

# **You Can Be Totally Free**

## **Lesson 1 & Small Group Discussion**

### **November 17 & 24, 2013**

#### **Scene Setting Discussion:**

Are you really living a totally “Free Life” in Christ? *Do you believe this statement, “Through the events of our life you can be completely satisfied and at peace, no matter the circumstances”*

- Does your daily life involve more or less pressure, stress, pain, internal torment?
- How free are we truly living in Christ?
- Have we really turned all to Him and understand the context of His plan for us?
- While difficult, addressing these issues is the most liberating thing we can do

#### **Christian Song Lyrics:**

Many things in life are hard, Many things can pull us down  
How could I take my eyes off You After all You've done for me  
*It's by grace and love I am saved*  
*It's by grace and love You've forgiven me*  
*And by that love and grace, I'm amazed*  
*It's by grace and love that I am Free*  
*I am Free, I am Free, I am Free*

#### **Typical Questions We Might Ask Ourselves at Some Point in Life**

- Why did I not get that job? Why are they smarter than me?
- Why does my family not do what I want? Why do I not have “those” children?
- If my spouse would only do this or be that? My relationships are really bad.
- I am not happy with my lot in life?
- Why is my health failing?
- God what have I done wrong?

#### **Release and Freedom Come From Assurance and Trust**

*The Purpose Driven Life*, by Rick Warren

#### **You are not an accident, pg 22-23**

- God created you
- Every single detail was planned
- Nothing is arbitrary, it's all for a purpose

#### **What Drives Your Life? pg 27-35**

- Everyone's life is driven by something
  - Guilt
  - Resentment and Anger
  - Fear
  - Materialism and Worldly Success
  - Need for Approval
- The man without a purpose is like a ship without a rudder- a waif, a nothing, a no man(Thomas Carlyle)
- Job 7:6-7
- Jeremiah 29:11

#### **What makes God Smile? pg 69-76**

- The smile of God is your goal and purpose in Life

- Ephesians 5:10
- What pleases God
  - Love Him
  - Trust Him Completely
  - Obey Him wholeheartedly
  - Praise and Thank Him Continually
  - When we use our abilities

### **The blessing of Surrender, pg 82**

- Job 22:21; Romans 6:7
- Greatest hindrance to blessings is ourselves

### **Transformed by Trouble, pg 193-197**

- 2 Corinthians 4:17
- John 8:31
- Building Christ like Character
  - Romans 8:3-4, James 1:3, Hebrews 5:8-9, Romans 8:17

### **Understanding Your Assignment, pg 227-228**

- You were placed here for a special assignment

### **Understanding Your Shape, pg 241-247**

- You are unique and only you can make the contribution God has planned, no one else
- Employing your experiences in life
- Family, Educational, Vocational, Spiritual. Ministry, Painful
- Painful experiences are the ones God uses the most!
- Comfort and trust come from knowing God's ultimate authority and plan

### **Accept and Enjoy You Shape, pg 252**

- Examine your experiences and extract lessons
- Accept God's lot for you
- Do not compare yourself to others (key issue that cannot be over stated)

### **Personal Testimony**

- Not fully surrendered
- Driven by business success
- Comparing myself to others, lead to a constant feeling of being inadequate and internal stress/pressure
- Always focused on "making the future right" and not living each day to its fullest
- Missed opportunities with family and friends, serving God
- Accepting who you are; God made you exactly like He wants
- Living each day at a time and not letting the future drive your very being
- True peace and contentment comes from accepting and being happy with God's place in life for you
- This does not mean that you cannot plan, dream, strive for success in whatever area, achieve
- It is about finding physical, spiritual and emotional balance with God and His purpose for you

### **Summary Points For Group Discussions**

- Through the events of our life you can be completely satisfied and at peace, no matter the circumstances
- Not from ourselves but by God's promise for peace and freedom
- God's ultimate purpose for your life on earth is not comfort, but character development
- You are unique, it is about transforming character, not your personality

- God wants us to develop the character of the beatitudes, the fruit of the spirit
- Every time you forget that character development is God’s purposes for our life, we will become frustrated by our circumstances
- Life was never promised to be easy or exactly what you think you need for happiness in a worldly way
- These situations are the very things that refine, mold and develop the traits that Jesus so desires in us.

**Summary Commentary**

What are your worries, your pains in life? What is your vice? Are you holding on to something that you will not or feel that you cannot let go? What relationships have troubled you? What stress and daily worries will you not let go? What sins in your past have you not forgiven yourself? Will you trust? Just turn it over, lay it at the foot of the cross, it is not your burden to carry. Jesus promises an inner peace if we will only trust and let Him be in control.

Becoming Christ like is a long and slow process, it is not instant or automatic, it is gradual progressive development, and you are a unique being constantly maturing. We are a work in progress, but it will take the rest of our lives.

You can be free, truly free and live with an eternal sense of calm, an eternal sense of understanding, an eternal sense of a loving God. With a spiritual understanding that God is in control, who can be against us? Do you crave this type of peace and freedom from our everyday troubles and concerns? It is our choice; no one is preventing us from this complete freedom and relationship with God, but ourselves!

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**Group Exercise 1 – How We Grow**

**God’s Part and Your Part – Philippians 2:12-14**

**12 Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed – not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence - continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, 13 for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose. 14 Do everything without complaining or arguing.**

**Romans 2:12**

**12 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is – His good, pleasing and perfect will.**

**GROUP Questions – How we prepare to grow spiritually:**

- 1) How does the “works out” portion relate to our role?
  - Is this referencing how to be saved?
  - How are we to approach our growth?
  - What does this say about the importance and reverence of God’s expectation of us?
- 2) How does the “works in” relate to God’s role?
  - Collaborative effort with you and the holy spirit
  - Discuss how he works with us, not just in us?
- 3) How important is changing the way you think to your spiritual growth?
  - Stop immature thoughts that are self-centered and self-seeking
  - How is spiritual maturity measured?

**Key Points**

- Collaborative effort with God
- God’s expectation from us is very high, spiritual growth is very serious
- Fear and trembling, reverence

- the first step to spiritual guidance is changing the way you think, taking on the characteristics of God
- Spiritual maturity is not just biblical knowledge, it is conduct, character, behavior, sacrificing for others

**Group Exercise 2 – Focus and Renewal**

**Transformed by Trouble – 2 Corinthians 4:16-18**

**16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. 17 For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. 18 So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen...what is unseen is eternal.**

**GROUP Questions – Circumstances develop character:**

- 1) Discuss how God uses circumstances to develop character?
  - Discuss how your most intimate spiritual experiences can come from your darkest moments?
  - Discuss how we learn things in suffering? Do we learn and grow with all things rosy?
- 2) Discuss the comment “You will never know that God is all you need until he is all you’ve got!”
  - Secrets of endurance and reward
  - Rejoice over our pain? How can that be?
- 3) Discuss God’s sovereign control
  - Everything that happens is with God’s permission
  - Circumstances are created for spiritual significance and your growth

**Key Lessons Learned:**

- God’s expectation for our spiritual development is high
- No one is immune to pain or suffering and problems
- God is in control, His plan has your best interest at heart
- You are unique, special and God has you right where He wants you at every moment
- God Gives us the ability to have complete peace in this world no matter the circumstances