



FOUNDATIONS OF FREEDOM

Study Guide

*“Whom the Son sets
free is free indeed.”
John 8:36*

August 2020

*Empowering People to Discover and Walk
in the Freedom Provided Them Through Christ*

Foundations of Freedom
Study Guide

Original by Bob Hamp, Gateway's Freedom Ministries;
edited with permission by Foothills Christian Church

Copyright 2013 Gateway Create Publishing

Unless otherwise noted, all scripture quotations are from English Standard Version (ESV) 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a division of Good News Publishers.

All rights reserved. No portion of this publication may be reproduced, stored in retrieval system, or transmitted in any form by any means - electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or any other - without prior permission from the publisher.

Introduction

Welcome to Freedom Ministries. If this is your first time through Foundations of Freedom, we're glad you're here. If this is your second (or third or fourth, etc.) time, welcome back! There's so much God has to say to all of you.

Before we begin, we'd like to take just a minute to talk about what freedom is- and what it isn't.

People come to Freedom Ministries for all sorts of reasons. But mostly they come because they have a problem. They have something in their lives that is causing them great pain and discomfort, and they want it to stop.

So they come to Freedom. But the Bible looks at Freedom very differently than we do.

We tend to look at Freedom from the perspective of the guy in jail. "If only I could get out from behind these bars," he thinks "then I would truly be free." But if that were the case, would you have been behind those bars to begin with?

And what about Paul? When he was in prison (see Acts 16), was he any less free than when he wasn't? Some might argue that he may have been freer than ever during that time. Certainly the people around him in the prison might have felt that way.

So instead of looking at Freedom from the perspective of getting out of something, what if we indeed put on the mind of Christ (1 Corinthians 2:16) and ask God to show us His perspective on our lives? What if, instead of looking down for answers, we look to the One who knit us together in our mother's womb (Psalm 139: 13), who numbers the hairs on our head (Luke 12:7) and loved us enough to send His own Son to die on the cross for us (Romans 5:8)?

2 Corinthians 3:17 says "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom"- not the absence of a problem, not the ceasing of a behavior. Look up for a minute, and purpose in your heart to spend these next few weeks seeking His presence through this study. You might be surprised to find He has answers you didn't even know you were seeking.

Jump in. The water's fine.

FREEDOM MINISTRY

Study Guide Table of Contents

Introduction

WEEK 1:	Defining True Freedom	Neil Hoffman
WEEK 2:	Levels of Change	Kevin Miller
WEEK 3:	Kingdom of God	Jenny Stecklair
WEEK 4:	Hearing God	Linda Hoffman
WEEK 5:	Life in the Kingdom	Fawn Goodrich
WEEK 6:	Breaking Strongholds	Jim Deyling

Week One: Defining True Freedom

Neil Hoffman

The Kingdom of God is the presence and the **power** of God. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is FREEDOM (2 Cor. 3:17). We all enter this Kingdom at different levels of life experiences. It causes us to interpret very differently what it means to “give our life to Christ.” This class explains where we started to think wrong and how to think in a new and freeing way.

Week Two: Levels of Change

Kevin Miller

This class is designed to help identify and avoid traps common to man’s attempt to change his own life and explain God’s provision and strategy for changing your life from the inside out. The enemy wants you to work harder and harder with the wrong tools. The goal of this teaching is to think differently about the transformation process of a believer. There are five distinct levels of change - four you can do something about. One was done for you.

Week Three: Kingdom of God

Jenny Steckclair

Jesus’ message carried tremendous power to transform peoples’ lives. The Scriptures say “Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.” The phrase “at hand” means “it’s within your reach” - within arm’s length. Learn to be able to walk in that power that is filled with LIFE and love, peace, joy, and righteousness everywhere you go. The only thing that prevents you from accessing it could be the way that you see and think.

Week Four: Hearing from God

Linda Hoffman

If God speaks to us, then we have to learn to recognize and discern His voice. Hearing the voice of God is central to living out your created design. This class discusses ways to hear God and HOW we can discern that it is really God we are hearing. When we hear God personally, it changes us forever and we become passionate seekers of the One we have personally encountered.

Week Five: Life in the Kingdom

Fawn Goodrich

In life, there are things that are God’s job and things that are our job. When we understand the tools that God has given us, we begin to have victory. The power of core lies, soul wounds, life patterns, and demonic oppression begin to break off. We will learn to discern the voices, get rid of the wrong ones, and walk in God’s transforming power and truth.

Week Six: Breaking Strongholds

Jim Deyling

Learn a very simple step-by-step process to resolve personal and spiritual conflict. Learn how strongholds come in and how to break their hold over you and your relationships. Repentance and forgiveness hold the key the new life and real breakthroughs.

1. DEFINING TRUE FREEDOM - LECTURE NOTES

Defining True Freedom - Neil Hoffman

The best way to define freedom is to understand it's opposite – BONDAGE

Three Levels of Bondage

1. Bondage to bad definitions of freedom

Counterfeit #1:	Freedom is the absence of boundaries
-----------------	--------------------------------------

Counterfeit #2:	Freedom is the absence of frustrating habits
-----------------	----------------------------------------------

Counterfeit #3:	Freedom will come when my circumstances or relationships change.
-----------------	------------------------------------------------------------------

Definition of freedom: The ability to respond to God FULLY, out of who He made and redeemed you to be.

