

MEN'S LIFE BLOOMINGTON & GOD @ WORK

Tuesday, November 12, 2019

Freedom: After the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil

Overview: Life changed forever, in an instant, but the reality came like a flood, slowly at first, then overwhelming later. A bite from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil changed the way we relate to this world, to each other, and unfortunately complicated our relationship with God. When we think of the garden of Eden we think of “abundance.” What a wonderful word! Do you know that a simple bite, sin, did not change God’s desire for us to live “Abundantly” and live a life in amazing relationship with him? John 10:10. It’s obvious that sin from the past, and sin daily bogs us down and at times convinces us that we aren’t good enough, undeserving of an abundant relationship with God. So how do we pursue freedom from that? How do we accept God’s desire for us to have hope, joy, and purpose? Jeremiah 29:13

God Working In Us: Joshua Holden

Segment Questions:

- When God told us not to eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, and we did, how did that change our relationship with God? Genesis 2:16-17 Colossians 1:21
- When God said we would toil on earth, did that mean we wouldn’t enjoy the fruit of our labor? Genesis 3:17
- Do you find yourself “doing more” to gain God’s approval? To feel more loved by God? John 14:15
- Discuss religion versus relationship. Colossians 2:6-20 Do you feel like you obey God out of duty, or delight? 1 John 5:3,12
- When it comes to asking for forgiveness from sin, do you believe that God harbors frustration with your continued sin that follows, or does He free you from the bondage of that history? Romans 8:1

Action Questions:

- How can you desire Freedom, seek Freedom, request Freedom, and claim Freedom from God for your sins if you do not award Freedom from sin that others have perpetrated against you? Matthew 18:35
- Is forgiveness a sign of love in spite of the sin? Colossians 1:22-23
- Can you accept the gospel for what it is, and live free from your sin, a life abundantly in relationship with Jesus? Colossians 1:23

Closing Prayer: Lord, Jesus, please forgive me for my sin. Thank you for forgiving me from my past sin, and forgiving me for my present sin. Help me to be free so I can look up and focus on you. Give me confidence in your love for me that I may live a life abundantly.

Introduction

Sin has always been a barrier in my brain between God and I. This study provided by Church of the Highlands has been an excellent one my wife and I have been studying this year that has helped me come back to the realization that Christ has set me free from the chains of sin. Galatians 5:1

I struggle with “deserving” an abundant life. I labor every time I sin as I look at myself and think, has anything changed? I’m still the same guy with the same problems, doing the same things, acting the same way. Then I feel irrelevant in the work God is doing, and can do, through me. Like I am starting over again to build back up to being a good guy. Undeserving, and a marked tool not worthy to be used for His purpose. I even struggle with material things. Anything too nice or fancy just seems like an extravagance that I don’t deserve, and I’m embarrassed to enjoy it.

So what four things can we do to live a life more abundantly? What can we do to live a life of freedom from sin?

1-Fall in love with Jesus

2-Serve God through relationship not rules

3-Respond to sin with life. Romans 8:38-39

4-Forgive others who have sinned against us.

4-Guard your heart from going back. Ephesians 4:17-29 John 15:5

Growing up I was taught that I need my own personal relationship with Jesus. That was informative, and I used that in my thought life. Falling in love with Jesus, knowing He loves me, and that He is real. We all want to be loved. Knowing He loves me so much he died for me, and forgave me, is enough.

I do what God wants me to do because I love him, and want to please Him, not to check something off a list so I can say I’ve done my duty.

It is vital that we know that nothing can separate us anymore from the love of God when we love Jesus. We have to trust that. He won’t disappear on us.

We are commanded to forgive others, and many times over. There is no getting around God’s very direct and clear instruction, we better forgive those who sin against us. We are sinners too, after all.

Last, we cannot be set in our ways. We really do have to put off the old way we were. I know I feel a whole lot more “abundant” when I am good than when I am bad.

I seek Freedom where I know God loves me, and will use me. My past and current are not enough to separate me from His good work now. Instead of starting all over every time I sin, I need to learn to live an “Abundant Life” where I am in “relationship” with Him, not “Religion” with Him.

I’m learning to accept the truth that I know. John 8:32. Jesus died on the cross for my sin so that I may be forgiven, and be free from the chains of sin which separated me from Him. I now can have a relationship with Him where I am redeemed.