

## **Sermon June 13, 2010**

### **Building the Bridge**

**Mark 10:17-22, 28-31**

**Summary:** Every person who ever met Jesus was confronted with the challenge to change. The change to which Jesus calls us demands more than adopting some new behaviors. It calls us to build the Bridge from where we are to the transformation that only God can accomplish in our lives.

## **I. Now What?**

### ***A. Graduation!***

#### **1. What a feeling!**

- a) You've taken the last exam.**
- b) You've sat through the last school assembly.**
- c) You've ridden the bus for the final time – no more rush to the mail box with a pop tart hanging out of your mouth.**

**2. You put on a funny gown and even more ridiculous-looking cap with a tassel that wants to get in your eye.**

**3. You hear the principal read your name, your family and friends cheer, your teachers sigh a sigh of relief, and you are done – ready for the next adventure.**

### ***B. Now what?***

1. Just one question hangs in the air – mostly unspoken, except by well-meaning, but meddlesome adults.
2. The question: “Now what?”
3. The short answer: “Life.”
  - a) Or, as my kids put it, “Real life.”

### ***C. Now What?***

1. We know that just flipping your tassel from one side of your face and receiving an important-looking piece of paper from the school superintendent does NOT automatically launch you into your new life.
  - a) “Now what?” means stepping into the biggest change you have ever experienced, bigger even than your first bus ride to kindergarten.
2. In fact, we face this question over and over again in our lives.
  - a) When we drive away from the honeymoon,
  - b) When we bring the baby home from the hospital,
  - c) When we watch our baby march down the aisle in her cap and gown,
  - d) When God calls us down a New Path.
3. Now what?
  - a) So just how do we make the changes and discover the future that only God can give us?

## **II. Change**

### ***A. Ready for a Change***

1. Mark tells us about a man who had come to the place in his life where he felt the need for change:

a) **Mark 10:17 NIV** As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. “Good teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

2. Here was a man who was evidently dissatisfied with his present condition.

a) He **RAN** to Jesus.

b) He **FELL** on his knees.

c) He posed the **Big Question** about the very meaning of Life itself.

3. He is ready to try something new: “What must I do?”

### ***B. The Present Reality***

1. Jesus starts by asking the man about his present reality:

a) **Mark 10:18 NIV** “Why do you call me good?” Jesus answered. “No one is good – except God alone.

b) **Mark 10:19 NIV** “You know the commandments: ‘Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony, do not defraud, honor your father and mother.’”

2. The man answers that he has already done all of those things:

a) **Mark 10:20 NIV** “Teacher,” he declared, “all these I have kept since I was a boy.”

3. But the man senses that there must be something more – something he’s missing and that Jesus has to offer.

4. If he can just find out **WHAT TO DO**, he’ll be able to make the necessary change and inherit eternal life.

### ***C. The Starting Point***

1. The first thing we look for when we feel the need to change is something to DO.
2. Think about the last time you tried to lose weight or get in better shape:
  - a) You probably signed up for a program, bought a book, ordered CDs or joined a gym.
  - b) Then you put in motion a series of actions.
  - c) You hopefully saw some immediate results from you actions.
  - d) Taking action is good and necessary: it gets us moving in a new direction.
3. But then what happened?
  - a) If you're like most of us, after a while you found your resolve beginning to slip.
  - b) You missed a day at the gym; you snuck an extra piece of pie before bed.
  - c) You know the story.
4. In order to truly change we must do more than change our actions; we must be transformed on the inside.

### **III. Transition**

#### ***A. Ants' Nests and other changes***

1. Did you ever lift up a rock or log and discover that there was an ants' nest underneath it?
2. So what happens?
  - a) The ants start running around all over the place.
  - b) It looks like the ant-world version of the End of the World.

c) But if you look more closely you might notice that the ants are up to something.

