

# FREEDOM

## CLASS REVIEW

### **How are we approaching our relationship with God?**

*The first section of Freedom Class challenges us to think about how we view ourselves in relationship with God, and uses the visuals of the Two Trees: The Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil.*

### **The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil**

We start at the beginning, when Adam and Eve first sinned. They ate the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. They lost their innocence, their lack of awareness of sin was gone, and they became so focused on their sin that they hid from God. Sin often causes us to separate ourselves from God, to hide from Him, and we make assumptions about how He is going to respond to us in our sin.

Instead of living as a child or heir, we often adopt an “orphan spirit” when we live in this tree. This means we perform for love and attention, we strive and earn, we act out of fear or duty. We often struggle with comparison or competition with others; or, we can become resigned, thinking nothing we do will change our circumstances or make us worthy of love. Shame and condemnation weigh us down.

Remember that knowledge in and of itself is not bad, it is our motivation behind acquiring it that we need to be aware of. Are we trying to elevate ourselves? Are we trying to prove something? Or are we desiring to know God in a deeper way?

### **The Tree of Life**

Instead of living separated from God, hiding from him, or striving for His love, God wants us to draw near to Him in the Tree of Life. Here we can rest in the truth that we don't need to do more to earn His love, Jesus has already done it. We don't need to earn God's approval, He already loves us. We don't need to obey Him out of duty, we can do so out of delight, because we are focusing on His love. We can serve Him through a relationship instead of rules.

In the Tree of Life, we live out our true identity as His sons and daughters. We are loved for simply existing, we are included in God's inheritance, we are innocent, a new creation.

John 14:15 says, “If you love me, you will obey what I command.” When we are living in the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, we hear “you better do what I say to show you love me”, but when we are in the Tree of Life, we can hear God saying, “Just fall in love with me, and then the obeying part will come.” The comma in John 14:15 shows the separation of the two trees.



## Spiritual Order

This chapter dives into the idea that we have three distinct parts: a spirit that must be redeemed, a soul (thoughts, will, emotions) that must be restored, and a body that must be surrendered. When we accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior, our spirit is redeemed, and we are a new creation. This is called justification (just as if we've never sinned). Our souls being restored and our bodies surrendering is an ongoing, life-long journey called sanctification (becoming more and more like Jesus).

God designed us to live Spirit first, so the part of us that is redeemed and connected to the Holy Spirit is our command center, and our soul and body fall in line under our spirit. Remember, we are spiritual beings having a temporary physical experience, not the other way around.

When we let our soul and our body lead us, we become disordered. When we live disordered, it affects our approach to God, our identity is distorted, we become slaves to our bodies and souls, we move from God reliance to self reliance, it makes it hard to hear from God, and authentic connection with others is difficult.

When we live spirit first, we have freer communication with God, we are living out of our true identity, we filter everything through the Holy Spirit and people can see Jesus in us much more readily. We can be reflective instead of reactive. And when we find ourselves living disordered in the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, Jesus is the rope that helps us swing back into the Tree of Life.

### **What blockages do I have in my heart?**

*In this section we shift from our approach to God, to what actually might be blocking us from living in the Tree of Life- what blockages do we have in our hearts? Blockages like selfish ambition, bitterness, rejection and evil thoughts. We want to move from selfish ambition to surrender, bitterness to forgiveness, rejection to words of life, and evil thoughts to cleansing.*

## Surrender

Surrender doesn't mean weakness or giving up. Surrendering means that you trust God to take control of the situations in your life, and you trust that he will take care of you. In order to trust God, we have to spend time with Him and be in relationship with him. Our goal, as we become more and more like Jesus, is to surrender more and more of our lives to him.

We also explored ways to stay unoffended: Take the lowest seat, always remain grateful, give others their freedom, make decisions that promote life in others, trust God to bring justice when an offense comes, and dedicate time to the Lord.

## Forgiveness

It is so important to forgive those who have wounded you, and to forgive yourself. Harboring unforgiveness in your heart is like drinking poison and expecting the other person to die. Or setting yourself on fire in the hopes that the other person will die of smoke inhalation. Unforgiveness leads to bitterness, which can cause us to live in bondage and put up walls.

Often we struggle with forgiveness because we don't really understand what forgiveness is and what it isn't. Forgiveness is not minimizing the offense or forgetting what happened. It isn't something we earn or that is dependent on behavior. Forgiveness only requires one person (you!) and it lets go of the bitterness in your heart.

Forgiveness is a choice, not a feeling. Choices lead, feelings follow. We must recognize our own imperfections, focus on the real enemy (the devil, not people), and receive the forgiveness and love of God for ourselves.

## The Power of Words

One area we often need forgiveness for is wounding words that have been spoken over us. Words are powerful, and they are not neutral- they either advance the kingdom of God or the enemy's kingdom. Our words impact people, they bring life or death. Our words reveal what is in our hearts. We need to examine the motivation behind the words we are using: am I trying to elevate myself? Diminish someone else? Am I bringing glory to God? Encouraging others? Trying to make myself feel better?

We pressed into what words have been spoken over us that have impacted us negatively, and worked through the voice of victory prayer (confess, repent, cast off, bless) to release those words and the lies we believed from them, and replaced the lies with truth.


## The Living Word

Truth comes from God's Word. Jesus is the Word, there is Power in the Word, and the Father, Son and Holy Spirit want to meet you in the Word. The Bible is a meeting place, where we can always go to hear from the Lord.

The Spirit to meet us in the Word to make it come alive. We can meditate on Scripture, speak the Word out loud, find ways to have His word around us throughout the day. Trying a new translation, Bible apps, The Bible Project, having accountability, and creating a rhythm all can help us spend more time in God's word.

## Vessels of Honor

The Word can be used as a weapon, because there is a battle going on around us in the spiritual realm all the time. This chapter is about being vessels of honor, and battling evil thoughts. The enemy likes to use lies and deceit in his plan against us. Demons respond to rank and authority, so we need to be in relationship with God and lean into the one with the highest rank of all instead of trying to make ourselves more powerful.



Authority comes in the name of Jesus, through the Word, and by the blood of the cross. Everytime you are battling something- find a verse that brings truth to the lie! The enemy wants to plant thoughts in your mind that are contrary to God's thoughts. Warfare is exchanging the report of the world with the report of God. We must take thoughts captive and set them against what the Word says is true.

## Worship

Worship can be an offensive weapon just like the Word. Worship is not just singing songs, but a way that we live our lives when we are in love with God and give him our attention, no matter what we are feeling or what we are doing. We move from duty to devotion, and worship is an outcome of the shift in our approach to God. We are fighting from victory, not for it! We have the River and the 4 different stages (ankle-deep, knee-deep, waist-deep, and the middle of the river) as a visual to help us see where we are in our trust and relationship with God.

### **Tools to Keep With you**

*Your Freedom Book and Binder are full of resources for you to keep coming back to. We covered so much ground in these twelve chapters, so remember that these tools are here for you to keep coming back to as you become more and more like Jesus!*

The visual of the Two Trees  
The Spiritual Order circles  
Daily Spirit Blessings Booklet  
Prayer of Relinquishment  
Forgiveness Scriptures  
What Forgiveness is and isn't  
Declaration of Forgiveness  
Voice of Victory Prayer  
Scripture Blessings in the Back of Freedom Book (pg. 190)  
Prayer of Protection