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. John 10:10

Three Levels of Bondage (continued)

THE PROBLEM JESUS CAME TO SOLVE....was not that we were behaving badly. What was the problem?

Freedom is not about what we don't do, but about fulfilling the destiny we were born for.

2. Freedom from bondage to ourselves

Identity is the key issue that brings real change.

Three Levels of Bondage

3. Bondage to a variety of obstacles

Freedom is "not when I stop something but when I become someone."

1. DEFINING TRUE FREEDOM - *HOMEWORK*

PRAY: Say, “Lord, Your Word says You are near to the brokenhearted and You are a very present Help in time of need.” I want to experience Your nearness so I give You this time. Speak to me about my life. I’m ready to let You change some things. I am also afraid that things might not change. But I give you that fear also. Show me the way through to your freedom and peace.”

READ THE FOLLOWING SCRIPTURES:

“So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed!” (John 8:36)

“Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.” (II Cor. 3:17)

“It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery.” (Gal. 5:1)

Isaiah 61:1 (Jesus’ words)

The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,
Because the LORD has anointed me
To bring good news to the afflicted;
He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to captives and freedom to prisoners

Whatever the Lord says is TRUTH, and if you have believed anything else, then you have believed a lie. Here are common things people say all the time. Put a check next to those you also tend to say:

- I can’t break these feelings of anger and they are destroying my relationship with my kids and spouse.
- I can’t quit this addiction and I am afraid it will eventually take everything from me.
- Rejection has taken root in my life and now I am sabotaging every relationship that I have, and I can’t stop. I feel I need to reject “them” before they reject me.
- The hurt that I have experienced is too much to ever forget. And I believe that I am destined to carry this baggage to the end.
- God’s freedom is for other people ... not me.
- My situation will always be hopeless.

Maybe it's none of the above, but there is SOMETHING you keep saying that defines you and makes you feel defeated. Write it out here:

Take a minute to also **examine your inner thoughts about how you view God, yourself and others.** Without thinking really hard, write the first thoughts that come to mind:

God is...

I am...

People generally are...

Jesus said, **“Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks.”** Or in other words, we find what's really in our hearts — what we really honestly believe — just coming out in unguarded moments. It's those thoughts God wants you to be aware of. He wants you to examine them to see if they are truth or lies. If they are NOT IN ALIGNMENT WITH HIS TRUTH, **He wants to help change them and thereby change the course of your life.** HE SETS PEOPLE FREE FROM LIES, but we can't be free if we don't recognize the lie.

OUR JOB: these next 6 weeks is to

- Train you up to see TRUTH in a way you haven't seen before
- Persuade you to get into God's Presence and ask questions and learn to listen.

YOUR JOB:

- Is to show up every week and let nothing get in your way.
The enemy wants to keep you trapped. He will put everything he can in your way.
Will you let him get in the way?

You learned today:

Lie #1: Freedom is the absence of boundaries

Lie #2: Freedom is the absence of frustrating habits

Lie #3: Freedom will come when my circumstances or relationships change

**TRUE FREEDOM IS NOT THE ABSENCE OF SOMETHING
BUT THE PRESENCE OF SOMEONE!**

Pray/Hear

Pray: *Lord, I want to invite you into all areas of my life. I ask for YOUR PRESENCE to shine on ALL my understanding and on ALL my weakness. I believe you love me and that you make old things new. Lord, in my flesh I don't want to give you control of these areas of my life. I'm afraid I won't be happy. But I know the first step is just to cry out for help. So here I am. HELP ME! Or I will be too weak. Your word says, "I will work in you the POWER to perform my good pleasure." I choose to believe that. Help me to just seek YOU FIRST and believe that in this new relationship with you I will simply begin to walk in a new way.*

THE PROBLEM JESUS CAME TO SOLVE was not to help you behave better, but to reconnect you to God.

Read Psalm 139

In that psalm, it says, "I knew you while you were in your mother's womb and that Your eyes saw my unformed substance; and in Your book was written all the days that you ordained FOR ME even before one of them came to pass. How precious are Your thoughts to me, O God! How vast, the sum of them!"

God gave gifts to you while you were being formed in the womb.

- Therefore you are born with a bent toward certain areas
- You are drawn to specific things by God's design (writing, art, medicine, children, etc)

Dig Deeper

What do you feel drawn to?

Write it out and ask God why that desire is in you. What does He want you to do with it? (Even if you don't hear something right away, listen over the next week and see what new insight comes to you.)

Spend some time this week exploring some old dreams. What things used to make you feel alive when you did them? Why did you stop? Is it possible to carve out some time for those things?

Remember

- “As a man believes in his heart, so is he.” Your beliefs overshadow everything.
- You discover your true identity as you discover who your Heavenly Father really is.
- Change is a process and it's something difficult and painful.
- Your wounds and limitations do not define your identity.

2. LEVELS OF CHANGE - LECTURE NOTES

FUNDAMENTAL IDEAS ABOUT FREEDOM

1. *You were created for freedom. It was one of the purposes in Christ's coming in the flesh.*

"It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery." (Galatians 5:1)

Jesus came to give us life.

"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly." (John 10:10)

The word "life" refers to the absolute fullness of life which belongs to God: a life real and genuine, a life active and vigorous.

