit it – Christian for a long while

What is yours? – that prevailing issue that drains you, puzzles you, stalls you from FULL SURRENDER?

My Obstacle _____

My challenge – the time is now for you deal with it!!!!

This life is not about you. Too much at stake! Cause of Christ is too important!

Very High probability that you/been wasting a lot valuable time you could have been investing in the KOG because you have allowed this to be your **Kryptonite!**

Take some BIG STEP this week to address your crisis. It’s sabotaging your full surrender!!

Let’s Review

- God owns you.
- Our best days, both in fulfillment and fruitfulness are the days we are fully surrendered to God.
- One big obstacle to full surrender is failing to healthily navigate through our CRISIS OF BELIEF.

2nd Obstacle to submitting to God’s ownership

How Do I Become Fully Surrendered to God?

How do we get to that place - our **eager** cry is, "God, Almighty, you are my king, my master, my owner. I submit my will, money, time, talents, the people and experiences I love wholly to you. What are your marching orders? **I'm ALL EARS!**"

I must win my battles over temptation to stay fully surrendered.

Sin holds the starkest contrast to the fully surrendered life. Sin is saying, I am surrendering to myself not God.

This was true for many of the Christians who were receiving this letter from James.

Sins of Jewish Christians

Doubt	Pride	Anger	Favoritism
Jealousy	Hypocrisy	Filthy talk	Selfish ambition
Judging others	Unbridled tongue	Pleasure driven life	
Presuming upon God in their business planning			
Neglecting the needs of widows/orphans and the poor –			LOSING THE BATTLE

James 1:13-15

¹³ When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone;

¹⁴ but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. ¹⁵ Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

Battle Plans

Gain control of your evil human desires

Description of the Process of Sinning

No denying that the Bible teaches that Satan and his demons tempt us.

James – reminds us of something about the **human condition**.

Humans possess evil desires within them even if they are genuine Christians.

Romans 7:18-24

7:18 For I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my flesh. For I want to do the good, but I cannot do it. 7:19 For I do not do the good I want, but I do the very evil I do not want! 7:20 Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer me doing it but **sin that lives in me**. 7:21 So, I find the law that when I want to do good, evil is present with me. 7:22 For I delight in the law of God in my inner being. 7:23 But I see a different law in my members waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the **law of sin that is in my members**. 7:24 Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?

This is the apostle Paul, teaching that evil human desire is real and it still indwells the born again Christian - he is admitting, **“Wretched Man that I Am”!**

BIG TEACHING – A flame of evil human desire exists in you. **BEWARE!!**

But God also teaches that we can control the intensity of the flame.

ANALOGY – avoid dirty SUDS.

Suds are the foam of soapy water. Goal is to have clean suds when you wash dishes and not dirty suds if you want them to be clean.

SUDS – SEEMINGLY UNIMPORTANT DECISIONS

Flame the evil desire that exists in you

- Posting a like on Facebook to an old High School friend
- Staying alone in a hotel room while on business
- Shooting a smile at a high school bad boy

They seem harmless but the intensity of the flame has just gone up. And you start making more plans of self- gratification.

Oh my...

- Now I really want to **message** my old HS sweetheart – AFFAIR
- Now I really want to watch something inappropriate – EVE OF LUST
- Now I really want a date with this high school bad boy – PREGNANT

Starts with these SUDS. This is why Jesus warned, “not even a hint”.

Lesson here is be on guard. Do not be deceived as James says repeatedly.

Soapy Water to a **Fishing Analogy**

Greek word for “entice” – verse 14 – literally means, “taken with a bait” – not surprising that a fishing analogy would be used in this 1st century culture where all of these nations are reside right off the seas

So evil desires exist – **LURES OF TEMPTATION ARE HEADED OUR WAY!**

Lures are not effective if they appear obviously fake. Effective lures are ones that appear to be something they are not.

PICTURE OF SHRIMP LURE - pretty good image of a live shrimp

Satan, the Father of lies is the best lure designer of all time

Be on guard, lose your naïve gullibility – **PICTURE OF FISH – DANGEROUS TO BE ONLINE**

Friends that warns you..**PRESSURE** – **PICTURE OF FISH – YOU DO IT!**

Do not be a dumb fish. Turn your back and swim away.

Avid fisherman this week and he shared that there are **smart and dumb** fish.

It’s the skinny fish that you know are dumb. Their mouths are all scarred up from the many hooks they bit and there skinny because they have swallowed so many hooks they cannot eat properly. **SLOW LEARNERS!!**

Temptation Tip – if your stomach is stuffed full of God’s Word, God’s Spirit, and God’s people – less of an appetite for sin.

Spirit is willing/flesh is weak - take the bait – **FISH – HOOK IN MOUTH**

See the panic in his eyes. Can you relate to that fear when you get caught?

Consequences have only just begun!

- Jerked all over the water, the other fish are making fun of him
- **ASHORE** - the hook has to ripped right through their lips/out of their insides if they swallowed it.

PICTURE OF FISH – BUCKET – thrown into fish prison - shame/embarrassment of being a part of the crowd that was caught and your living conditions went south fast – **IT NEVER, EVER, EVER WORTH IT!!**

You what is next for the fish – **PICTURE OF FISH – CUTTING BOARD**

UNREPENTANT - Sin and Satan will cut you to pieces. You experience the pain of broken relationships, a life of utter loneliness, ultimate emptiness, the pain of a stubborn heart and a lack of self-respect but you won't admit it.

How Do I Become Fully Surrendered?

- *I must work through my crisis of belief that is sabotaging my will to surrender*
- *I must win my battles over temptation to stay surrendered*
 - Gain control of my evil human desire – no fanning the flame!

Battle Plans

Own up when I mess up!

All of us mess up. But in my observation(35 years) few **fully own up**.

We blame others and our circumstances and our apologies are lame.

Read James 1:13a

¹³ When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me."

When we sin, our strong desire is to rationalize, justify, minimize and push the cause outward rather than inward.

This has been the pattern of mankind from the beginning.

- Adam blamed God – it's the woman you sent me
- Eve blamed the serpent

After we sin, the next right thing to do is to confess.

Confession is thinking and feeling the exact same way God thinks and feels about our sin. This will stir up a God honoring repentance.

Do you go down that path after you sin?

Godly sorrow - not a condescending, conviction less, Oh yeah, my bad.

James 4:9

⁹ Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom.

Emotionless confessions are pseudo confessions. I say, Don't Bother!

Are you ready to take following Christ and achieving His mission seriously?

What are you going to do with what you have heard today?