



## **2016-2017 Strength to Stand Conference Curriculum**



*Below, you will find the general outline for what you can utilize as a small group time or format as a sermon. We will provide you with the nuts and bolts to effectively prepare and communicate during these 4 sessions leading up to your conference. You will need to insert your own personal stories and also make sure that you personalize it for your group. If you need anything to help you in this journey, please know that we are here for you and love partnering with student ministries.*

1. Intro
2. Certain Confession
3. Finally Innocent
4. No Shame
5. Close

*Appendix: Small Group Questions*

## **1. Introduction of Redeem.**

Going to a fair can be expensive! Though it always ends up being a good time, it tends to cost more than you planned. Rides that are going to take you 20 feet up in the air that were unpacked from a trailer just hours earlier...well, that's just terrifying. Typically, when you go to a fair, you have to purchase a ticket to get in the gate and then more tickets to get on rides – each one taking cash from your pocket. You walk to the ticket gate and hand them your ticket and the host says, "Thanks. C'mon in." You go to a ride and you give a ticket to the operator and he says, "Thank you." and you walk to to find your seat. The ride starts and you smile. A Lot. As you get off the ride you realize it was a ton of fun and you want to ride again. You grab a ticket to jump on. You are ready to *redeem* your ticket.

The ticket's purpose is to be *redeemed*. This is, at its core, its value. Its worth is found upon being *redeemed*. A carpenter takes an old house and remodels it, *redeeming* it. A car enthusiast buys an old car and restores it, *redeeming* it.

As someone walking on this planet, being *redeemed* by Christ will expose you to truths that you never knew could exist. By Christ *redeeming* you, you find your true identity. Your identity is that you are a child of King Jesus. Your worth. You're worth more than you could ever imagine. You're worth God allowing His Son, Jesus, to be sacrificed so that you could have a full relationship with Him. Your nature. Your nature is to worship and by being *redeemed*, your worship has an infinite God of Salvation to point towards and stand in awe of. Your joy. Your joy will be made complete upon being *redeemed* because you will experience forgiveness, grace, hope, peace and love like never before. Your joy will be made true because you will see and savor Jesus.

## **2. Certain Confession**

For the fair ticket to be *redeemed*, it has to be handed to the ticket taker. The ticket taker is waiting at the gate. He is easy to see because he is the one that is standing and giving people access into the park. He is the gatekeeper and loves to welcome people in. He sees you and reaches out his hand implying you have to give the ticket to him.



Jesus has reached out to you through the cross and the empty tomb. It's actually quite astonishing to think that King Jesus is welcoming you into a real relationship that spans all of eternity. This eternity is one of people fully *redeemed* by Jesus' blood and resurrection through the power of God. He has reached out his hand to you and is waiting for you to respond by handing him your ticket...that is yourself.

Romans 10:9 say, *"because, 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."*

*Application:*

How are you *redeemed*?

- 1) **Confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord.** This is an understanding of realizing Sin has dominated your life and that you are ready to be set free. Scripture tells us "if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed." By confessing with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, it is you confessing Jesus as your Lord.
- 2) **Believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead.** We understand that "with our heart" in our time means, "everything within us believes". Do you believe that Jesus was crucified and then raised from the dead? If so, that is by faith and that is the point your salvation begins. Amen!
- 3) **You will be saved.** Once you have confessed Jesus is your Lord and that you believe God raised him from the dead...YOU ARE SAVED. There's not a waiting process or 10 step system, you are instantly given new life. Catch that? You are made new.

This verse makes our confession certain. When the gatekeeper takes your ticket, there is no question as to if you can get in or not. You can. With Jesus, when you truly confess him as Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, there is no question. You are now *redeemed*!

Have you been *redeemed*?

### 3. Finally Innocent

Scripture goes even further than just to confess and believe, but gives us an assurance that is absolutely breathtaking. Romans 10:10 say, *"For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved."*

The word "justified" is such a powerful word in the *redeeming* process. When you walk up to the gatekeeper to give him your ticket, he takes it and knows that it has been paid for and that the value of the ticket has been purchased.