2. *To get this life we must die. No matter how we try to find freedom God intended us to receive it one way.*

"I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me." (Galatians 2:20)

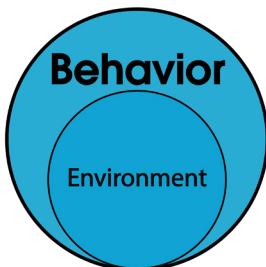
FIVE DISTINCT LEVELS OF CHANGE

1. Environment



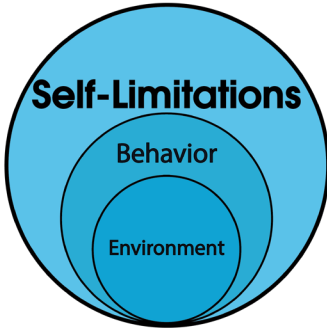
Attempts to change by shifting our Environment are generally temporary and ineffective. Real Freedom comes about when you can become the person you were created to be regardless of the circumstances you are in.

2. Behavior



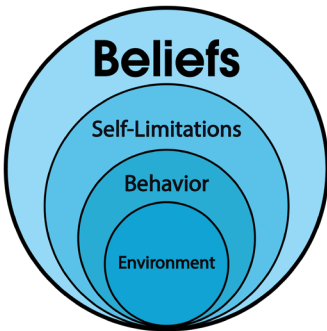
Our Behavior is connected to what we think and feel. Our Environment is subordinate of our Behavior.

3. Self-Limitations



Our Self-Imposed Limitations set our level of change like a thermostat set in our hearts controlling what change can take place.

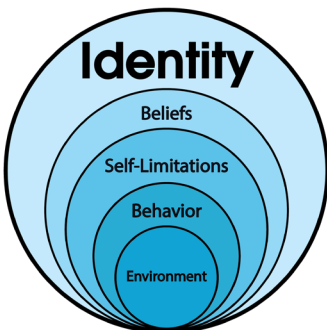
4. Our Beliefs



Our Beliefs cover our heart like a contact lens covers our eye – beliefs are the lens through which we perceive all of our experiences. At every defining moment of our lives, God is always ready to give definition to what “this circumstance” says about you...so is Satan.

All of our beliefs are determined by what we believe about GOD and what we believe about OURSELVES.

5. Identity



If we think of sin as behaviors, thought, feelings, two traps can snare us:

1. We attempt to solve sin at a behavior level, trying to please God by acting differently.
2. We bring only part of the problem to part of the solution.

Your **Identity** is the blueprint in the heart of God when He created you.

Understanding our identity trumps all other attempts to change.

- The diagnosis has to fit the treatment.
- Sin is a cancer and has a terminal diagnosis.
- Sin is the absence of God in the human soul.
- Jesus died because in you is death and he had to switch death to life.
- He took the thing you had so He could give you the thing He had.

“And to as many as RECEIVED HIM, He gave the power to become the sons of God.” (John 1:12)

Solution to the absence of the old life (Phantom limb syndrome)

1. **BIBLE:** Stimulating with NEW understanding
2. **PRAYER:** Connects me to the source of life - Spirit of the Living God
3. **GATHERING WITH BELIEVERS:** Focus on new relationships and “doing life” with people seeking truth

2. LEVELS OF CHANGE - *HOMework*

What are two of the most frustrating situations in your life right now? List them here.

What solutions have you attempted to apply to those situations? List your solutions and whether or not they have been effective in changing your situation. Be honest.

The life of a believer is no longer the life of a believer. The life of a believer comes from the One that we believe in. (Gal. 2:20)

After attending the class, can you identify some “wrong tools” you’ve been using? How have those tools affected you?

What “good advice” have you gotten to help you fix a problem? According to our definition, what level of change does that advice fit into?

“Our capabilities are like a thermostat set in your heart.” We begin to look at our environment because of our behavior. Then we look at our behavior and we think, “But I don’t know how to change.”

Have you ever had thoughts like:

- It’s too late for me.
- I’ll never be different.
- Nothing will ever change.
- I’ll never be free from this.

Describe that time in your life.

When you’re feeling the immense pressure that comes with changing the things that have never changed before, that’s how you know you’ve hit your “upper limits.” What have you accepted as the “upper limit” of the thermostat in your heart? Give some examples of how you “know” that’s the limit.

Before you go on take a minute and answer this question: What if the thing that “will never be different” could actually change? How would things look then? Pray and ask God to show you what life would look like, free from that thing.

Pray/Hear

We get our truth- or the version of our truth- from our experiences. Our “truth” leads to behavior, which reinforces that belief, and because we believe it, others react to our behavior again reinforcing our version of the truth. But most of the time, those experiences and beliefs are contrary to God’s Word and what He says about us.

As a man believes in his heart, so is he.” (Prov. 23:7a)

Ask God this question: **“Lord, what lie have I believed about myself that doesn’t match up with how You see me?”**

Use the Identity Papers you received in class to help you here.

Read these verses out loud. Then, listen and hear what God has to say about you.

2 Corinthians 5:17

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold the new has come.

Philippians 4:13

I can do all things through Him that strengthens me.

Galatians 2:20

I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Dig Deeper

Spend some time this week stimulating your new life, whether you just made a decision this week or if you accepted Jesus many years ago. Which of these three primary areas of hearing God is hardest for you? Why?

