

Freedom – 3

Galatians 5:1 (NIV)

1 It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.

- The old is gone and the new has come
– **2 Corinthians 5:17**

Habitual patterns can weigh us down and keep us hindered from living the life of Freedom

Hebrews 12:1-2 (NLT)

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. ² **We do this** by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith.* Because of the joy* awaiting him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now he is seated in the place of honor beside God's throne.

We may confess sin again and again yet continue to fall into it over and over

- We try to gain the victory yet fail no matter how hard we try
- *Maybe there is a past wound that needs healing*
- *Maybe there is something dark in our past*
- *Maybe there is something illicit we have dabbled in*
- *More than likely it is a spiritual problem*

A Christian can not be owned by a demon. But a Christian can be influenced by and come under the control from a demon, even from within. The demon can ride you!

Spiritual attacks from the outside:

No Slide: 2 Corinthians 12:7 (NLT)

⁷ even though I have received such wonderful revelations from God. So to keep me from becoming proud, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger from Satan to torment me and keep me from becoming proud.

- When we humble ourselves the Devil will flee
– James 4:7

Demonic influence from the inside:

No Slide: Ephesians 4:27 (NLT)

²⁷ for anger gives a foothold to the devil.

- We have been made alive and sealed by the Holy Spirit;
- We can choose to live by the flesh or by the Holy Spirit – Colossians 3:7-10
- By living in the flesh we can “give place” to the devil

We need *discipleship* and *deliverance*

Romans 6:16 (NLT)

¹⁶ Don't you realize that you become the slave of whatever you choose to obey? You can be a slave to sin, which leads to death, or you can choose to obey God, which leads to righteous living.

Breaking the foothold of pride

Proverbs 16:18 (NLT)

¹⁸ Pride goes before destruction, and haughtiness before a fall.

God has called each and every one of us into the ministry

- He calls us ministers of righteousness
- We are called to be salt and light to a world that desperately needs Jesus

We are called to make an impact on our generation

- Whatever your ministry is, the temptation will be to do it in our own power
- Whether it's to lead a children's church class, minister to the elderly, usher or lead a small group
- You can't do it in your own strength
 - That thought is staggering yet freeing

Philippians 2:13 (NLT)

¹³ For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him.

Ephesians 1:11 (NLT)

¹¹ Furthermore, because we are united with Christ, we have received an inheritance from God,* for he chose us in advance, and he makes everything work out according to his plan.

Philippians 4:13 (NLT)

¹³ For I can do everything through Christ,* who gives me strength.

Are you dependant on God for everything? Are you both capable and powerless at the same time?

- If not that's a root of pride
- It's a BIG problem

Most of us would deny that we have a root of pride

Let's help identify what pride looks like

- Pride can get in when we trust in your own strength
- Do you consider yourself a strong or a weak person?
- It may not look the way you think

2 Corinthians 12:10 (NLT)

¹⁰ That's why I take pleasure in my weaknesses, and in the insults, hardships, persecutions, and troubles that I suffer for Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

The only way we have real power is through God

- God never expects us to go in our own strength
- When we try to we fool ourselves
- When we do it opens the door to oppression

Ephesians 6:10 (NLT)

¹⁰ A final word: Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.

The Apostle Peter thought he was strong apart from the Lord

- Jesus is enjoying His last Passover meal with the disciples
- A fight breaks out over who should be considered the greatest
- Jesus solves the debate and then turns to Peter

Luke 22:31–32 (NLT)

³¹ “Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift each of you like wheat. ³² But I have pleaded in prayer for you, Simon, that your faith should not fail. So when you have repented and turned to me again, strengthen your brothers.”

- Jesus predicts Peter will fall away
- Peter understood what Jesus was saying
- He says

Luke 22:33 (NLT)

³³ Peter said, “Lord, I am ready to go to prison with you, and even to die with you.”

Luke 22:34 (NLT)

³⁴ But Jesus said, “Peter, let me tell you something. Before the rooster crows tomorrow morning, you will deny three times that you even know me.”

We see a warning that we often overlook

- In verse 31 the word “asked” to sift you
- It literally means to ask with success
- To both ask for and receive it

Luke 22:31 New (NASB)

³¹ “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan

has ^[a]demanded *permission* to sift you like wheat;

- He has demanded permission because he has the right
- Jesus was warning Peter to watch out because he left a spiritual door open to spiritual oppression
- Satan has a right to go through open doors

Here is another example of this principal

Mark 14:27 (NLT)

²⁷ On the way, Jesus told them, “All of you will desert me. For the Scriptures say, ‘God will strike* the Shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.’”

Mark 14:29 (NLT)

²⁹ Peter said to him, “Even if everyone else deserts you, I never will.”

You can almost hear the disdain and pride in Peter’s voice

- Even if
- I’m better than that
- All of these other weaklings yes
- But not me

Then Jesus makes His prediction almost as if to say,
“What part of the word all did you not understand?”

We see here that Jesus is quoting a scripture from the Old Testament and Peter in essence is saying that the Bible is wrong

– That’s arrogance – That’s pride

There was another time when Jesus was telling His disciples that He must suffer and give His life, and again Peter...

Matthew 16:22–23 (NLT)

²² But Peter took him aside and began to reprimand him* for saying such things. “Heaven forbid, Lord,” he said.