3. In each ant's mouth you will see an ant egg.

a) The ants – faced with catastrophic change – are ensuring the success of their nest.

b) And their behavior demonstrates one of the most important things that we must do when we face change: **DECIDE WHAT TO TAKE WITH US AND WHAT TO LEAVE BEHIND.**

### ***B. Transition***

1. People who research the science of change tell us that long-term change is actually a three-step process:

a) Change

b) Transition

c) Transformation

2. When we see the ants running around with eggs in their mandibles we are seeing Transition.

a) The ants have discovered that their world has drastically changed.

b) And now they are working as hard as possible to transform a destroyed nest into a safe home once again.

c) That means a very busy time of **TRANSITIONING** from the old reality to the new one.

3. You might think of **TRANSITION** as a bridge that we build from where we were to where we want to be.

### ***C. Just One Thing***

**1. Jesus challenges the man who wanted to change to step out and build a Bridge of Transition:**

a) **Mark 10:21 NIV Jesus looked at him and loved him. “One thing you lack,” he said. “Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”**

**2. Note that Jesus gives him 4 commands – commands that identify what to TAKE with him and what to LEAVE BEHIND:**

a) **“Go sell everything you have and give to the poor” – what you leave behind.**

b) **“Then come, follow me.” – what you take with you.**

**3. If you’re going to build the Bridge of Transition you have to decide what to leave behind and what to take with you.**

a) **When you build a bridge you can’t take everything on the bank with you to the other side.**

b) **In fact, not everyone will choose to build the bridge and cross to the other side with you.**

**4. It’s not enough to just want to change or to engage in some new behaviors; real change means taking the time to build a Bridge of Transition.**

a) **And, funny thing, you build the bridge AS you walk on it.**

b) **You start living bits and pieces of the new reality that is your ultimate goal.**

c) **You start seeing the world differently – you are building a Solution, not just griping about the Problem!**

## **IV. Transformation**

### ***A. Too hard***

**1. For this man building the Bridge of Transition was “too hard.”**

**a) Mark 10:22 NIV At this the man’s face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth**

**2. He wanted to change some actions, but he didn’t want to BE changed – transformed.**

**3. So, he went back to his stuff – sad, but not sad enough to follow Jesus!**

### ***B. Eternal Life***

**1. The irony of this story is that the man walked away from the thing he most wanted to inherit!**

**a) Mark tells us that “Jesus looked at him and loved him.” Mark 10:21 NIV.**

**b) The implication is that Jesus embraced him – offering him a full and eternal relationship.**

**2. And after all, that relationship IS eternal life.**

**a) John 17:3 NIV “Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.”**

**3. Eternal Life was RIGHT THERE in front of him in the here and now saying “Come, follow me!”**

**a) Eternal Life was saying, “I’ll help you build the Bridge of Transition to the new life that God has for you.”**

**b) Eternal Life was saying, “Let’s go for it! It starts now. You don’t have to wait until the end of time to see if you qualify.”**

**4. But he couldn’t see past his wallet, so he walked away from building the Bridge of Transition to Transformation.**

### ***C. First or Last?***

**1. The story ends with Jesus talking to Peter about the New Life that they had discovered and the Transformation that was happening to them:**

**a) Mark 10:28 NIV Peter said to him, “We have left everything to follow you.”**

**b) Mark 10:29 NIV “I tell you the truth,” Jesus replied, “no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel**

**c) Mark 10:30 NIV “will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age (homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields – and with them, persecutions) and in the age to come, eternal life.**

**d) Mark 10:31 NIV “But many who are first will be last, and the last first.”**

**2. Jesus tells Peter, in effect, that he is a new person with a totally new identity:**

**a) A new home**

**b) A new family**

**c) A new wealth**

**d) A new future**

**3. But is only when we move past changing a few things about our lives and out onto the Bridge of Transition that the Transformation process can begin.**

**4. It doesn't matter who's out front at the beginning, but who steps onto the other side of the Bridge of Transition into God's New Reality.**

#### ***D. Building the Bridge***

**1. Okay, so you're feeling like the ants whose log has just been rolled away.**

- a) **You see big changes coming.**
- b) **What to take with you/ what to leave behind?**
- c) **You feel like you have to do something – but what?**

**2. Make up your mind to take with you the ONE thing that matters most.**

- a) **He is standing here beside you offering to help you build that bridge to a whole new life.**
- b) **He knows the way.**
- c) **He IS the way.**
- d) **Dare to follow Him.**

**3. And then, start building!**