- Bible Reading
- Prayer
- Gathering with other Believers

Ask God what area He wants you to begin becoming stronger in RIGHT NOW.

Remember

- The cross says there's no such thing as "too late."
- If what you believe to be true about yourself is contrary to what God says about you in His Word, then it's a lie.
- "It's not what's in your mind that determines your experience; it's what in your heart." *"For as he thinks in his heart, so is he."* Proverbs 23:7
- Jesus died, not just for what you've done, but for who you are.

3. THE KINGDOM OF GOD - LECTURE NOTES

The Kingdom of God-- Jenny Stecklair

1. Jesus preached one central message – The Kingdom of God

- He often started out with “The Kingdom of heaven is like”
 - Jesus would then end with “For those who have ears, let them hear”
 - He’s saying – don’t miss what I am telling you.
-
-
-

2. The Basic Gospel Message We Know

Jesus died for your sin, His resurrection gives His power to overcome, if we believe and receive that Jesus died for your sins, you are saved and will go to heaven someday

- His death and resurrection hadn’t happened yet!
-
-
-

3. Jesus’ message summed up in “Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand”

- We interpret this message as “you better change, because God is coming and He will be ticked if you don’t get it together”
 - John 1 tells us that “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God”
 - JESUS’ UNDERSTANDING IS ETERNAL
-
-
-

4. REPENT!

- We have applied our self effort and religious pressure to our lives (and the lives of others) in an effort to bring about repentance

Metanoia – to think differently afterward

- Describing a process, the point in time when the process begins
 - Apply this to “Repent! For the Kingdom of God is at hand”
 - Is He telling us to straighten up? Or is He telling us there is a Kingdom within our reach, but we need to change the way we see reality to receive it?
-
-
-

5. The Way We See - The Tree of Life and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil

- Genesis 2:9, “Out of the ground the LORD God caused to grow every tree that is pleasing to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.”
 - This shift for Adam and Eve from God as their source to their knowledge of good and evil as their source is like unplugging the power cable on a computer and trying to use the data cable for power
 - Satan has a 2 prong approach – Good and Evil
 - Knowledge of evil – You shouldn’t have done that
 - Knowledge of good – You better straighten up and try harder
 - Knowledge of evil – showed Adam where he was insufficient
 - Knowledge of good – couldn’t fill him up with life
-
-
-

6. Jesus Came to give us LIFE

- Does John 10:10 say, “I came that they might do better, and do better abundantly”?? NO!
 - John 10:10 “The thief comes only to steal, kill and destroy. But I came that they may have life, and have it to the full”
-
-
-

7. John 4 - Jesus and the Woman at the Well

Jesus is confronting her source

- Not shaking a condemning finger, but applying pressure to wrong thinking
 - Won't stand for anything that would harm the object of His love, even if it's the object itself
 - John 4:10 - Jesus answered and said to her, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, ‘Give Me a drink,’ you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water.”
 - “If you knew who I was”
 - It's an invitation; the Kingdom of Heaven is within reach
 - “You would ask”
 - She needed to look with the eyes of heart, to see Him as her source.
 - “Rivers of living water”
 - She can now be plugged into the source that made her who she is in the first place
-
-
-

3. THE KINGDOM OF GOD - *HOMEWORK*

What was the problem Jesus came to earth to solve?

Have you ever felt real peace? What did it feel like? How did it affect you?

What was lost in Genesis 3? What was the result of that loss?

Describe a time when heaven invaded your reality. (Hint: As believers in Jesus, we've all had that happen; it's what happened at salvation. Suddenly you see the world around you differently, as if looking through God's eyes. There are usually many more times also.)

A kingdom will take on the characteristics of its ruler. Take just a moment and examine your “kingdom”- your environment. What does it reflect? Anger? Frustration? Joy? Peace?

What is “righteousness”? What is “peace”? What is “joy”? How would having those things change your perspective on your circumstances?

RIGHTEOUSNESS:

PEACE:

JOY:

Pray/Hear

Romans 14:17 says, “*The kingdom of God is... righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.*” Does your reality reflect this kingdom or another? Stop here, and ask the Lord to show you His kingdom in the midst of your circumstances.

READ:

2 Kings 6:15-18 tells the story of Elijah and his servant. Read the story and ask the Lord to open your eyes to the reality of His kingdom.

Lord, would You show me where You are in this circumstance (name the situation)?

Would You show me, like Elisha's servant, what You're doing?

Dig Deeper

Meditate on Ephesians 1:15-19 this week. "Meditation" simply means to contemplate or reflect on something. Chew on this scripture; memorize it. Sometimes it helps to write it out a few times.

Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power.

Pray:

- ***Lord, would You open the eyes of my heart to see Your riches?***
- ***Lord, what is my inheritance in You? (Ask Him to be specific.)***
- ***Lord show me Your power!***

Journal your experiences here.

Remember

- There is a heavenly space (domain, area, arena, place) that is in every way a reflection of God’s character and desires. This domain is God’s kingdom.
- When Jesus says, “The kingdom of heaven is like...” He’s not telling us how to do earth, He’s describing for us a reality that He has experienced-and we haven’t.
- The Good News of the gospel is that we can be restored from exile to God’s kingdom through the death and resurrection of Jesus.
- God spoke the earth and all of creation into existence. When He speaks, it’s creative and tangible-not just words.
- The two trees in the garden were a picture of what we would access as our source of life: self as source (tree of knowledge of good and evil) or God as source (tree of life).
- Peace is when the power and presence of God moves in and overwhelms those things that were once overwhelming you.
- When things are right in the sense that they fit into God’s plan, they are righteous.

