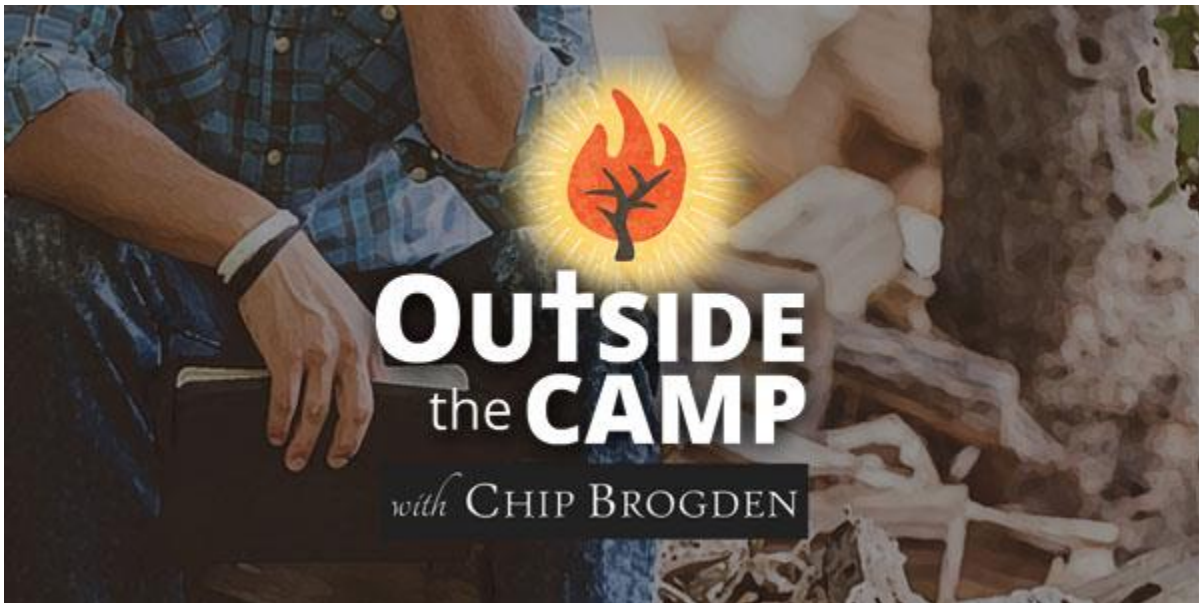


TRANSCRIPT

OUTSIDE THE CAMP WITH CHIP BROGDEN



EPISODE 0: Following Jesus “Outside the Camp”

Audio File Location:

<http://www.chipbrogden.com/otc-0-following-jesus-outside-camp/>

CHIP: Episode 0 of Outside the Camp with Chip Brogden. This is the “about me” episode, in case you’re joining us for the first time and you’re wondering, “Who is this guy and what is this show all about?” Episode 0 has all the answers, so let’s get started right now.

ANNOUNCER: Support for this program comes from listeners like you. To find out more, visit us online at ChipBrogden.com.

ANNOUNCER: Welcome to this edition of Outside the Camp with author and teacher Chip Brogden. Helping you discover the freedom and joy of a Christ-centered faith that is based on relationship, not religion. And now, with today’s message, here’s Chip Brogden.

CHIP: If you are burned out on religion, if you are fed up with church, if you don't feel as if you fit in to the popular Christian culture, and you are hungry and thirsty for truth on a deeper level, then my message to you is simple: You are not crazy, you are not alone, and now is the greatest opportunity of your life.

Welcome to Outside the Camp, the podcast for people who are learning what it means to follow Jesus without going to church. My name is Chip Brogden. I am an author, a teacher, and a former pastor. I dedicated my life to God when I was 8 years old. I began preaching when I was 13 years old. As a teenager, and into my 20s, I was a pastor and a worship leader in the largest Charismatic denomination in the United States. In my mid-20s, I had a “Road to Damascus” moment – and encounter with Jesus that radically changed the direction of my life and ministry. My eyes were opened to see the real Jesus, and my eyes were also opened to see everything wrong with the church. So, like many people do, I thought I would go back to all my church friends and tell them what God had shown me, and they would love me for telling them the truth and they would change. Of course you know that's not what happened. Instead, I was fired, and my wife and my two little girls and I were kicked out of the parsonage.

