

Small Group Discussion Guide

The Word Sets Us Free: For the week of January 23 - 29, 2022

Main Thoughts and Scriptures:

As discussed throughout this series, the Word is essential for us to live as God intended, both here on earth and eternally in heaven. We often don't consider how sin affects us, but Jesus says that we are "slaves" to sin apart from Christ and if we don't live by His Word.

"So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, 'If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, ³²and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.' ³³They answered him, 'We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, "You will become free"?' ³⁴Jesus answered them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin. ³⁵The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. ³⁶So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.'" (John 8:31-36 ESV)

1. Sin enslaves us.

- We are "slaves" to sin in that we often cope with the brokenness of this world in ways that go against the will of God (i.e., sex outside of marriage, alcohol, drugs, bitterness, avoidance, apathy, etc.).
- These coping mechanisms can become habitual and addictive, leading to negative outcomes.

2. The world looks for comfort and freedom in the wrong places.

- The gospel of John gives several examples of this. The woman caught in adultery in John 8 looked for comfort in her adulterous relationship, but it ended up getting her into more trouble.
- The paralytic man in John 5 thought that if he just made it into the pool of Bethesda he would be healed. His hope was in the supposed healing powers of the water.
- When we seek comfort and freedom in anything other than Jesus, we will be disappointed and left worse off than before.

3. Freedom comes to those who believe and follow Jesus' Word.

"...and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (v. 32)

- To know in the bible is knowledge that comes from personal experience and practice.
- Thus, what Jesus is saying is that freedom comes when we personally believe and put His Word into practice in our lives.
- The paralytic and the adulterous woman experienced forgiveness and freedom as they believed and obeyed His Word.

Discussion Questions:

- As you reflect on the main thought, scriptures, and the weekend sermon, what is the Lord highlighting to you and why?
- How has sin affected your life in the past? How were you a "slave" to sin? What happened, and what did you learn through that?
- As long as we live on earth, we will not be ultimately "free" from sin and its effects. However, we should be experiencing greater freedom with each passing day as we walk with Christ. In what area of your life do you need to experience greater freedom? Explain. We will pray for each other to experience greater freedom in Christ.

Prayer:

- Pray for one another to experience greater freedom from sin and its effects.
- Pray for one unreached friend or family member to experience freedom in Christ as well.