4. HEARING GOD - LECTURE NOTES

HEARING GOD

We are made in the image of God to be God's "representatives."
To "RE- PRESENT" HIM to the planet.

1. Faith comes (not by trying really hard) but by hearing the Voice of God.

2. God WANTS to talk to you about who you really are.

Levels of Change: Environment, behavior, capability, belief, identity

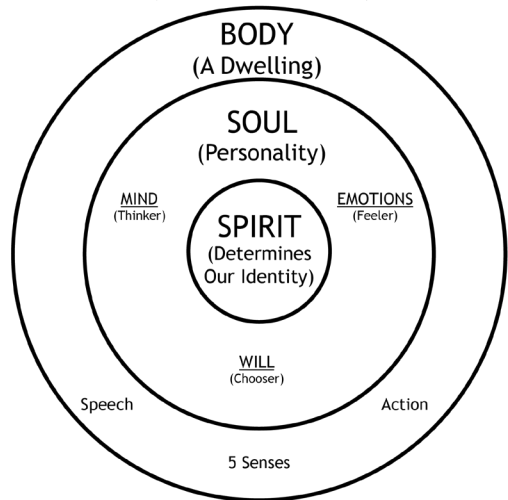
He uses the stuff on the planet to capture our attention.

3. Hearing God's voice is the primary way we disconnect from our knowledge and reconnect to the Source of ALL knowledge

A Biblical Picture of Man

Man - A Three-Part Whole

(I Thessalonians 5:23)



WAYS GOD WANTS TO REVEAL HIMSELF

1. God has given us **SCRIPTURE** as the **PRIMARY REVELATION** for who He is and who we are.

2 Tim. 3:16...All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, reproof, correcting, training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

Jer. 33:3 Call to Me and I will answer you and show you great and mighty things you have not seen before.

2 Cor. 6:18 I will be a Father to you and you shall be sons and daughters to me.

Lev. 26:12 I will make My dwelling among you, and My soul will not reject you. I will also walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people.

2. Prophetic Words: Someone hears the Lord speak and they proclaim it from their mouth.

3. Personal Revelation: Spirit to spirit exchange

God often speaks through our learning styles: Visual, Auditory, Kinesthetic, etc.

3 questions I need to ask when I perceive God is speaking to me:

1. Does what I have sensed, or seen, or heard – line up with the nature of God as taught, revealed in the **Scripture**?
2. Does it produce the **fruit** of the spirit?
3. Does your revelation have the result of releasing you from the power the circumstance has over you?

What language does God speak?

He speaks **reality** into existence by His Words.

Rom. 4:17 God gives life to the dead and calls into existence that which is not.

The World is Made by the Word of God

Col. 1: 17 He is BEFORE all things, IN all things, and all things HAVE THEIR BEING in Him.

Heb. 11:3 By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the Word of God so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.

THE POWER OF CONFESSION

Confession is more than **forgiveness of sin.**

To confess is to HEAR, BELIEVE, SPEAK AND ACT.

Confession begins with God and is fulfilled by God.

The point of confession is the completion of a **circuit.**

Kingdom of God come to me, inhabits me, and then goes through me to the world.

WE MUST TAKE THE TIME TO **HEAR!**

4. HEARING GOD - HOMEWORK

So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.
Romans 10:17 (NKJV)

2 Timothy 3:16

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness.

Hebrews 4:12

For the Word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

John 5:37-40

*“And the Father who sent Me has Himself borne witness about Me. His voice you have never heard, His form you have never seen, and you do not have His word abiding in you, for you do not believe the one whom He has sent. You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about Me, **yet you refuse to come to Me that you may have life.**”*

Hebrews 11:3

By faith we understand that the universe was created by the Word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible.

Describe a time when you think you heard God speak to you. What was that like? What impact did it have on you?

Pray/Hear

If you can't think of a time, ask God to tell you why you haven't yet heard His voice.

Why is it important to hear God speak to us?

God speaks you and me perfectly; He speaks to us in the best possible way for us to hear Him. Some of us are visual; He'll speak to us in pictures. Some are auditory; He speaks to us in words or phrases. And some of us are "feelers" or more kinesthetic, and He speaks to us in impressions.

God speaks through the Scriptures. Take the list of Scriptures from the Levels of Change lesson, and pray through them again, allowing God to speak His word to you.

Journal what you hear.

It's okay if you don't think you heard Him this time. Take a minute and ask again. Remember that He's better at speaking than we are at hearing; it takes practice to "tune in" to Him.

Now take a minute and evaluate what you just heard.

- Does it line up with Scripture?

Does it produce the fruit of the Spirit in you? ***“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.”***
Galatians 5:22

- Does it set you free? “And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” John 8:32

Dig Deeper

Spend some time looking for opportunities to hear God this week. During your quiet time, ask Him to tell you what He'd like to talk about.

Spend some time asking God for encouraging words for others. Remember, you can give them an encouraging or comforting word without sounding religious and weird. Try something like this:

- "Hey, I feel like I'm supposed to tell you this _____"
- "Just wanted to let you know that _____"
- "I think God might be saying _____"

Journal about what happened. Include "confirmations" – when others tell you the word you gave was "right on" or "just what they needed."