Let me say this to you from the beginning: getting kicked out of church was the best thing that could have happened to me. And I have learned the truth of this saying: you have to lose your religion before you can find your faith.

Now since that time, I have written several books, I've recorded thousands of hours of teachings, I've traveled all over the United States and other places, helping people discover the freedom and joy of a Christ-centered faith that is based on relationship, not religion. That is not just a slogan, a motto, or a catchphrase – this is exactly what my life's mission is all about, and it's the reason why I am here talking to you right now.

In the Bible, Mary discovered something sitting at the feet of Jesus that few people have ever really discovered. Jesus said only ONE THING is needed. Now isn't that amazing, when you consider all the things that religion says God wants and expects. Jesus said ONE THING is needed, and Mary has discovered it. So that's my mission: to help you discover that freedom and that joy of a Christ-centered faith. But what is that ONE THING? The ONE THING that is need?

Well, I'll give you a clue. The Bible says that Mary's sister, Martha, was stressed out because she was “much serving.” “Much serving.” Well, that certainly describes what my life used to be like in church, and maybe you can relate to that, too. “She was vexed with much serving.” Even serving Jesus! That's right, you can get a religious mindset about serving Jesus and become stressed out. I think that certainly explains why so many people in the ministry and so many people in church feel beat up, stressed out, tired. They invent all these things they think they are supposed to do to make God happy, and they vex themselves with much serving.

But to make matters worse, just like Martha, they spend too much time worrying about what everyone else should or shouldn't be doing! Right? Martha went to Jesus and complained about her sister Mary: “Lord, my sister has left me to serve alone! Speak to her and tell her to come help me!” Well, doesn't that sound familiar? Here's somebody working themselves to death trying to “serve Jesus” and then they start criticizing what someone else should be doing, trying to bring them into the same stressed-out, burn-out, crazy world they live in all the time.

How did Jesus respond? He said, “Martha, Martha. You are worried and troubled over many things, but only ONE THING is needed. Mary has discovered it, and it will not be taken away from her.” Jesus says only ONE THING is needed. What is that ONE THING? Well, it must be on the opposite side of all that serving and working being busy

for Jesus. What was Mary doing? She was sitting at His feet, hearing His Word. That’s all. Jesus is the ONE THING. He is the ONE THING. He is what it is all about. And all this other stuff we’re doing *for* Him just keeps getting in the way *of* Him.

Well, Mary discovered something, I discovered it many years ago, and I want to help you discover it if you haven’t already; and if you have, I want to help take you deeper. My mission is to help you discover, and to experience, the freedom and the joy of a Christ-centered faith. Some of you have never even experienced it. You may have gone to church all your life. You may have been in the ministry for years. But you aren’t free, you’re bound. You aren’t full of joy, you’re stressed out, depressed, frazzled, worn down, frustrated, maybe even disgusted. My friend, THAT is not what a Christ-centered faith is all about.

But you see, most people I meet haven’t discovered the freedom and joy of a *Christ*-centered faith because they have been living a *Church*-centered faith. They think everything God does and says revolves around church. Now, where did that idea from? From the church, of course! But where’s the fruit? Where’s the freedom and the joy? You won’t find it in a church-centered faith. You’ll only find it when you get rid of all those distractions and discover that only ONE THING is needed.

This Christ-centered faith is based on relationship, not religion. So we see that illustrated for us with Mary and Martha. Mary represents relationship and Martha represents religion. Mary sits at the feet of Jesus and puts Him first, Martha is busy running around and getting stressed out with much serving. Nothing wrong with serving and working. But when serving and working becomes more important than Jesus then we have a problem. And we know we have a problem when people are stressed out over it. There’s no freedom and joy in working to the point of being stressed out, doing things out of religious obligation or duty. And to make matter worse, when religious folks want

to criticize and condemn people who aren't working as hard as they are to please God. That's a problem!

It's hard to convey this to people who haven't discovered it yet. I once visited a ministers luncheon in Texas many years ago, and since I was guest from out-of-state, they asked me to say a few words. So I stood and said, "Brothers, I would like to remind you of ONE THING: that the work of the Lord is *not* the most important thing." They got reeeeeaaaal quiet, and they looked at me like I had just told a dirty joke. I said, "The work of the Lord is not the most important thing." And I just let that hang in the air for a minute. Then I said, "The *Lord* of the Work is more important than the *work* of the Lord."