“This will never happen to you!”

²³ Jesus turned to Peter and said, “Get away from me, Satan! You are a dangerous trap to me. You are seeing things merely from a human point of view, not from God’s.”

- Can you imagine?
- Rebuking Jesus
- When we think we know better than God we have absolutely opened the door to pride

This is more common than we admit

- Maybe we’ve walked with the Lord for a while
- We start to trust our own strength
- We can resist a temptation on our own
- We can get through a difficult time if we isolate ourselves from others

1 Corinthians 10:12 (NLT)

¹² If you think you are standing strong, be careful not to fall.

Pride gets in when we trust our own righteousness

The Bible shows this to us in the story of Job

- Satan gets permission to afflict him
- He loses his family, his livestock
- His life is wrecked
- We see the root of his problem

Job 33:8–9 (NLT) *Elihu speaking of Job*

⁸ “You have spoken in my hearing, and I have heard your very words. ⁹ You said, ‘I am pure; I am without sin; I am innocent; I have no guilt.

- He was used to bringing offerings for his children
- He was an upright man
- He started to trust his own righteousness

Job 40:8 (NLT) *God speaking*

⁸ “Will you discredit my justice and condemn me just to prove you are right?

- Job hears these words and repents

Pride gets in when we trust in our own wisdom

1 Kings 22 tells that story of King Ahab wanting to reclaim Ramoth Gilead. It had been taken by Syria. The king of Syria was too strong for him so he asks Jehoshaphat, king of Judah to help him.

Jehoshaphat recommends that they seek God for wisdom. Ahab seeks his personal 400 prophets who say, “Go for it” Jehoshaphat calls for Micaiah, a true prophet but Ahab doesn’t like him because he never prophesies good concerning him.

1 Kings 22:15–18 (NLT)

¹⁵ When Micaiah arrived before the king, Ahab asked him, “Micaiah, should we go to war against Ramoth-gilead, or should we hold back?” Micaiah replied sarcastically, “Yes, go up and be victorious, for the LORD will give the king victory!” ¹⁶ But the king replied sharply, “How many times must I demand that you speak only the truth to me when you speak for the LORD?” ¹⁷ Then Micaiah told him, “In a vision I saw all Israel scattered on the mountains, like sheep without a shepherd. And the LORD said, ‘Their master has been killed.* Send them home in peace.’ ”

¹⁸ “Didn’t I tell you?” the king of Israel exclaimed to Jehoshaphat. “He never prophesies anything but trouble for me.”

- He clearly said don’t attack – you’re going to fail

1 Kings 22:19–23 (NLT)

¹⁹ Then Micaiah continued, “Listen to what the LORD says! I saw the LORD sitting on his throne with all the armies of heaven around him, **on his right and on his left.** ²⁰ And the LORD said, ‘Who can entice Ahab to go into battle against Ramoth-gilead so he can be killed?’ “There were many suggestions, ²¹ and finally a spirit approached the LORD and said, ‘I can do it!’ ²² “ ‘How will you do this?’ the LORD asked. “And the spirit replied, ‘I will go out and inspire all of Ahab’s prophets to speak lies.’ “ **‘You will succeed,’** said the LORD. ‘Go ahead and do it.’ ²³ “So you see, the LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouths of all your prophets. For the LORD has pronounced your doom.”

All the armies of heaven or “host of heaven” suggests that fallen angels are present as well.

- On His right and on His left
- **Matt. 25:31-46** the judgment of the sheep and goats

2 Kings 21 tells a story of King Manasseh, who was king at 12 years old and reigned for 55 years

- He was a horrible king
- He led the nation to worship idols
- He practiced soothsaying, witchcraft and consulted mediums
- He built idols to worship the “host of heaven”
 - probably fallen angels

God allows a lying spirit to deceive him

1 Kings 22:22 (NLT)

²² “ ‘How will you do this?’ the LORD asked. “And the spirit replied, ‘I will go out and inspire all of Ahab’s prophets to speak lies.’ “ ‘You will succeed,’ said the LORD. ‘Go ahead and do it.’

- Notice – God is in charge
- God allows thing to bring us discipline
 - **Hebrews 12:6**
- Whenever we sin we open a door for the enemy

Proverbs 16:18 (NLT)

¹⁸ Pride goes before destruction, and haughtiness before a fall.

- Pride doesn’t go before a fall
- It goes before destruction

Sometimes the Lord will use the enemy to get our attention

- He may allow a fall to save us from destruction
- Push you out of the path of a moving vehicle – bondage
- What we do while in bondage is important
- Ask God to set you free!

Maybe today you feel you've allowed pride in

- Only God can remove the guilt
- You cant do it on your own
- That's what you've been doing
- You need His help

Habakkuk 2:4 (NKJV)

⁴ “Behold the proud, His soul is not upright in him; But the just shall live by his faith.

Don't trust in your own wisdom

James 3:14–15 (NLT)

¹⁴ But if you are bitterly jealous and there is selfish ambition in your heart, don't cover up the truth with boasting and lying. ¹⁵ For jealousy and selfishness are not God's kind of wisdom. Such things are earthly, unspiritual, and demonic.

James 4:10 (NLT)

¹⁰ Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up in honor.