Remember

- Revelation, not just information, produces change.
- We often want to talk about the "do's" and "should." God usually wants to talk about who we are and Whose we are.
- When you don't feel as if you're hearing Him, try asking different questions. Or, ask Him what He wants to talk about.
- Don't get discouraged! Keep asking. He'll answer.

5. LIFE IN THE KINGDOM - LECTURE NOTES

Life in the Kingdom

What's our part and what's God's part.

1. Lordship
2. Transformation
3. Authority
4. Spiritual Warfare

Roadblocks:

We as modern Christians stake our entire life on a belief system built on a world-view that many of us don't have and haven't shifted over to.

As modern Americans, we are materialistic and intellectual.

A Christian worldview is built on a spiritual and natural worldview that's integrated.

Genesis 2:9

1. LORDSHIP

Our Part: Lordship is when we surrender our will to God.

His Part: He makes us new. He puts His spirit in us. He gives us the mind of Christ.

If you are deciding which individual issues to surrender to God, you are still exercising and therefore strengthening YOUR WILL.

What does it mean to surrender our will to the Lordship of Jesus?

We approach God and recognizing He is the source of all things.

So how should we use our will? SUBMISSION

God's voice/ Power VS Our Ability/Strength
Basis: the tree of life.

We surrender to the Lordship of Jesus, by submitting our will, choosing Him as the power source of our lives

2. TRANSFORMATION

Our part is to: Understand the change we are engaging in. (Romans 12).

NOT

Good vs Evil

BUT

LIFE vs Knowledge.

God's Part: To accomplish that change.

1. Am I allowing my flesh to empower the transformation process or am I surrendering increasingly over time to the Spirit?
2. Is that God's voice or is that my flesh?
3. He's after you growing in the ability to see more the way He sees.
4. **Lie:** YOUR DEATH CAN DO MORE FOR YOU TO SET YOU FREE THAN THE DEATH OF JESUS
5. Baptism in the Holy Spirit. - Acts 1:3-8
 - a. Our part is to wait here
 - b. God's part is to bring power.

3. AUTHORITY

Power is the strength or ability to accomplish something.

Authority is delegated power.

Luke 10:19

Our part? To exercise authority

His part? To empower our actions, words etc.

1. Be under authority.
2. It comes from His presence and our submission to who He is and our asking.
3. You do not have authority over another person but you have authority over the spiritual realm around them.

4. SPIRITUAL WARFARE (2 Cor. 10:3-5)

1. The central issue in spiritual warfare is not what's in front of us but which voice we listen to about the issue that's in front of us.
2. SPIRITUAL FORCES ARE EMPOWERED BY HUMAN AGREEMENT.

Our Part: Is to be a place inhabited by the Kingdom of God

God's Part: The presence and power of God in you steps into the geography and doesn't turn back the circumstance necessarily but the power of that circumstance to dictate the truth of that moment.

We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God.

1. Speculations are thought processes that are rational in nature based on evidence.
2. Every lofty thing: Anything we fear more than we trust God

5. LIFE IN THE KINGDOM - *HOMEWORK*

Think about your life before you met Jesus and after you met Him. Compare the two. What’s the difference now?

Describe a time when you’ve seen God’s power at work in your life.

What does it mean that we have a “will”?

How do you hear from the Lord? What do you do to help hear from Him?

Do you feel like there are parts of your life you've surrendered to Him, but not others? Is there an area you have not yet surrendered? How would it be different if you surrendered your will completely?

Pause for a moment here and surrender your will in the issue you wrote about above to Him.

Lord, today I choose to surrender my will to You. I choose to get out of the driver's seat and let You get in. I choose to let You steer, to be the passenger along for the ride You choose.

What's your first thought when you hear about something miraculous? Skeptical? Unbelieving? Why do you think that is? Do you need to ask for greater faith?

Describe a time when you tried to do God's job for Him. How did that work out?

Describe a time in your life when something happened that could only have been God’s doing. What was that like?

Pray/Hear

Acts 1:8
“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

Jesus asked His disciples to wait there until He had sent the Holy Spirit. Wait... Don’t do... Don’t go... Don’t move... Just wait. Then when the Holy Spirit had come upon them, giving them His supernatural power, they were able to go out and do what He had called them to do. This is called the “baptism in the Holy Spirit.”

Spend some time waiting now. God sent the Holy Spirit to be real and present with us; ask Him to come now.

PRAY:
Father, fill me with Your Holy Spirit, right now, right here. I want to see more of You. I want to see Your power. I want to see Your Kingdom come on the earth, through me.

Now wait. Allow a few moments for God to work. Set aside your expectations and agenda. Let God define what this experience needs to look like for you.

Dig Deeper

Life in the Kingdom of God involves a continual shift in our way of thinking – from our way to His way. **Spiritual warfare is simply making the shift from agreeing with the lies of the enemy to agreeing with God’s truth.** Take some time this week and ask God to help you identify some areas where you might have believed a lie. Then ask Him to tell you the truth.

Journal some of what you hear.

LIE:

TRUTH:

LIE:

TRUTH:

2 Corinthians tells us to bring “*every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.*” **Pay close attention to your thought processes this week.** Did you notice some areas where you’re beginning to think differently? What about some areas where you might be stuck in an old way of thinking? Take authority over your mind and thoughts, coming into agreement with Jesus.