You, likewise, have been purchased at a great price, that being, Jesus. When you are *redeemed*, Jesus' life covers yours and you are justified. This means, you are instantly made right with God. All your sins and your past is now gone and you have right standing with the God of the universe, because Jesus paid the debt of your life.



Paul is writing in a circle from Romans 10:9, because he sees this as the utmost important thing you can do in your entire life.

*Application:*

1. You are justified because you realize, identify and believe Jesus died and was raised from the dead.
2. You are saved because you believe and you confess. There is no delay, you are saved.

#### **4. No Shame**

Can you imagine walking up to the gatekeeper, giving your ticket, being let in and then 20 minutes later, he comes and finds you and tells you that you have to leave? He does this right in front of all your friends and it ruins your whole night. This cannot happen, because your ticket was purchased and *redeemed*.

If you are *redeemed*, there is no need to worry about ever being rejected by Jesus.

Romans 10:11 says, *“For the Scripture says, “Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame.”*

*Application:*

1. We must hang on to the promise that Jesus will never put us to shame as his Children.
2. If you hear a voice in your head/heart that keeps pointing you to the past, know that that voice is not Jesus, but our enemy. Jesus only points you forward into more likeness and fullness in Him. The enemy comes to make you believe you have no worth.

#### **5. Close**

Have you been *redeemed*? Jesus has come, paid the price of death, was raised by God and is alive today. He is the gatekeeper. The power is that He is not only the gatekeeper, but also the purchaser and He is just waiting for you to enter into the Kingdom.

To be *redeemed*, there must be a certain confession. This certain confession makes you finally innocent. It is beautiful. It is powerful.

[Invitation]



## **Appendix: Small Group Questions**

### **Introduction to Redeemed**

1. How does culture define your worth? (i.e. Money, Position, Popularity, Possessions)
2. How does knowing this cause you to live your life?
3. How is Jesus counter cultural?

### **Certain Confession**

1. How are you redeemed?
2. Would anyone be willing to share about when they confessed Jesus as Lord?
3. Why is it easy to do it here, but not “out there”?
4. Ask students to discuss the importance of Jesus being raised from the dead. (Answer: without Jesus being raised from the dead, we have no hope for the future. This is what separates Christianity from every other religion. Jesus died, was raised, to never die again.)

### **Finally Innocent**

1. In your own words, what does it mean to be justified?
2. Have you ever had a time in your life that you needed to be justified?
3. Does knowing that it's Jesus that justifies you help you trust in salvation more?

### **No Shame**

1. How do you feel when you read that Jesus will never put you to shame?
2. Does this give you confidence to walk closer to Jesus?
3. How do the promises of God give you hope?



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1. Intro
2. Not the Same
3. A New Walk
4. Renewal
5. Close

*Appendix: Small Group Questions*

## **1. Introduction of Renew**

When a baby is born, it is called a “newborn”. People describe them as cute and cuddly and say they want to “pinch their little cheeks”.

*[Insert a funny story of either your child or someone else’s child when they were a newborn]*

Even though that little baby looks innocent, the Bible says we are born sinful. Psalm 51:5 says, “Surely I was sinful at birth...” We grow in our neediness and we have massive wants. I want this and I want that. We become more self-indulgent and look to worldly things. As we grow into our teen years, we become obsessed with self and the ideologies of our cultures. Sin is exposed in our lives and we come to the point, like last week’s look at the word “redeem,” that causes us to look at our lives to see if we truly know Jesus.

It’s an odd idea, knowing we were once a newborn, that we must get to the point of understanding the word *renew* has massive implications on our life. We each must be “made new” in Christ. Once you are redeemed, your life is *renewed*.

## **2. Not the Same**

A newborn has no understanding of sin or their need for Jesus. Newborns simply want to be held, smiled at, fed and changed. It’s when the 2-year-old stage hits that rebellion and selfishness takes hold of our hearts, but we still have no knowledge of our wrong, but that our parents or others tell us no. We are ignorant in understanding why.

