

freedom

TRUE FREEDOM
WEEK OF OCTOBER 4

This weekend we learned that Jesus came to set us free—not only from the penalty of sin, but also from the power of sin. True freedom is not simply freedom *from* something; it is freedom *for* something. God’s ultimate vision for our lives is that, through the power of the Spirit, we will learn to live lives of love.

PAUSE

As you begin this study, take some time to read these verses a few times, slowly. Ask the Lord to show you where you are experiencing His freedom and where He may be inviting you to grow.

You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love.

Galatians 5:13

STUDY

1. What are one or two key insights that stood out to you from the message this weekend, and why?
2. This weekend, we heard that true freedom in Christ has two dimensions: freedom from the **penalty** of sin and freedom from the **power** of sin. In your own words, how would you describe the difference?
 - a. Why do you think it is so important that Paul emphasizes both sides of this freedom?
 - b. Which of these two aspects of freedom do you more naturally lean on and/or need to grow in right now?
Which of these two aspects do you have a harder time believing? Why?
3. Paul says the entire law is summed up in one command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” (Galatians 5:14) God’s ultimate vision for our lives is that we would be transformed by the Spirit into people who live a life of love.

- a. As you look at your life right now, what is your vision for your life?
- b. Where has that vision come from? How have you seen the vision for your life change over the years?
- c. How does (or doesn't) a life of love sit at the center of your current vision for your life?

4. Scripture repeatedly calls us to love not only those who are easy to love, but also our “enemies.” And as Michael shared, this includes people who annoy, irritate, aggravate, disappoint, or even harm us. Read the following passages about loving those who harm us.

- **Luke 6:27-28**

- **Romans 12:14**

- **Romans 12:17-21**

- **1 Thessalonians 5:15**

- **1 Peter 3:9**

- a. As you read those passages, what stood out to you the most?
- b. What types of people are hardest for you to love and do good towards currently? (Think in categories: different politics or worldview, someone who has hurt you, a person who is simply irritating, a family member, a coworker, etc.)
- c. What roadblocks or internal resistance do you notice when you think about moving toward those people with compassion and love?
 - i. What would it look like to take a small step of love or compassion toward them?

5. Read the following passages about love and how we can be loving toward others:

- **Colossians 3:12-14**

- **1 Corinthians 13:1-7**

- a. Based on the Colossians 3 passage above, which of these “clothes” (compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, forgiveness, love) feels hardest to put on toward others? Why do you think that is?
- b. What is one step you can take to let the Holy Spirit help bring about transformation in that area?
- c. The Colossians passage begins by reminding us that we are “God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved.” How does realizing our true identity free us to love others without being defined by what they think of us or how they treat us?
- d. 1 Corinthians 13 is probably the most famous passage from the Bible that describes love. Reread verses 4-7. Which component of love comes most naturally to you? Which is the hardest for you?

RESPOND

The message ended by asking two questions: “*What Is Your Vision ... For Your Life?*” and “*What ... Is Your Intention?*” Specifically, is it your sincere intention, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to learn how to live a life of love, even toward those who irritate, hurt, or oppose you? Spend some time praying over these questions. **Be honest with yourself and God.** Write down anything you sense God showing you about your vision, about specific people, about a next step of love or forgiveness.

Optional next step: Choose one person who is difficult for you to love. Ask the Spirit for one concrete, small way you can move toward them in compassion this week (a kind word, a prayer, a practical help, a decision not to repay evil for evil). Share that intention with the group if you feel comfortable.