It is, after all, a very simple truth – that Jesus is more important than church. Jesus is more important than the ministry. Jesus is more important than fellowship. Jesus is more important than doctrine and theology. Jesus is more important than the religion people created in His Name. And if you're not experiencing the freedom and joy of Christ, it's because you haven't discovered the ONE THING that Mary discovered, sitting at His feet.

ANNOUNCER: More of Jesus. Less of everything else. You're listening to Outside the Camp with Chip Brogden. www.ChipBrogden.com.

CHIP: The purpose of this program is to encourage and support those of you who are seeking the truth about Jesus and have been hurt, burned-out, and disillusioned with things said and done "in the name of Jesus" that have nothing to do with Jesus. I don't care if you're a believer or a non-believer, but if you have stumbled upon this program, I want you to know that Jesus loves you, He knows you, He knows where you are, He knows what you need, and He isn't telling you to go to church to meet Him there; but is

saying, “Come to Me and I will meet you right where you are, right now, if you only ask Me.” And I’m here to encourage and support you on your journey – to point you to Jesus.

Even if you still attend church, you’ll benefit from hearing the truth of the Word being taught without the filters of tradition. Many people who read my books and listen to my teachings still go to church. You’ll get the advantage of an outside perspective from someone who used to have an inside perspective – if you’re interested in hearing it! And if you still go to church but you’re getting the sinking feeling that something just isn’t right, something isn’t adding up, that there’s got to be more to the Christian life than what you’re seeing and hearing... if you feel that way then I hope that you will stick around and hear me out as a voice crying out to you from the wilderness - just one of many millions of people who are love God, and love God’s people, but they no longer go to church.

This is not about church-bashing or trying to persuade people to stop going to church if that’s where they think they need to be. Plenty of people (including me) have spoken out *against* something but not enough are speaking *for* something. What I am *for* is your freedom, and joy, and spiritual growth and maturity in Christ; what I am *against* is anything that gets in the way of that.

Now, maybe you were kicked out of church like I was. Maybe you just felt led by the Lord to stop going. Maybe you just outgrew church and you’re looking for a deeper walk with God, or you attended church as a child but then you grew up and you moved on. Maybe you just woke up one day and said, “I can’t stand it anymore.” Or, maybe you’re still going to church and you’re miserable and you’re looking for answers. I don’t know how you found me and how you came to be listening to me, but I’m glad you did.

Because my message to you, once again, is very clear: You are not crazy, you are not alone, and now is the greatest opportunity of your life.

There is a great big world outside of church, and God wants you to be set free - liberated from what I call “Churchianity.” To be free to follow Jesus in Spirit and in Truth, free to love God and free to love your neighbor, without being bound up and stressed out by the Spirit of Religion.

If you don’t know me then it’s also worth mentioning that I don’t just give opinions and theories, and I don’t ask you to just to take my word for anything, because I want you to take God’s Word. I believe that Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life, and that no one can come to God apart from Him. I believe that Jesus is the Living Word, but I also believe that the Bible is the written Word that reveals the Living Word. I believe that the Bible is infallible in its original languages - not necessarily in the modern translations - but that does not prevent me (and it shouldn’t prevent you) from reading and studying Scripture. I believe that all Scripture is profitable, that it contains the revelation of Christ, and is to be studied, taught, and obeyed. It is the objective standard against which all other teachings and utterances and prophecies are supposed to be measured. We need that objective standard, and Scripture provides that. Now, you need to know that so you can trust that I’m not just making things up as I go along, but what I write and what I teach is intended to be Christ-centered, Spirit-led, and Scripturally-based.

So the idea behind *Outside the Camp* – what does it mean? Well, “outside the camp” is based on Hebrews 13:13, which says, “Let us go forth to [Jesus], outside the camp, bearing His reproach.” And if you study the context of this Scripture, it’s talking about the failure of the religious system. It’s a comparison between what’s happening “inside the camp” – where the people are worshipping God, offering sacrifices, going through the religious motions; compared to what’s happening “outside the camp,” where we

discard all of the traditions of men, all the legalism, all the formality and religiosity and hypocrisy, and we go to be with Jesus outside the camp.