Ephesians 4:17-19 says, “*Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity.*”



This is a large, tough scripture to digest because it brings us a point of investigating our maturity in Christ. Just as the newborn has to learn how to walk, the *renewed* do also. The question that we must ask ourselves, “Are we walking, even if by stumbling?” In this passage, Paul has laid down the gauntlet of those that are redeemed and *renewed* and those that are not. He is describing the former life and reminding the church at Ephesus to no longer walk in it.

*What is he warning against?*

1. Not knowing or pursuing God.
2. Hardness of Heart
3. Impurity (Sin-Filled)

Why is this important? Because those that walk the old way are testifying/stating that they are not walking with the Lord. As a newborn grows and begins to understand why it is getting in trouble, they learn to stop. It’s when that child continues to do this and dishonor its parents that the proof of rebellion exists.

You see, as one that has been made new again (*renewed*), we are not the same. We are now seeking after God with our whole self. We posture our hearts to be molded instead of hardened. We are not seeking to sin, but repent of our sins and seek to honor the Savior. While we are in this world, we are not of it.

### **3. A New Walk**

Paul is starkly contrasting the previous verses to the following verses:

In Ephesians 4:20-22, the Bible says, “*...But that is not the way you learned Christ! —Assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires...*”

When the newborn grows they learn how to turn over, crawl, stand, and walk. Next thing you know they are running. The child never forgets these skills and only continues to learn and perfect them. That child won’t go back to crawling, because they know that it’s much better to walk.

You have sat here week after week and heard the Gospel. Some of you have been redeemed and made new by Christ. Many of you have had a relationship with Christ for a long time. You have chosen to put off your old self and former life and push on towards Christ.

*So, lets take some time to encourage one another.*

1. Praise God that you have heard and responded to the call of Jesus on your life.
2. Praise God you were taught the truth of Jesus and what it means to be made new.
3. Praise God that you are no longer left to fend for yourself, but are running to the prize that is Jesus.
4. Praise God that your former life is just that - former.
5. Praise God that your new life has come.



*Some observations through questions:*

1. Have you fully put off your old self? Are you done with sin? Keep in mind, this doesn't mean you are sin free, but are you pursuing holiness?
2. Do you understand that being taught in Jesus is the blessing that puts you on the path to righteousness?

Friends, putting off the old self is crucial to putting on the new self in Jesus. For a child to learn how to walk, it must make the decision to let go of the table for balance and look ahead for the next step. For you and I to fully pursue Christ, we must let go, fully, of our old ways and have a new walk totally dependent on the direction and power of Christ.

#### **4. Renewal**

When we get right down to it, what does it mean to be in a state of *renewal*? Scripture has an answer for us.

There is a process that scripture lays out for us. It's astounding how, just like a parent teaching the child how to walk, Scripture gives us our next step, then the next and so on.

In the last two verses, we were told to put off our old selves, but then what do we do? How many of you have been there before? "Okay Lord, I have said yes to salvation. I have said I am tired and done with sin. I want to know you, Lord." But then after saying those things, you don't know what to do next. Read Ephesians 4:23-24 with me.

Ephesians 4:23-24 says, *"...and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness."*

*This is your answer. What does it mean to be "renewed"?*

1. **Renewed in the spirit of your mind.** Your mind must be pointed towards the things of Jesus. Your mind is *renewed* when Heaven is its focus. No matter what your circumstance or situation is, you still see Jesus as your joy. When life becomes what is seemingly, "too hard" or even if everything seems to be "falling into place"; your mind is constant in its pursuit of Christ. When the Gospel is at the core of your thoughts, your mind is *renewed*. It's a process, but it begins the instant you're redeemed.
2. **Put on the new self.** Putting on the new self means you have taken off the old self. Before Christ, you couldn't help but sin and rebel. Actually, you were chained to it (next session). By putting on the new self, you see that you are free from your old life and sin and now are able to live a life in a manner worthy of the Gospel. You are made new (*renewed*) because you have been redeemed.
3. **See your new identity.** Scripture is clearly stating that when you put on your new self, you see that you are "created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness." It isn't because you did something, but because He did everything. You are His because he created you, called you and rescued you. He gave you a new mind and a



new self. He has made you completely new. Your life has been *renewed* by the living God. He is the one that created you in His likeness. This has given you true righteousness and holiness. You inherit this righteousness and holiness because of Christ redeeming you and making you new!

