

FREEWAY

A NOT-SO-PERFECT GUIDE TO FREEDOM

SERMON OUTLINES

WEEK 1: INTRO ✱

A WELCOME HOME PARTY

SUMMARY:

In every story there is beauty and there is pain. And no one can escape either one. The problem is we often lack the transparency required to walk through our lives honestly with people.

We cover up our scars and try to look squeaky clean for everybody, while we're living a very different life. We post Instagram photos that make our families look perfect. We drive nice cars, wear trendy clothes, and fix our hair real slick to hide how disheveled we really are on the inside; to hide our damaged hearts.

But we don't have to live in that anymore. There is freedom from your past, your present, your enemies, your memories, yourself. There is hope. There is an answer. God wants to use you; not the sanitized, spiffed up version of yourself. And He's been waiting for you.

Take a look at the infamous Prodigal Son in Luke 15. Notice that he doesn't have to walk up to the stoop and knock on his dad's door. No, his father has been waiting for him. He's been looking out the window, pacing the floor, awaiting the day his son would finally come home.

The question is not if God is ready for us to come home. The question is: Are we ready to finally stop running and join the party?

OUTLINE - WHEN WE COME HOME, OUR FATHER:

1. Immediately runs towards us.
2. Immediately forgives.
3. Immediately celebrates.

SCRIPTURE:

The Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32)

WEEK 2: AWARENESS ✱

THE GIFT OF SLOWNESS

SUMMARY:

If we want to be free, we have to escape the rat race and embrace the spiritual gift of slowness. We live in a fast-paced, noisy world. Every day is filled with work deadlines, dropping kids off at soccer practice, and trying to keep up with the rat race. Often the speed of life keeps us from hearing the voice of God, especially when it comes to our pain. Distraction and escapism keeps us from dealing with our spiritual brokenness. Busyness is a badge of honor when it should be a sign that we might be avoiding something important. Perhaps the way to freedom is to stop saying, "I'm busy" and start telling God, "I'm ready."

Many of us use our super-connected, plugged-in, fast-paced lives to ignore some of the key issues God is asking us to look at. We live unaware of how we are hurting ourselves and others. We are blind to the toxic beliefs, patterns, and behaviors that are running in the background of our heart and soul.

In the Bible, God established the Sabbath for this very reason. He established rest, quietness, and breaking the typical routine of life so he could reveal things to us. God wants to show us how we are held captive by our pain and how we can eventually find freedom through him. God asks us to look at our blind spots and the areas of our life we have been neglecting. The challenge is to finally examine our lives and be honest with ourselves. Maybe everything isn't so perfect? Maybe we don't have it all figured out? Maybe we do hurt and need God's freedom? Maybe there is a siren going off that we need to pay attention to? These questions are the first step to finding freedom.

OUTLINE - GOD, I'M READY.

1. I'm ready for change.
2. I'm ready for freedom.
3. I'm ready to slow down for God to show me things.

SCRIPTURE:

Jesus goes to pray alone many times (Matt 14:13, 23; Matt 26:36-39; Luke 9:28...)

God speaks in a quiet voice (1 Kings 19:12)

Sabbath (Genesis 2:2-3; Exodus 20:8-11)

WEEK 3: DISCOVERY ✱

YOU'RE STRONGER THAN YOU THINK YOU ARE

SUMMARY:

In order to be free we must face the fear, lies, and unresolved pain by trusting that God is with us and that we are more than conquerors.

Jesus invites us to go looking in our story for the broken and busted up things. He wants to take us on a journey where we finally face the things we've been scared to deal with. He wants to bring light into our darkness.

But the enemy of our freedom uses fear to keep us held captive. He lies to us and uses scare tactics to prevent us from experiencing God's great plan for our life. He wants to kill, steal, and destroy...everything.

Freedom requires fearlessness. It means we stop believing the lies and trust that God has our best interest in mind. He tells us not to fear, for He is with us. He comforts us and will walk through the valley with us.

In order for us to be free we must have the courage to explore what holds us captive. We have to stop believing the lies and accept God's truth that we are more than conquerors.

OUTLINE - WE ARE STRONG WHEN:

1. We Have The Courage To Face Our Past.
2. We Have The Strength To Deal With Our Present.
3. We Have The Focus To Do Something About It.

SCRIPTURE:

More than conquerors (Romans 8:37-39)

David and Goliath (1 Samuel 17)

Jesus being tempted in the desert (Matthew 4:1-11)

WEEK 4: OWNERSHIP ✖

YOU CAN'T BLAME YOUR WAY TO FREEDOM

SUMMARY:

Living as a victim is easy. Living free means I take personal responsibility for both the good and bad parts of my life. It may not be my fault, but it is my responsibility.

One of the most powerful things we can do in our lives is to take personal responsibility for today. From the very beginning of the world, starting with Adam and Eve, we've been blaming others and it is easy to be a victim. God's word shows us how to live an abundant life with Him and be free to move on.