It is, to me, the difference between a religion *about* Jesus and a relationship *with* Jesus. For the Jews at that time, to follow Jesus meant to being cut off from their family, their friends, their community. You were ostracized, excommunicated, cut off. So, the person who wrote this letter in Hebrews is telling them they have a choice. They can stay where they are, and just keep going through the motions of religion, making the sacrifices, keeping the commandments, doing what is socially acceptable, staying “inside the camp” – or, they could go “outside the camp” and discover the freedom and joy of a Christ-centered faith that is based on relationship, not religion.

That was the crisis of the New Testament, of the early Jewish believers in Jesus. Christianity began as a revolution *inside* of Judaism. It was a movement, then a sect, then it began to grow and became inclusive of both Jews and Gentiles, and that created such a conflict that Christianity spun off completely from Judaism and became something new and different. And, if you lived in those days, you had to make a choice. Oh yeah, they tried to hold on to both, and it worked for a while, but at some point the differences became so great that they had to make a choice. Are you going to stay inside the camp? Are you going to keep going to the Temple, going to the synagogue, observing all the religious rules and regulations and traditions and customs? Or, are you going to go outside the camp to be with Jesus and bear His reproach – meaning, you’re willing to be ridiculed by family and friends, to be talked about, to be laughed at, to be cut off and cast out? It was a radical decision, a revolutionary and momentous thing, to make the decision that you’re going to give up your religion and follow Jesus outside the camp.

In the beginning, following Jesus was the most non-religious thing you could do. There was no temple. No synagogue. No church building. No denomination. When people met,

they met in their homes. There was no paid clergy. No professional preacher. No non-profit organization. No religious institution. Just people who loved God, loved Jesus, and loved one another. An amazing thing! A spiritual thing! The Holy Spirit filled them, moved them, inspired them, led them, and knit them together into a spiritual house of living stones.

Now, fast forward 2,000 years. The situation today is very similar, but look what has happened: a religion *about* Jesus has gotten in the way of a relationship *with* Jesus. The very thing that was begun as a non-religious movement of people who loved God and loved one another has now become the very thing that they were trying to move away from in the beginning. They were burned out on religion, buried under the weight of law and legalism and ceremony, and following Jesus meant experiencing freedom and joy and spirituality and a connection with God that didn't require conformity to a religious system.

They willingly suffered and many died because those religious folks – the same religious folks that persecuted Jesus – persecuted them too! Yet, here we are today. Christianity has become the very thing it was supposed to be rebelling against: traditions of men, legalism, religiosity, hypocrisy, formalism, denominationalism. In fact, what we have today is not even the Jesus-centered Christianity of the New Testament. It's not true Biblical Christianity, it's what I call *Churchianity*. Not Christianity. Churchianity. We have pastors, priests, popes, churches, cathedrals, thousands of denominations, each teaching their version of truth.

What's worse, the power of the Holy Spirit is missing. The love of many has grown cold. And the world looks at all of this and says, “You know what? If that's what it means to be a Christian, count me out!”

And so, something is taking place today that once took place 2,000 years ago in very similar circumstances. It's not a new movement, but the continuation, or the revitalization, or the rediscovering, of what it means to follow Jesus in simplicity and in truth. And the real, simple truth of the matter is that Organized Religion is the single greatest hindrance to a relationship with Jesus that I know of. It's not the devil. It's not the world. It's not all those mean, bad people out there. This religion about Jesus has gotten out of hand. It's become a monster. Instead of helping people, it's hurting people – or at least, it's hurting more people than it's helping.

We've made church attendance the definition of what it means to follow God. We've made our religious system the center of everything. Bearing in mind that Jesus never built a church for His followers, nor did He ever tell them to build a church. He said *He* would build His Church – or as I like to say, His *Ekklesia* – on *Himself*, and the gates of hell would not prevail against it, Jesus said. *Ekklesia* is the Greek word that gets translated as *church* in the Bible, but it doesn't mean “church” the way we think of “church.” *Ekklesia* means an assembly of called-out people. In the Bible it always means *people* – never a building, never a religious organization. So, “building the church” in the Bible meant encouraging, edifying, and loving one another. See? Jesus was building His Church as a spiritual house of living stones. Those early believers were called-out: called-out of darkness, and into light; called-out of sin, and into the fruit of the Spirit; called-out of religion and into relationship.

