

## Unhindered: Private Conclusions and Life Outcomes

10.02.2022

---

To start out this morning

Let me tell you a story about a guy named Nick

Nick *is* his name

But that's probably not how you know him

You know Nick because he was a scientist

But that would have been surprising to him

And to those who knew him

Because although Nick had a PhD

It wasn't in science

He didn't really work as a scientist

That was almost like a hobby for him

He worked as a businessman

An administrator

A manager

But those aren't the reasons why you know him

His PhD was in Canon Law

Which is a study of Catholic legal principles

But Nick wasn't a priest

And, again, his work in the church is not why you know

His name

You know Nick because he solved

A scientific debate of his time

And that would have maybe surprised him also

Because, again, he wasn't really a scientist

Scientists of his day

Had two theories

That they fought over

Let's call them theory 1

And theory 2

Some scientists believed theory 1

And they had facts that lined up behind it

Making theory 1 seem true

But we know now it wasn't true

Some believed theory 2

And they had different facts that lined up behind it

Making theory seem true

But we know now that theory 2 also wasn't true

Nick discovered that a belief

That almost all scientists of his day believed

A foundational idea that made theory 1 and theory 2 even possible

Nick discovered that this belief wasn't true

And all of us today know it's untrue

Elementary school science textbooks today

Will teach Nick's theory as truth

Without any real debate

In fact

If anyone today proposed *an alternative theory* today

They would be ridiculed

In much the same way that Nick's theory was ridiculed

When he proposed it

In fact – this is good

Nick was so insecure about his proposal

That the book he wrote

The one that made him famous

He published it under his assistant's name originally

He went back and forth with the publisher

For more than a decade before they would even publish it

And when they finally *did* publish it

They changed its name

Without his knowledge or permission  
And they added a “letter to the reader” at the front  
Also, without his knowledge or permission  
The letter to the reader basically said  
This book is just a theory  
Which doesn’t even pretend to be true  
So, don’t freak out

But people did freak out  
Even though it was true  
Because they were utterly convinced  
It was a lie

...

And now I’m going to make you wait

What lies

Does our culture today emphatically believe to be true?

What truths does our culture emphatically believe

But they’re actually lies?

Remember, the German people

*Freely* elected Hitler

Many of America's founding fathers – our politicians

Personally owned slaves

We all know, today

How heinous those two decisions were

None of us today

Would vote for someone from the Nazi party

Or would vote for someone who endorsed slavery

History reveals

Many blind spots

That were simply hidden at the time

I mean, heck

Some of us had blind spots

**That were simply hidden at the time {80's hair pic}**

---

Let me ask again:

What lies

Does our culture today emphatically believe to be true?

What truths does our culture emphatically believe

But they're actually lies?

This is a core piece of  
The Apostle Paul's letter to the Romans  
The Roman culture  
Had become corrupt and selfish  
And their behavior and lifestyles  
Were vile in the sight of God

So, Paul was exhorting the church in Rome  
To *act* differently  
To *believe* differently  
To think differently

**Romans 12:2a (NLT) - Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think.**

There are patterns in our world  
Paul says  
That do not align with the ways of God

If we're honest, we'd admit  
That there are patterns in each of our minds  
That do not align with the ways of God  
And it is imperative  
For the follower of Jesus

To allow God to transform you into a new person

How?

By changing the way you think

---

You see this all throughout Scripture

Amy & I were talking just the other day

And she had this brilliant insight

And you thought she was just

Prettier than me

So, Moses had been adopted

By Pharaoh's daughter

But he knew that

He was Hebrew

So, one day

He leaves the palace

And goes out to where his people lived

And he sees

Maybe for the first time

An Egyptian picking

On a Hebrew

**Exodus 2:11-12 (NIV) - One day, after Moses had grown up, he went out to where his own people were and watched them at their hard labor. He saw an**

**Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his own people. Looking this way and that and seeing no one, he killed the Egyptian and hid him in the sand.**

“Hid him in the sand”?!?

This is like an episode from the Soprano’s or something

Moses is a gangster!

So, he goes back to the palace

And he must’ve thought to himself

I got away with it

Nobody saw me

I really am a gangster

So, the next day

He goes back out to the Hebrew area

But this time

He sees two Hebrews fighting with each other

He steps in – just like before

And intervenes

**Exodus 2:14 (NIV) - The man said, “Who made you ruler and judge over us? Are you thinking of killing me as you killed the Egyptian?” Then Moses was afraid and thought, “What I did must have become known.”**

No more gangster

Now that's a key text

For the history of Moses

Pharaoh finds out

He pursues Moses

Moses flees to Midian

It's a key text for Moses

But I think it's also a key text for us

Because for forty years

This scene played out in Moses' mind

"Who are you?"

"Who made you ruler and judge over us?"

"Who do you think you are?"

---

Fast-forward forty years

God comes to Moses

It's time for him to pursue his destiny

God speaks to him from a burning bush

Calls him to go to Pharaoh

And what does Moses say?

What's his first response to the call of God?

Look carefully

**Exodus 3:11 (NIV) - But Moses said to God, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?"**

Moses' deep insecurity

The lie that Moses has internalized

Becomes the obstacle to his faith

"Who am I?"