### 5. Close

As we consider what it means to be *renewed*, we must remember that we were once a new one. When you were born, our parents had dreams of what you might be like, what you might become, what you might do. Parents and family members love(d) to love you and had thoughts towards you. As you have grown into a teenager those dreams are still there, but you likely have your own dreams now also. Think about this for a moment.

God, when speaking the universe into existence, thought about you. His thoughts, according to scripture, outnumber the grains of sand on the seashore. That's astounding. His plan was and is to redeem you and give you a new life. His hope for you is Himself. Today, don't harden your hearts, but understand that the Lord is for you and wants to *renew* your life. He wants to rid you of guilt and fill you with hope. Our God is transforming you into your new self.

[Invitation]



## **Appendix: Small Group Questions**

### **Introduction to Renew**

1. What do you think about when you think about your sin being exposed?
2. How does that cause you to be more thankful for being redeemed?
3. How do you see being redeemed and being *renewed* as two different things?

### **Not the Same**

Read Ephesians 4:17-19 aloud then follow with these questions:

1. What is the very first thing that stands out and why?
2. Is it easy to walk the very way we are told not to any longer?
3. What is Paul warning against?
4. How can these 3 verses be seen as encouragement?

### **A New Walk**

Read Ephesians 4:20-22.

1. What's the most influential truth about Jesus you have ever heard?
2. How does that truth impact your daily living?
3. As a result of this impacting your life, how has your relationship with Christ grown?

### **Renewal**

Read Ephesians 4:23.

1. What action words stand out in this verse?
2. What are the 3 things happening in this verse?
3. What does it mean to be made new?



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1. Intro
2. Shackled
3. Reality
4. Free Indeed
5. Close

*Appendix: Small Group Questions*

### **1. Introduction of Release.**

[Add a story of a time you or someone you know was trapped and someone had to help to get free].

When you're trapped, you're trapped. It can be a desperate situation. Think about a person who is in jail. They are trapped with no chance to walk around freely or come and go as they please. They have to sit in a cell until a guard opens the door and instructs them where to go. What if someone came up to a life-sentence inmate and said, "You are free to go. Your debt is paid. You are released?" Don't you think that person would sprint out of the cell? YES!

Today, we are talking about being *released* - *released* from sin and shame and *released* into freedom and life with Christ. Jesus uses some pretty straightforward and powerful contrasts when He talks about being *released* into pure Gospel freedom.

### **2. Shackled**

Prisoners are locked up for a reason. They are not innocently incarcerated. Everyday, they sit and have to think about what they did and how they could have done things differently. They can't go free because of the crime they committed.

To be trapped or held captive by sin is something that we must understand to better grasp the power of being *released*. John 8:34 says, "*Jesus answered them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin.'*"

Have you ever been there? It's as if you can't stop. You try and try, but you just can't. The temptation is just too great. Or maybe it's a lie and then another to cover the one before. Maybe it's the trap of living in comparison to everyone and everything else.

Jesus uses a very harsh term. He uses the word "slave". A slave has no choice but to serve its master and in this case, He is referring to sin being our master. A slave isn't someone who can break free. They are chained to their master. Its harsh language, but Jesus doesn't shy away



from it. He wants us to see the brutality and the powerful reality of sin in our lives. Sin creeps in quietly and slowly and the next thing you know, it has become your master.

Also notice that no one is immune to this reality. Jesus says, “everyone who practices...” That’s you and me. We are all guilty of sin and understanding this brings a deeper understanding of the following verses.

### 3. Reality

John 8:35 says, *“The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever.”*

What an incredible word picture Jesus paints here. He brings up the fact that the slave cannot remain in the house forever. He has no right or ties to it because he does not own the house and does not live there. The slave comes in, works and reports, and then is required to leave. He does this day after day with no end in sight. He doesn’t have a seat at the table. He doesn’t have a room with a bed. He doesn’t even get to use the same bathroom.

