

Unlocking Freedom In Your Life, Part 4: Free To Forgive!!

Remember, small groups are primarily for growing closer relationships with other believers. We can learn wonderful things in this environment but keep relationships first.

- **Unlocking Freedom In Your Life**
- Recap: Three Steps in the Path to Freedom from **John 8:31-32**.
 - Step One: Hold to Jesus' Teachings.
 - Step Two: Know the Truth. This is talking about a knowledge that comes from experience!
 - Step Three: The Truth Sets You Free! As you learn you get more and more free!
- This Week: Getting Free from Other People's Sins or "**Free to Forgive!**"
 - We have all been hit by the evils of this world.
 - It isn't whether or not, it is how much and how we handle it.
 - **Romans 12:2** and **Matthew 24:12-13**.
 - What happens when we experience evil?
 - 1) Conform. "I see how the game is played!" Repeat the evil.
 - Most evil is a response to a previous evil. It escalates.
 - 2) Crumble. Just be crushed by it. Believe you deserve it submit to a victim mentality.
 - Enabler distortion of "turn the other cheek." Sometimes you need to flip the money changers tables over!!
 - 3) Be Corrupted. Have a tainted and dark view of everything. See evils and wrongs everywhere. Negative whiney attitude.
 - 4) Conquer! **Romans 12:21**
 - How do we start the conquering/overcoming process? Forgive!
- Jesus taught us to forgive and love our enemies. **Matt 5:43-48, Matt 6:14-15**
 - How do we "Hold To" this teaching?
 - Either we participate in forgiveness (both receiving and offering it) or we don't participate in forgiveness (either receiving or offering it)
 - Have you ever tried to forgive but not succeeded!
 - What do we come to "know" when we hold to this teaching?
 - Doesn't just automatically happen when we try!
 - I see this as a choice to work toward attaining a higher level of spiritual understanding and living.
 - Even when you forgive the perpetrators are not off the hook with God.
 - **Romans 12:17-21** God is good at avenging!
 - Harpoon and whale example. You must break the sin bond!!
 - You need God's help! Open yourself to the Holy Spirit!!
 - Then we become Free to Forgive!!
 - Jesus in **Luke 23:34** and Stephen in **Acts 7:60**.
 - That is overcoming evil with good!! Can you relate to Jesus and Stephen?
 - I refuse to give evil people power over me or power to darken my heart!!
 - In Christ I can be free from all of those negative emotions and be Free To Be Me!
- **Hebrews 12:1-3**
 - V2: "scorn" means to dis-esteem. Despise.
 - Jesus scorned the shame. He scorned being falsely accused, abandoned, hated, beaten, humiliated, and murdered! THEN Jesus went to the right hand of God Almighty!!
 - Do not esteem, magnify, glorify, find your identity in or submit to your shame!!!
 - Scorn it. That's what Jesus did.
- Let us receive of the great forgiving and healing power of God, and let us SHARE the great forgiving and healing power of God with others.
- Pray for each other before you finish up!