Are there any situations in your life that don’t line up with what God says? Ask Him what He says about them then declare the truth He speaks. Exercise the authority He’s given you over those situations.

Journal your thoughts and experiences here.

Remember

- We have a part to play in the Kingdom. There is a part that only God can do, but there is a part He will not do for us because it is YOUR part to do.
- We are created in God’s image – He is not in our image.
- Life in the Kingdom is a journey toward discovering how God sees, thinks, feels, etc.
- *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come (2 Corinthians 5:17).*
- Transformation is a qualitative change; it’s so much more than wiping out our past.
- The choice we have to make is between being our own source (Tree of Knowledge) and allowing God to be our source (Tree of Life).

6. REPENTANCE - BREAKING STRONGHOLDS

Repentance is not a one-time event but a lifestyle you practice daily.

Fallen human nature seeks to find an environmental cause for sin (brain chemistry, poor upbringing, poverty, childhood abuse, evolutionary drives, etc). But the Bible doesn't allow it. The bad news is that all mankind is under the wrath of God and we deserve it. Notice how unflattering Paul is to his fellow Christians (and himself) when describing their former condition:

You were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest (of mankind).

Ephesians 2:1-3

To understand the heart of the reason we have problems we must understand this **FOUNDATIONAL RULE** about the human condition:

All human sin and failure is the result of unbelief, disobedience, or ignorance of God or His life principles.

REPENTANCE IS THE CURE.

When the gospel writers wished to summarize Jesus teachings, this is what they wrote:

Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

Mark 1:14-16

*The people who were sitting in darkness saw a great Light,
and those who were sitting in the land and shadow of death,
Upon them a Light dawned. From that time Jesus began to preach
and say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."*

Matthew 4:16-18

That means you must turn from your sin and rightly relate to God because the powers of God's kingdom age [salvation and all it entails] are only available to those do. If you won't repent- you won't enjoy the freedom of life in God.

Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent, because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead.

Acts 17:30-31

Repentance is central to all life in God.

WHAT IS BIBLICAL REPENTANCE?

The Greek word used for repentance in the New Testament is ***metanoia***: **to change one's mind leading to a change of heart.**

- **Repentance is a process of rejecting one set of beliefs or perspectives and replacing them with another.**
- Repentance includes sorrow for sin, and embracing the truth (instead of the untruth that got you into this mess). This is a reversal of thought where you displace the thought patterns, ambitions, inclinations and longings of the old nature with the new nature given to you by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.
- **Principle: the first step in solving ANY life problem is to take responsibility for your role in the problem.** If it's not your fault, if you are merely a victim, if you have done no wrong- there is nothing to repent of.
- Ways people AVOID taking responsibility for their sin: minimize, rationalize, deny, blame shift.

THE REPENTANCE FORMULA

In repentance, you replace sin with obedience and replace false beliefs with the truth.

- 1) **confess the sin**
- 2) **reject the lie**
- 3) **embrace the truth**
- 4) **restitution (if necessary)**

Let's examine each step in repentance.

1) Confess the sin.

Confessing means you admit or acknowledge your guilt. You take responsibility for your actions.

So it shall be when he becomes guilty in one of these, that he shall confess that in which he has sinned. Leviticus 5:5

The descendants of Israel separated themselves from all foreigners, and stood and confessed their sins and the iniquities of their fathers. Nehemiah 9:2

I acknowledged my sin to You, And my iniquity I did not hide; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord"; And You forgave the guilt of my sin. Selah. Psalm 32:5

If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us. 1 John 1:8-10

A biblical confession must be specific. You should name the sin: fear, worry, lust, greed, unforgiveness, etc.

A confession acknowledges the injured party: God and/or man.

Receiving the forgiveness. You should acknowledge the Lord's forgiveness: "Thank you Lord for forgiving me." Don't beg God for forgiveness.

Forgiveness of sins is now ours through covenant.

"This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days," says the Lord: "I will put My laws upon their heart, and on their mind I will write them," He then says, "And their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more."
Hebrews 10:16-17

Repentance involves more than just securing God's forgiveness. It includes reversing your thoughts and life direction on the subject. Therefore true, biblical repentance involves rejecting the lies and embracing the truth.

2) Reject the lie.

Reject the lie: To renounce something is to reject or disown or repudiate it.

"We have renounced the hidden, shameful things ..." 2 Corinthians 4:2

"But immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints..." Ephesians 5:3

Renunciation is a choice, an act of the will, where you repudiate the sinful activity or attitude and instead, embrace the new, godly one.

Turn from that sin back to the opposite (obedience to God).

"He who steals must steal no longer (he must reject thievery); but rather he must labor, performing with his own hands what is good, so that he will have something to share with one who has need." (generosity is the opposite of thievery)
Ephesians 4:28

3) Embrace the truth: knowing the truth is what sets us free. Declare the truth about your situation. The truth is going to contain the biblical opposite of your sin: lust vs. purity, fear vs. trust, revenge vs. forgiveness, stealing vs. working hard, laziness vs. diligence, treachery vs. loyalty, etc.

It would go something like this:

"Lord, I reject and disown the sin of (name it) and I choose not to (name it) any longer.

Instead, with Your help, I will (name the opposite action or belief) ."