All of those things that came along afterwards – churches, professional clergy, denominations organizations – all of these are the inventions of carnal men, or even men with good intentions, but whether it was for good intentions or not, the end result is we turned the simplicity of following Jesus into a religion, and we ruined the relationship.

In my book, *The Irresistible Kingdom*, I provide a brief history of how the Church has become compromised. It’s a quote – I don’t know who made the quote, but here’s what it says:

“Christianity began in Palestine as a group of people who had a relationship with Christ. From there it traveled to Greece, where it became a *philosophy*. Then it moved to Rome, where it became an *institution*. After that it moved to Europe, where it became a *culture*. Lastly, it moved to the United States, where it became a *business*.”

So here we are today. According to NPR, Christianity is by far the world’s largest religion with an estimated 2.2 billion adherents, almost 1/3 of the world’s population - but get this - fragmented across 40,000 denominations! 40,000 denominations! Islam is the second largest religion in the world, with 1.6 billion adherents or about 23% of the world’s population. But Islam is growing faster than Christianity, and by 2070, the Pew Research Center projects that Islam will be the world’s largest religion.

Well, I’ll leave it to you to draw your own conclusions about those numbers and what they mean; but in my opinion, it looks like Christianity as an institution is *dying*. The Church is failing. Why haven’t we won the world yet? Because a religion *about* Jesus became more important than a relationship *with* Jesus. Plain and simple.

But here’s the good news. There is a movement of people - ordinary people just like you and me - who are doing the same thing that the Jews had to do when they saw their religion going down the tubes. They had to choose between staying “in the camp” or going “outside the camp” to be with Jesus. Millions of people are leaving Institutional Christianity behind and are getting back in touch with the simplicity of a Christ-centered faith – the Jesus-focused faith of the New Testament. Some are meeting in homes, some aren’t meeting at all, some want to meet and don’t know where to go; but regardless of

where or how they meet, many of them are discovering the ONE THING that is needed – and it isn’t more church, it’s more of Jesus, and less of everything else.

So, I’m going to reach out to you and connect with you through this broadcast to encourage you, strengthen you, and also challenge you in your faith. I’m not trying to impress you. I am certainly not trying to entertain you. And I am not trying to win any popularity contests. But as a voice in the wilderness, I am crying out and saying, “Prepare the way of the Lord, make a straight path for His feet.” And if you are hungry and thirsty for deeper truths, for relationship instead of religion, then I say, welcome home!

In addition to the podcast, I have several books, dozens of articles, and hundreds of hours of audio teachings on my website, ChipBrogden.com, for those of you who want to go deeper. I’ve even got some online courses you can take, and I’m adding new books, teachings and courses all the time. The goal is to equip you with everything you need, to help you unlearn some things you learned in church that messed you up; to help you get past the old hurts and the wounds and move on to better things; to help you make sense of your situation, and to let you know that you are not crazy and you are not alone. I’ve said that three times now, I hope it is sinking in!

So the first thing I want to do is give you one of my books that I think will help you the most at this point, and it’s a good introduction to what we’ve been talking about. It’s called, *Knowing HIM: Having a Christ-centered Faith in a Church-centered World*. It’s free, and you can get it right down by visiting my website, ChipBrogden.com/free. When you get that book you’ll also be subscribed to my mailing list, so we can stay connected, and you’ll also be able to get in touch with me in case you have any questions or need help with anything.

So praise the Lord and Hallelujah! It’s going to be an exciting journey, and I look forward to seeing you “outside the camp” as we go forth to be with Jesus together. Until next time, this is Chip Brogden. Thanks so much for listening, and remember that GREATER is He that is in you than he that is in the world!

ANNOUNCER: You’ve been listening to Outside the Camp with author and teacher Chip Brogden. We hope you enjoyed today’s broadcast and found it helpful and encouraging. If you’d like to get additional teachings, audio recordings, books and other Christ-centered resources to help you grow spiritually, visit us online at ChipBrogden.com. Outside the Camp is made possible by the prayers and financial support of listeners like you. Until next time, on behalf of Chip Brogden, I’m Kathy Smith, reminding you that you can do all things through Christ Who strengthens you!