But, then the tone shifts in the second half of this passage. Do you see it? “The son remains forever.” Just like that Jesus shifts to His purpose: the power of the Gospel. See the owners of the house are also the ones that can set a slave free from their life of oppression and bondage.

It’s as if Jesus had to tell us about the gravity of slavery to sin to better tell us about the great hope of the Son. The Son does remain forever. Jesus is displaying his power through these words. Jesus cannot be moved and will not move. He is flexing his muscles here and saying, “I am forever and a day. No one can come and take my home. No sin can enter my home and stay. Nothing can shake me, because I am here forever.”

It would be simple to stop there and make us stand in awe and understand that we are not worthy, because we are slaves to our sins.

The power Jesus has and the story He is telling only gets better. Check out the next verse. If this doesn’t get you fired up, check your pulse to make sure you are alive!

### 4. Free Indeed

John 8:36 says, *“So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.”*

Do you see it? Do you hear it?

The words “if the Son” are so massive and important. Read the verse again and hear what just happened here.

It’s the Son that remains in the house forever setting free the slaves that come into his home. This is powerful. It’s Jesus flexing again, but this time with even more power. It’s the power of grace and pardon. It’s a release that cannot be granted by anyone or anything else other than the Son that is in the house forever.



No matter where you look to be made free, none of those things can do what Jesus can do. He can release you from sin and your former self. He is releasing you from your life of slavery and setting you free. This is the Gospel. This is being redeemed. This is being renewed. This is the power of the *release* that Jesus, the Son grants. What's even more amazing is that He gives it to slaves. Slaves are property. They are just workers. Jesus, the Son, reaches his hand out to the slave and says, "I love you. You are *released* and free."

Could you imagine what someone sitting in a jail cell with a life-sentence would do if the guard informed them they were free to go – that all of their debts and crimes had been paid and forgiven? That prisoner is no longer a prisoner, but is released and free. He would get up and run out of the jail and tell everyone what just happened!

*Friends, your release is on purpose. You are released to:*

- Worship the Son
- Live in freedom from sin
- Enjoy your Savior
- Tell everyone about how they, too can be free.

## 5. Close

When we think of Jesus the Son we must also think of Jesus the powerful. You see, Jesus had and has the right to refuse anyone the miracle of *release* and the miracle of salvation. Instead, the Son that remains forever sets the captive slave free by His own blood and by His own word.

"Yes, Father, this one is mine" is spoken over you. The question that we must ask is do we respond with, "Yes, Jesus, I am yours."

*Have you been released?*

1. For those that are Christians, understand that your sin is of your choosing. You are no longer a slave to sin. You are now holy and righteous. You are now a child of the King. Don't let yourself be defeated by or enslaved to sin. You have been made free. You are free to get out of the cell. You are free to go live a life that is abundant in joy because the Son is with you.
2. For those that have not yet been set free, do you want to be? The sin that you have isn't just a choice, it's who you are. Before you are set free by Christ, you are shackled to yourself and your sinfulness. The depths of despair and the heartache from the sin in your life is a result of not having the Son *release* you...yet. Do you want to be *released*? *Released* from your shame, your guilt, and your sin? *Released* from your past or maybe even your present? The Son can and wants to do that today.

[Invitation]



## Appendix: Small Group Questions

### Introduction to Release

1. Anyone willing to tell of a time that they were trapped? *(This is a light- hearted question for fun. The tone you ask this question with is key.)*
2. Have someone share about when they felt like the Lord gave them release in a time they felt trapped. *(Suggestion: Ask the student beforehand so they can be prepared)*

### Shackled

*(The following questions may be better to print on piece of paper and have students answer privately. If your students are comfortable and transparent with one another, they will be fine with the following questions.)*

1. Have you ever been held captive or by sin as Jesus said, “A slave to sin?”
2. What so you typically become enslaved too?
3. What do you think about when you read Jesus using the term, “slave to sin”?

### Reality

1. Why can the slave not remain in the house forever?
2. Why can the Son remain forever?
3. Why is the shift in the tone of the verse significant?