Notice God doesn't chastise him for feeling that way

He doesn't get mad

He simply says,

It'll be ok

**Exodus 3:12 (NIV) - And God said, "I will be with you."**

The salve for Moses' deepest wound

The salve for *our* deepest wounds

Is the very presence of God

The balm for our most pressing insecurities

Is walking... in the presence... of our Creator

**James 4:8a (NIV) – Come near to God and He will come near to you.**

You were designed to live

Close to God

Near to Him

Many of us sit here this morning

    Unsure of where we stand with God

Have I done too much?

    Have I gone too far?

James promises us

    That what we need most

Is readily available

    Come near to God and He will come near to you

---

Let me ask again

    But let me be a little more direct this time

What lies

    Do you emphatically believe to be true?

What truths do you emphatically believe

    But they're actually lies?

This is where this unhindering process

    Gets real

This is where

    The rubber hits the road

**Let me show you a great diagram**

That the authors created  
That shows us where we get off track

**The events in our life**

The words and events that shape our heart  
And the sore spots from living in a broken world

**Create faulty logic**

In our mind and heart

And from that logic

**We create strategies**

Some people call them “defense mechanisms”  
Some people call them “survival techniques”  
But we strategically devise ways  
To survive in a broken world  
With beliefs and truths  
That sincerely feel true to us

**We hide**

**Or live in denial**

**We settle**

**Or become very independent**

**We numb ourselves**

Through shutting down

Or thru activities and addictions

To numb us

**We may compartmentalize our life**

**Or be overly driven to achievement**

To somehow prove our worth

**We become control freaks**

**Or stay super busy**

**Or choose unhealthy coping mechanisms**

This list leads to a lot of pain

And a lot of confusion

But this list is familiar

To many of us

**But God has a different plan in mind**

God wants to transform you into a new person by changing the way you think

**He wants to rewrite those painful parts of your past**

So that they become a place of strength

**2 Corinthians 1:3b-4 - God is our merciful Father and the source of all comfort. He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us.**

God doesn't cause all of the difficult things in our lives

But He can utilize them

They're experience for us

And He's not going to waste that experience

So, when He leads *you* through it

He'll have you help lead someone else through it

And that brings purpose and meaning to your pain

He comforts us in all our troubles

So that we can comfort others.

Then, as He transforms the way that we think

**Our heart logic will be healthy and strong**

**Which will lead us to Truth and strategies**

That actually work in our lives

And that's good news

That's hope

And sometimes

Sometimes

Hope is the starting point to healing

**Proverbs 12:25 (NIV) - Anxiety weighs down the heart, but a kind word cheers it up.**

God is not saying that one kind word

Fixes everything you're facing

But kind words bring hope

And hope... over time... can bring great healing

---

Let's go back

And finish Ole Nick's story

From the beginning of the message

**Nicolaus Copernicus**

Was born in 1473

Although astronomy and science

Were always a part of his life

It never was the main focus of education

Or the main focus of his career

And yet

This is a true story

On his death bed

**His seminal book**

Proposing a helio-centric view of the universe

That the earth revolved around the sun  
Instead of the sun and planets revolving around the earth  
His newly published book  
Was placed in his hand for the first time  
On his death bed

After his death

For hundreds of years  
The debate about his theory raged on in the scientific community

Some called it “interesting”

Others believed it was “dangerous”

Some thought it was “ridiculous”

Others said it was “heresy”

Because everyone just *knew*

That the earth was the center of our universe

Anything else, they believed

Was a lie

Once people changed that mindset

It’s hard to convince yourself

That you’re not the center of the universe

But once people changed that mindset

It opened the door for them to see clearly

About everything else

---

That's the same decision

We face today

Many of us

I would likely say all of us

Certainly, I would include me

Have lies in our heart

In our emotions

And in our thinking

That we sincerely believe to be true

And those lies hinder us

Those lies cause us pain

And lead us to cause pain to others

And God wants to set us free

The pathway forward

To unhinder ourselves

Involves increased trust *in* God

Believing in His Word

Believing in His claims about us

And involves increased submission *to* God

Yielding our hearts to Him

**Proverbs 3:5-6 (NIV) - Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to Him, and He will make your paths straight.**

Trust God with all of your heart

All of your emotions

All of your thinking

Trust the Lord

And lean not on your own understanding

On your own emotions

On your own thinking

In all of your ways submit to Him

And He will make your paths straight

I love the Contemporary English Translation of verse 6

**Proverbs 3:6 (CEV) - Always let Him lead you, and He will clear the road for you to follow.**

That imagery just grabbed me

The picture of God

Clearing a path for us

In a dense jungle

Sometimes

For some of us  
The clearing that's needed  
Is just minor  
A little weed eating  
Maybe pull a few weeds  
Minor

Other times  
The task for our God  
Is extreme

We feel like we're in a dense jungle  
With lots of undergrowth  
And vines  
And pitfalls  
And dangers

So, when Proverbs says:  
"He will clear the road for you to follow"  
That can mean different things  
To different people  
At different times in their life

For those of us

I'm choosing my pronouns carefully  
For those of *us*  
Who feel a little more like dense jungle  
And a little less like a weedy subdivision sidewalk  
Let me give you a word of encouragement  
Today

**This is an actual picture of a jungle in New Zealand**

**So is this**

You don't have to have the whole forest cleared  
If you have a pathway thru  
You don't have to be as powerful as the Pharaoh  
If God is *with* you  
And you don't have to have all the answers  
Because you can trust in God

But submitting to God

May require you to change some of your assumptions

Submitting to God

May require you to let God transform you into a new person

By changing the way you think

I want to invite you

Beg you, honestly

To submit all your thinking to God

That He may transform your thinking