4) Restitution- apologizing and making good

Restitution is typically necessary where others are harmed: gossip, stealing, lying, etc. In a situation where your sin has affected others- repentance means you will humble yourself, admit your fault to them, and make good the loss.

Restitution is making good. It involves apologizing, returning what was stolen, or restoring the relationship, or making the wrong right again. The biblical concept of restitution is part of repentance.

*“...they should repent and turn to God,
performing deeds appropriate to repentance.”*
Acts 26:20

*“...then he shall confess his sins which he has committed,
and he shall make restitution in full for his wrong and add to it
one-fifth of it, and give it to him whom he has wronged.”*
Numbers 5:7

*“If a man steals an ox or a sheep and slaughters it or sells it,
he shall pay five oxen for the ox and four sheep for the sheep.”*
Exodus 22:1

*“He who steals must steal no longer; but rather he must labor,
performing with his own hands what is good,
so that he will have something to share with one who has need.”*
Ephesians 4:28

Examples of restitution:

- Apologizing to the one(s) you injured.
- Admit to the professor that you cheated on the tests.
- Return the money you stole and face the authorities.
- Go back and tell the truth to someone you lied to (or about).

In restitution, you are attempting to make things right- to undo the wrong as best you can. You are throwing yourself on the mercy of the person you have wronged:

“If you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering. Make friends quickly with your opponent at law while you are with him on the way, so that your opponent may not hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the officer, and you be thrown into prison.”

Matthew 5:23-25

Conclusion:

When confronting a mental stronghold, spiritual weakness, sin, or interpersonal conflict, you must take responsibility for your part of the problem and repent, that is, you replace sin with obedience and replace false beliefs with the truth.

- 1) confess the sin
- 2) reject the lie
- 3) embrace the truth
- 4) restitution (if necessary)

BUILDING ON THE FOUNDATION

Take a few minutes to reflect on the past few weeks.
Is there a new truth God has made clear to you, that you are committing to walk in?

A few weeks ago, we talked about our “lenses” - how we see reality. Have your lenses changed during this study? List some things you will do differently after going through this series.

[illegible]

This is not the end of your freedom journey; in fact, it's just the beginning!

How do you now think differently about “freedom” than you did at the beginning of this series?

For most, there was a “problem” that brought you here in the first place. How do you think differently about that problem now?

What are some ways you can now see the Kingdom at work in your life, where maybe you couldn’t before?

We learned more about how to hear God speak. Give some examples of when you’ve heard God’s voice in your daily life since starting this study.

Pray/Hear

Read Isaiah 61, out loud. Declare what God says about you!

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound;

To proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn;

To grant to those who mourn in Zion— to give them beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit; that they may be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified.

They shall build up the ancient ruins; they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.

Strangers shall stand and tend your flocks; foreigners shall be your plowmen and vinedressers.

But you shall be called the priests of the Lord; they shall speak of you as the ministers of our God; you shall eat the wealth of the nations, and in their glory you shall boast.

Instead of your shame there shall be a double portion; instead of dishonor they shall rejoice in their lot; therefore in their land they shall possess a double portion; they shall have everlasting joy.

Ask God to speak to you about how you can be a conduit of the kingdom, personally. God is very creative; be open to some new experiences and opportunities!

Dig Deeper

The end of this series is not the end. Hopefully throughout this series, you've begun to realize that "freedom" isn't a destination, it's a journey. And you've just started! There is so much more of God, and so much more of the real you, to discover.

There are many ways to stimulate the new life, new creation, the kingdom, inside of you. Remember, these are not things to check off; not new behaviors to "learn." They are ways of growing in intimacy with your heavenly Father, the One who created your identity and wants to shape it - His way, by healing hurts, speaking life and working real transformation in your life through His presence and voice.

Spend some time reading the Bible. Read it a lot, even the parts you might not understand. **Find some favorite passages and memorize them.** Consider starting in the Psalms. David gives us a very real picture - good, bad and ugly - of what life in the Kingdom looks like.

Pursue Him. Seek Him. Talk to Him. You'll find Him, and when you do, you'll find that He is the true source of life and the one who can provide everything you need.

Remember

- Real change can only happen at the identity level.
- God is the only one who can change how you really see yourself.
- Freedom isn't about the absence of something; it's the presence of Someone.
- Freedom is the ability to relate to God fully as the person you were created and redeemed to be.
- Going to church, reading your Bible, seeking a group to do life with - these aren't just "good" behaviors, but ways to stimulate the new life inside of you.
- Freedom is a journey, not a destination.

Resources

To find Video resources, as well as schedules of upcoming classes and events, <https://www.foothillschurch.org/ministries/freedom>

Last revised: July 2020

Freedom is the ability to respond fully to God out of who He created and redeemed you to be. Foundations of Freedom is designed to set the stage for you to begin your journey to freedom and help you become the person you were created to be.

As you go through this study, you will be challenged in several significant areas:

- Adjusting your focus to seeking God's Kingdom first
- Shifting your main target from your behaviors to your beliefs and identity
- Changing your emphasis from more knowledge to experiencing the voice of God
- Clarifying your choices as life vs. death rather than simply good vs. bad

Through Foundations of Freedom, you will go deeper in your experience of freedom and learn how to maintain a life of freedom over time and be an influence in the lives of others.

-Bob Hamp