

## Raised to an abundant life

My name is Nick Vujicic and I'm 25 years old. I was born without arms or legs and given no medical reason for this condition. Faced with countless challenges and obstacles, God has given me the strength to surmount what others might call impossible. Along with that, the Lord has placed within me an unquenchable passion to share this same hope and genuine love that I've personally experienced with more than two million people all over the globe.

Traveling extensively to over 19 nations, I've been extremely humbled by the continuous opportunities that the Lord has given me to share my testimony along with the hope that I have in Jesus with people in so many nations and situations. My greatest joy in this life is to introduce Jesus to those I meet and tell them of His great desire to get to know them personally by allowing Him to become their Lord and Saviour.

God has used me to let people know in countless schools, churches, prisons, orphanages, hospitals, stadiums and in face-to-face encounters with individuals how very precious they are to God. Secondly, it's my pleasure to assure them that God does have a plan for their lives that is purposeful. For God took my life, one that others might disregard as having any significance and filled me with His purpose and showed me His plans to move hearts and lives toward Him. Understanding this, though faced with struggles, you can overcome too.

John 10:7-18 So Jesus again said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. <sup>8</sup> All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. <sup>9</sup> I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. <sup>10</sup> The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. <sup>11</sup> I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. <sup>12</sup> He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. <sup>13</sup> He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. <sup>14</sup> I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, <sup>15</sup> just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. <sup>16</sup> And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. <sup>17</sup> For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. <sup>18</sup> No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father."

### 1) Did Jesus come to give us new religion?

- If we go back to before this discourse of Jesus about entering the sheepfold, we see that Jesus was referring to the Pharisees as blind and whose guilt remains
  - When He then started speaking about the thief and robber that climbs into the sheepfold another way, He was referring to the Pharisees and the legal system of religion
  - He constantly opposed the Pharisees and teachers of the Law who weighed people down with their religious rules and codes of conduct.
  - They didn't only follow the Law of Moses, but added their own laws to the Law according to their own interpretation of the Law
- The origin of the word "religion" comes from the Latin religare which means "to bind" at a later stage it became the word religion, which means obligation or bond
  - Religion was intended to bind people to God, but instead ended up binding people to more rules, laws, and rituals that truly became a bondage to the people.
- Jesus did not come to give us a new religion. He did not come to exchange old laws for new ones. He did not come to replace old bondages with new ones.
- What Jesus focused on was what God wanted all along – relationship
  - He was speaking about His sheep and the sheepfold and the way into it
- The thieves and robbers tried to woo the sheep in false ways
  - They called them, but the sheep did not listen to them
  - They act like they care about the sheep, but when trouble comes they save themselves leaving the sheep at the mercy of wolves
  - They don't come to bless, but to steal, kill and destroy the sheep
- Jesus, on the other hand, knows His sheep and they know His voice
  - There's a relationship between them
  - They know that He cares about them, protects them, and even gives His own life for them

## 2) Raised to life to give life

- John 10:10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.
  - This is what Jesus came for – to give life; not to give religion; not to give a system of rules and regulations
- Those who are dead to God need legalistic religion, and that is what we were before we came to know Jesus
  - Ephesians 2:1-2 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins <sup>2</sup> in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience.
  - Ephesians 2:4-6 But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.
- We are grateful that Jesus laid down His life for us, but without Him having risen to life again He wouldn't have been able to give us life.
  - John 10:17 For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again.
  - A dead Saviour can't do anything for anyone, but a risen Saviour who is alive can give life to all who believe.
  - We can be grateful that Jesus didn't only die on the cross for our sins on Friday but that He also rose on Sunday to give us life
- John 14:6-7 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him."
  - Him giving us life isn't just so we can live forever, or have a better quality of life for ourselves; it's so that we can know the Father
  - It's in our relationship with Him that we experience the abundant life

## 3) The abundant life

- Jesus focused on relationship – relationship with the Father; relationship with His disciples, His disciples' relationship with the Father, and His disciples' relationship with each other
  - Life consists of the sum of our relationships with our relationship with God being the foundational relationship of all our relationships
  - It's from Him that His life flows into us and then through us
- This was God's intention from the beginning when He breathed His breath of life into Adam
  - Without God's breathe of life Adam would have merely been a dead shell
  - Without God's breathe of resurrected life our lives are meaningless without hope and without purpose
- The qualities of the abundant life
  - A life of wholesome relationships
    - 1 John 3:14 We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers.
  - Eternal life that's rooted in relationship with God the Father and the Son
    - John 17:3 This is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.
  - A life of purpose
    - 2 Timothy 1:8-10 Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God, <sup>9</sup> who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, <sup>10</sup> and which now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel
  - A life of peace
    - John 14:27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.