

Freedom

1 KEY POINT:

Biblical freedom does not mean we can do what we want – it is the freedom to become what God wants us to be.

2 BIBLE VERSES:

- 1 Corinthians 10.23-33
- Ephesians 2 v.8-9
- John 8 v.31-36
- 1 Peter 1 v.13-16
- 1 Peter 2 v.16
- Romans 6, 7 and 8 (you need to study this carefully)
- Hebrews 10 v.26-30

3 THOUGHTS:

- When Jesus died, He died to set us free from the consequences of sin.
- Wrongdoing tends to control us. The bible refers to this as ‘slaves to sin’. God’s action in sending His Son to take the punishment for our sin has freed us - to be under new management – ‘slaves to righteousness’ – in other words we can now start to do and be what God originally intended for us.
- This is obviously a process – we don’t become perfect the day we become Christians, but we do now have the Holy Spirit helping us do things God’s way rather than our own way.
- But it does mean we can change our thinking about sin – we don’t have to feel we are helpless and can’t help ourselves. We are free to not sin. We have a choice!
- We also have to think about how our ‘freedom’ affects others.

4 POSSIBLE ILLUSTRATIONS:

- You might want to use an area of your life where you feel you are becoming more free.
- You could use a story about someone who was ‘set free’ e.g. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terry_Waite and discuss how they felt?

5 HOW IT RELATES TO DRUGS/ADDICTION:

You could talk about how people often want to be free to do things like (for example) drink alcohol. You should stress that you are not saying that drinking alcohol is a sin, but when people think of freedom regarding alcohol, they think in terms of the freedom to drink. What about the freedom to not drink? You could refer to 1 Corinthians 10.23-33, in particular the verse about not doing anything that would cause someone to stumble.

You could also talk about addiction (see addiction section) and consider how being 'set free' might relate to this. Perhaps you could focus on choosing to rely on God for some of the things we might otherwise get from drug use, rather than using a drug, so avoiding drug-related problems.

The following verses demonstrate some ideas for this – you will no doubt have other/better ideas!

What the drug might do	What God promises
Help you relax	Psalm 23. 1-2
Help you stay awake/have energy	Isaiah 40. 29-31
Help you experience alternative realities	Joel 2. 28 (!)
Make you feel comforted/safe	2 Corinthians 1. 3-4
Help you have fun	John 10. 10
Help you feel confident	Galatians 2. 20

(N.B. People dealing with issues of dependency should get professional help, this sermon is not trying to say that a person will necessarily be free from addiction if they are a Christian).

6 SUGGESTED APPLICATION:

1. Could we audit ourselves from time to time to see how we are doing with our freedom? Are we better at forgiveness than we used to be, for example? Sometimes as God works on us, we may even feel worse as He reveals stuff to us we need to deal with. If appropriate, you could even spend a few minutes in silence, allowing people to prayerfully 'audit' themselves.
2. Are there areas in our life where we rely on something harmful/unhelpful for help, rather than going to God? It may be that someone might want to get someone to pray with them, or possibly seek help.