### Free Indeed

1. The words “if the Son” are very significant for us. Why? *(Lead students into thinking where they seek other ways to find freedom, and then bring them back to these words. It has to be the Son to be truly free.)*
2. Processing being set free is interesting. What do you think about and how do you process being “free?”
3. What does being “free indeed,” mean? *(Lead to security in Christ.)*



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1. Intro
2. Authority to Live
3. Go All Out
4. Power and Peace
5. Close

*Appendix: Small Group Questions*

### **1. Introduction of Reckless.**

Living *recklessly* is an adventure that can have its ups and downs, turns and twists. A roller coaster is a great example. You trust the coaster, but as you are getting close to the cart, you have a big sense of jitters with a heightened sense of anticipation take over. You climb in the cart, pull down the locking system (praying it stays locked) and then the train starts to move. Then you realize you have zero control over the turns, the speed, the spins, the directions.... nothing. You make the first climb and then top the hill and what do you do? You throw your hands up and give in and just go for it. You laugh, maybe cry, you try to keep your eyes open, you look around, you have water coming out of your eyes and you have a thrill of the ride that you had no control over, but now know that through every turn, dip, spin and flip that the wait and the adventure was worth it, even when you didn't have control. The only decision you made was to get on. The rest was left up to the coaster operator.

For us to live *recklessly*, we must choose to get on the train and trust the operator. You have followed Christ and now it's time to walk by faith. The question is, "What does that mean?" It means living on purpose. It means living without control but complete trust that at the end, you will find it was all worth it. Let's unpack what a *reckless* life requires and looks like.

[Insert and tell a story of someone that you know of that lives *recklessly* (all out) for the Gospel]

How can this person live this way? It's because they trust the words of Jesus in the Great Commission in Matthew 28.

### **2. Authority to Live**

The roller coaster cannot start without a certified operator. At a theme park, a coaster operator goes through intense hours of how to start and stop coasters, what to look for in safety and how to correct errors. When an operator has completed their training, they are given the authority to command the staff around the coaster and the authority to start or stop any coaster they choose. They have complete authority over that ride.



Matthew 28:18 says *“And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.”*

Jesus has complete authority. His Father gave it to Him when He raised Him from the dead. This is not some average authority, but is the authority over all of life, salvation and redemption. Authority does not define Jesus, but Jesus defines authority. We must understand that biblical, holy authority is Jesus’ and not ours. If we were given this kind of authority it would be corrupted by our sin. But with Jesus conquering sin, He is incorruptible and wields this authority over, with and through us.

This authority is not just here on earth either. It’s of Heaven. That is some authority! The angels do as He pleases. Let that sink in. This is why when Jesus returns again, it will be as a conquering King that has no weakness and cannot be defeated. This authority is a total authority. There is nothing else like it.

To go one more step, the authority was given to him by the one that created it, God the Father. Remember that Jesus was fully God and fully man. When he died on the cross, some say he was in a battle with Satan (picture a fist fight), but the reality is that the battle was already won, because God didn’t need to “fight” He simply said, enough. Rise Jesus. Rise and defeat sin by defeating death. Earthly death is a result of earthly sin originating in the Garden of Eden. Adam died and is still dead. God sent His Son to pay a debt we couldn’t and to defeat a death that we could not. When God raised Jesus, He gave him “all authority” because He walked fully with the Father, was sinless and was the fullness of God with us. The authority given still rules today! It’s an eternal, all encompassing authority.

If you have been redeemed, renewed and released, then understand the following is for you under and in the authority of Jesus. This is a massive time together.

### **3. Go All Out**

Matthew 28:19 says, *“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”*

Jesus says (In His Authority) for us to “Go therefore...” The “therefore” is important to note because it means because of the previous things said or done, this what we are to do. So, to bring it together, “All Authority is mine and you are mine, so GO and make disciples.”.

If we are living under the authority of Jesus and in obedience to Him, what will stop us from living *recklessly*? What will stop us from getting in the cart, strapping in, and putting our hands up for the ride – totally surrendering control and trusting the operator?

