



Week 5: Freed from Lies

Big Idea

When we believe the lie that we can never change it keeps us hostage and prevents us from experiencing the good God has prepared for us.

Ice Breaker

What's the worst excuse you ever heard someone give for not getting something done? Was it true? Did people believe it?

The Problem

We are all held hostage to lies. There is one big lie that holds many of us hostage. It is the collective sum of all lies. We believe "God can't change me". We want to change but get caught up in a horrible cycle of making promises that don't work out and so we fail once again ending up in a pit of guilt and shame. Then we believe nothing will ever change and we tell ourselves "this is just the way I am." We buy the lie and believe that if God were going to change us, he would have done it already.

1. Have you ever made a promise (to God or yourself) that you would make a significant change in your life? What motivated you? How did you feel?

But God sees us differently. He sees us as his masterpieces. In Ephesians 2:10 Paul wrote, "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

2. What is your reaction to this verse? Do you believe it? Which of these answers best matches your reply?

- A. You must be joking – just look at me!
- B. There are days when I get it, but not that many
- C. Sure, I can see God at work in my life
- D. I believe it. I know clearly who God has made me to be.

God knows exactly what we are capable of doing and becoming. Often we give up and think we are incapable of changing but God is the only one who really knows what we are capable of. He made us and He created us to do good works.

We want God to flip a heavenly switch and change us instantly whenever we ask Him. Frustration sets in when we have asked God to take some temptation from our lives but it remains. Then we are captured by the lie and are unable to ever experience the good God has prepared for us.

3. Are you feeling hostage to some situation in your life right now? What steps have you taken to get free of it?

Now what?

God has given us the weapons we need to free us from the lies we believe.

“For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.” 2Corinthians 10:3-5

Capture wrong thoughts

Paul tells us to take every thought and make it obedient to Christ. We need to be honest with ourselves. E.g. If you are having a problem with road rage you might need to examine just why you get so angry. Are you planning badly so you are always late? Is it just a bad day? Is there something else altogether that is making me angry and I'm taking it out on somebody else's driving?

4. Have you been completely honest with yourself? What wrong thoughts do you need to capture?

Speak the truth

“The tongue has the power of life and death and those who love it will eat its fruit” Proverbs 18:21

It is not enough just to think the truth we need to speak it. Our words are powerful. When we say things like “I can never change” it gives power to the lie and keeps us imprisoned by it. It becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. We must confess the lie in our life to someone we trust. This takes away its power and frees us from the bondage that holds us captive.

5. Do you have experience of confessing a lie and being freed from its power? Share the experience with the group for their encouragement.

6. Have you been believing lies in your life that you need to speak out loud? Why is it so difficult to admit to the lies?

We need to replace the lies with the truth. We should immerse ourselves in Biblical truths about who God says we are.

7. Share the scripture verses that have spoken truth into your life in the past and the difference they have made. Speaking the truth gives it real power.

Don't give up

"To this end I labor, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me" Colossians 1:29

Nobody ever said it is easy to change. It is a struggle. It is hard work and takes perseverance. We need to take it one day at a time, continuing to look forward. When we fail we need to get up and start again.

8. What practical steps do you need to take on this journey of freedom and change? How can the group help you get started?

"But one thing I do, forgetting what is behind and straining towards what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus." Philippians 3:13

What's Next

It is time to confess the lies you have believed and ask for help to make the changes God is asking you to make. Join together in prayer, speaking out the truths God has reminded you of and asking for his strength and power to defeat the enemy who would seek to keep you hostage. Make sure to take the time to journal your journey this week.

"Christ has set us free to live a free life. So take your stand! Never again let anyone put a harness of slavery on you" Galatians 5:1 (The Message)

Week 5 Leader's Guide - Freed From Lies

1. Most people have made some sort of promise to God at some time, out of desperation, guilt, shame or some other motivation. Honesty is vital to this study. Set the tone and encourage honest answers to this first question.
2. Most people are somewhere in the middle of the spectrum of answers. Some days we feel we get it but other days just don't go to plan.
3. A difficult question for hurting people to answer. Don't jump in to rescue people as soon as they start to share. Allow time for people to find the words they need to fully express their hurts and fears. Some people may become emotional. That's OK.
4. Carrying on from question 3, this is another opening for members to unpack their thoughts and feelings as they think about what they really think about God and how far they can trust Him.
5. Now we have an opportunity for encouragement to come from within the group. Personal stories offer the chance for a new level of honesty.
6. One more time for people to be honest with each other. It may be that the answers from question 5 will provoke other people to join in the discussion. It is difficult to admit to character flaws that often have some truth in them. We need to separate the truth from the lies, which can be a lot of work. It is easier for some people to live in denial (Don't Even know I Am Lying...)
7. There are many scripture verses appropriate for people to share... If there are people in your group who are at the start of their spiritual journey you might want to allow them to go near the beginning, before all the "easy" verses are gone. Be sure to have Bibles available to let people check things up. This is a good time to encourage people to find their way around the Bible. It's not a test of people's knowledge but an opportunity to speak God's truth out loud. A few examples of possible answers might be Jeremiah 29:11, 1 Peter 2:9, Romans 8:38-39, Philippians 1: 6 ...
8. This is the pivotal question. This whole series has been about finding freedom. If not now, when?

Following on from last week, make sure to leave enough time for prayer. You might want to start your time by members reading their "truth verses" before praying for the spoken needs of the group.