We don't have to be afraid to take back what the enemy has stolen. We don't have to fear saying, "I'm sorry" to people we have hurt or to make amends. God's freedom allows us to do the difficult and sometimes uncomfortable things that are needed for restoration and healing. As followers of Christ we can face our past and our future with no regrets. Yet, the enemy wants you to hide and cover up your brokenness. He wants you to live a life of weakness and hiding. The enemy encourages you to blame those around you for your circumstances. He especially wants you to be angry at God and blame him for...well...everything.

OUTLINE - TAKING OWNERSHIP MEANS:

1. I Stop Blaming God and Others For My Circumstances.
2. I Courageously Make Amends To Those I've Wronged, Including Myself.
3. I Fully Engage In God's Great Plan For My Life.

SCRIPTURE:

Adam and Eve blame each other and the devil (Genesis 3:12-13)

David covering up his wrongdoings (2 Samuel 11:5-27)

WEEK 5: FORGIVENESS ✱

HOLDING ON KEEPS US FROM MOVING ON

SUMMARY:

When we surrender our hurts and hang-ups to God, we can be freed from the captivity of anger, unfairness, and self-condemnation.

Our pain and loss can define us if we let it. It is tempting to wrestle, fight, and carry the weight of our past with us. Life becomes heavy and cynical. Our relationships are filled with tension and life is a grind. Many of us feel completely trapped by things we wish could let go of and surrender to God.

We clench our fists and seek justice for life's unfairness. God is asking us to live with open hands. If we take the risk to un-clench our fists, he could actually pour out his blessing upon our lives.

The journey to freedom goes through the door of forgiveness. True forgiveness means giving up our right to hurt others that have hurt us. We trust God to deal with it in the way only He can. We release the burden that we have carried too long.

Forgiveness starts with forgiving ourselves for our mistakes. This may be a scandalous idea for many, but if we are truly going to be free we can't live with self-hatred. Too many Christians practice the art of self-condemnation on a daily basis rejecting the truth that they are God's beautiful creation. Living with guilt and regret limits our kingdom potential and minimizes the importance of the cross. Jesus paid it all. Forgiveness is real and it is for everyone, even you.

OUTLINE - FORGIVENESS MEANS:

1. I Surrender My Hurts To God.
2. I Live In The Hope Of Today, Not The Hurt Of Yesterday.
3. I Embrace Forgiveness For My Own Mistakes.

SCRIPTURE:

Jacob, a man defined by his pain and his loss (Genesis 43:1-14)

Woman Caught In Adultery (John 8:1-11)

David's Prayer after caught in adultery (Psalm 51)

WEEK 6: ACCEPTANCE ✱

LABELS LIE

SUMMARY:

The identity that you embrace determines your freedom position. Stop believing the negative labels and start living as God's beloved.

Who are you? It is an important question to ask ourselves. And how we answer that question determines whether we are living a free life or not. Many have their identity defined by a negative label. We see ourselves as failures and mistakes. We let a bad decision, or a negative circumstance, or someone else define who we are.

Others of us let work titles or our accomplishments define our identity. We package up all of our successes and never show weakness. We become what the world wants us to be. Some wear religious labels and proclaim our great holiness only to follow in the footsteps of the Pharisees.

Author Brennan Manning once said, "My dignity as Abba's child is my most coherent sense of self." When Christians operate out of this identity we become whole and free from the destructive labels. No matter who we are, or what we have done, we are God's Beloved. The key is to live out this identity and experience the powerful freedom found in belonging to God's family.

OUTLINE - I AM NOT DEFINED BY:

1. My Works, But By God's Love.
2. Earthly Position, But By My Royal Standing In The Kingdom.
3. Negative Labels, But By The Name "Beloved."

SCRIPTURE:

Zacchaeus the Tax Collector (Luke 19:1-10)

God sees us as we are, and loves us (Psalm 139)

WEEK 7: FREEDOM ✖

WE ARE RESCUED TO BECOME RESCUERS

SUMMARY:

God has an awesome plan for your story, even the painful parts.

The author Mark Twain once said the two most important days in your life are the day you are born and the day you find out why. God created you for freedom and to live a life of great purpose. Yet often pain hijacks our God-story and takes us off course. If we truly want to be free, we need to capture a vision of how God uses broken people like us to change the world. Our freedom isn't just for us, it is also for others. It is meant to be shared and given away. Everything in God's kingdom can be redeemed. What the enemy meant for destruction, God will use it to help love and serve others. Finding the beauty in our brokenness and discovering a purpose in our pain is meant for each of us.

The call to rescue those who are still trapped in darkness is given to each of us. We are called to use our gifts, stories, wisdom, and God-given talents to help seek and save the lost. Each of us play a part. No one is disqualified. All are welcomed. Let's get going!

OUTLINE - GOD'S GREAT PURPOSE FOR EVERY FREEDOM FIGHTER:

1. Proclaim Good News.
2. Chase The Prodigals.
3. Rebuild The Ruined.

SCRIPTURE: ↴

God's Favor over our lives (Isaiah 61:1-7)



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