

January is the month of “Resolutions”. Many of us like to begin the New Year with new resolve. Most of our resolutions reveal a longing for freedom. There are places in life where we feel trapped—even imprisoned. We want a new beginning; freedom.

In this electrifying passage, Jesus claims that He is the only one who can truly give us the freedom we long for.

Warm it Up

What is your favorite “place” In the house? What do you do there? Would you consider it to be a place of rest and refreshment for you? Explain.

Talk it Over

Read John 8:31-36

1. Jesus’ invitation is to take hold of/make ourselves at home in his teaching. As you think about your journey of faith, are there times when you have done that well—times when you have not? Talk about it.
2. Where do you think you have been most faithful to Jesus “teaching”? Where have you struggled * (a good place to find a large portion of Jesus’ teaching is Matthew 5-7. Start there for a personal assessment).
3. Jesus claims that our greatest freedom comes when we live by the truth of his teaching (verse 32). Has this been your experience?
4. In verse 33, those who were listening to Jesus appealed to their heritage (Abrahams descendants) as evidence of their good standing. Do you think we have the same tendency? Explain.
5. Can you think of a time when the teaching of Jesus or the truth of God’s Word helped reveal a blind spot in your life? What was it? What did you do about it?

6. Jesus said that everyone who sins is a slave to sin (verse 34). Do you agree? Do you think of yourself as enslaved to sin? Why is that sobering truth so important?
7. Read John 8:36. How does the Son (Jesus) set us free?
8. Read Colossians 2:13-15. Identify key words or phrases that help you understand what God has done for you through Jesus!

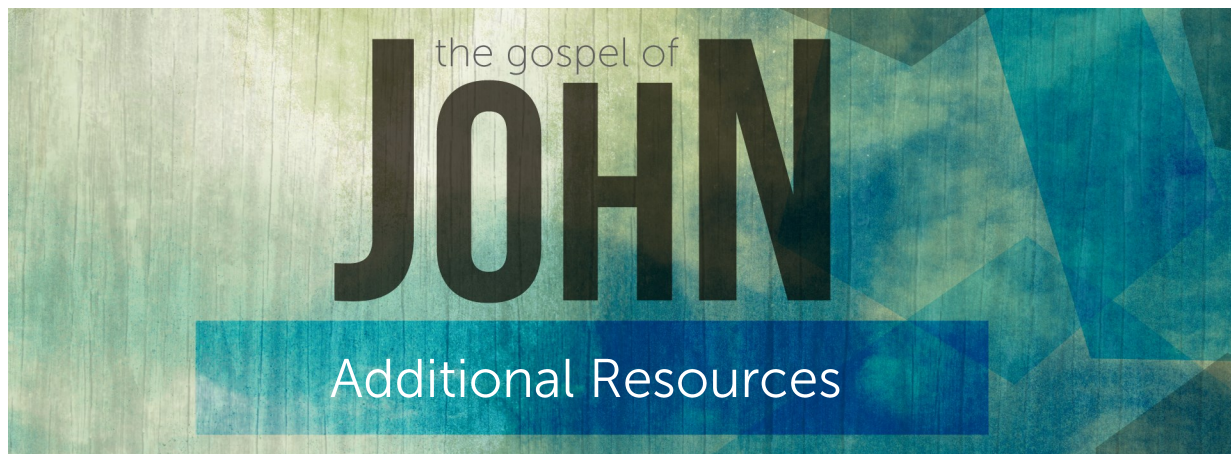
Work it Through

9. Look at the list below and identify a place where you need freedom:

Anxiety/Worry....Philippians 4:6-7
Peer Pressure....1 Corinthians 10:13
The love of money....Hebrews 13:5
Anger/Bitterness....James 1:19-20
To forgive someone....Colossians 3:13
Self-doubt....2 Thessalonians 2:16-17
Discontentment....Philippians 4:12-13
Materialism....Matthew 6:19-21
An addiction....Philippians 4:13
Past failure/Guilt....1 John 1:9
Overly Critical....Ephesians 4:29

10. Share it with your small group and have a group member read the corresponding verse(s) to you.
11. Make a commitment to pray for one another and check in through the month. God wants to bring you to a new place of freedom this year!





Recommended Resources for Money and Finances

1. Living a Generous Life

This booklet was used in conjunction with a sermon series at CPC in the fall of 2012. It contains daily readings for encouragement, helpful tools to help you with budgeting and solid Biblical truth throughout. Copies are free and available at CPC or contact Robin Aldana at robin@cpcdanville.org.

2. The Total Money Makeover, by Dave Ramsey

This is the book that Mark and Emily Tait used to address their financial challenges. Dave Ramsey is a Christian. The Total Money Makeover is not a Christian book—but there are sound Biblical truths throughout.

3. Your Money Counts (now more than ever), by Howard Dayton

A practical and Biblically-based approach to managing your personal finances. Dayton addresses budgeting, debt, giving, teaching our children about money and much more.

4. Generosity, by Gordon MacDonald

A four week devotional filled with inspirational stories and Biblical principles that will help you move toward transformation and deeper trust in God's plan for your giving and finances.

5. Set Your House in Order, by Crown Ministries

A resource from renowned Crown Ministries that provides a means of storing, maintaining and retrieving critical pieces of financial information. A great tool to prepare you and your family for emergencies and future needs.