It’s the jitters before getting in the cart, isn’t it? Those jitters cause us to continue to sit with the same people at the lunch table that we always do. They cause us to not surrender to that call of being a pastor, a missionary or a teacher. They trick us into thinking that this may be the wrong roller coaster. They cause us to doubt if we really want to ride. They cause us to look back and



forth between the operator and the cart, causing doubt to creep in. The jitters cause our stomach to turn and our palms to sweat. The jitters are a real deal.

What about authority? What about the name you have? What about the operator? We know that at the end of the ride, it will be stories that will be told of how incredible the ride was, but getting on is the challenge.

There are people all around you that are on the ride and they trust the operator. Here's an example:

[Tell of or have a student share about their journey to fulfilling the Great Commission in their life]

How can [insert previous name] do this? The authority of Christ over them is the only way.

When we get the authority of Christ right, we see the power of going and making disciples in the name of that authority. It's a beautiful picture. It's a powerful reality. We are redeemed, renewed and released so that we can live *recklessly* by going and telling others the Good News of Jesus!

#### **4. Power and Peace**

Matthew 28:20 say, *"teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

But Jesus doesn't just say, "I have authority" and "Go", but gives a promise that should make us stand up right where we are and say, my trust is with Him! This statement should give you a new sense of power and of peace.

"I am with you always,". Jesus Christ isn't some cosmic thing out there that we cannot have access to. We don't mindlessly tell others about Him out of blind obedience. He is WITH us. Catch it and think on this.

Jesus is given all authority, then gives us our purpose and then says... I am with you. Jesus, with all authority, is walking with you. The operator of the coaster isn't blind to the coaster. He sees the coaster. He sees the turns and twists and the places and the people you will encounter. He sees the jitters. He sees your eyes wandering around. He sees it all as the operator and He says, "You are not riding this alone, I am with you. I am watching you. I have a life for you to enjoy. Do not fear. Do not worry. I know the end and it is you with Me fully in Heaven. Get on the ride. Put your hands up in surrender and trust me."  
This is *reckless*.

We do have to finish with this observation. Jesus says, "Go and make disciples, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit." Simply put, we are on the front cart of the train and we have the responsibility of going everywhere and anywhere to find and lead others to



get on it with us. Simply put, we have a responsibility to go and share Christ with the world around us. We have the authority of Jesus with us, working through us. We have the command to go and make disciples. We have the promise that He is with us.

It's time to live *recklessly*.

## 5. Close

Over the last 4 weeks, we have walked through what it means to be:

- Redeemed
- Renewed
- Released

And today, we see that this is all so that we can see and join in the authority of Jesus in the redemption of the world. Friends, it is time for the church to rise up and take her place as a beacon of hope to the world. It is time for the student population to rise up with the authority of the Gospel of Jesus with full intent of leaving their old selves behind, having a new mind with a new self, and beginning a revolution in schools, malls, ball teams, clubs, homes, peer groups, churches, neighborhoods, cities, states, and countries. It's time for revival to take place, but it will take one person to stand up and say, "I am Redeemed. I am Renewed. I am Released. I will live Recklessly. All for the Gospel"

[Invitation to respond to the call of living recklessly]



## **Appendix: Small Group Questions**

### **Introduction to Reckless**

1. What's your favorite roller coaster? Why?
2. What makes you the most nervous about a new roller coaster?
3. What about the story shared stood out to you?

### **Authority to Live**

1. In your own words, define "All Authority" that Jesus mentions?
2. Does Jesus having "All Authority" comfort you or frighten you? Why?
3. Why does reading Jesus having the authority of Heaven and Earth matter?

### **Go All Out**

1. What does it mean to you when Jesus says, "Go and make disciples?"
2. What are your jitters?
3. How did [insert name here]'s story encourage you?

### **Power and Peace**

1. Jesus said, "I am with you always." Why did you need to hear that today?
2. Where/What is it that you need to go or surrender to doing?
3. Have student make a list somewhere (phones, back of bible, notecard) of 3 people they will begin to pray for specifically and pray about seizing an opportunity to share the Gospel with.