

# Greenslopes Baptist Church

## Series: Choices

### Part 5 : Choose Freedom

#### Introduction

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to be a Slave and live without the freedoms we currently enjoy?

*31 To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. 32 Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."*

Freedom and Slavery are constant themes throughout Scripture...

- The Israelites were slaves on numerous occasions
  - Many wealthy Israelites owned slaves
  - Slaves were considered part of the plunder of war... (Deut 20:14)
  - The Law of Moses addressed the treatment of slaves
  - "Indentured slavery" allowed for Hebrews to work off a debt
  - Slavery was limited... Israelite slaves were to be freed in the year of Jubilee(Ex 21:11)
- God created humanity to enjoy freedom, but everything that God gives, the devil tries to take away

Slavery robs a person of:

- Choice  
The freedom to choose a career, place to live, how to spend your time etc
- An Abundant life  
The privilege of playing sports, creating music, enjoying art, culture, travel etc
- A meaningful life
- Identity and Personal Value  
Slaves were treated as property and primarily valued for the work they did

The damaging effects of slavery can continue to have a lasting impact...

After 400 years of Egyptian slavery... the Israelites could not shake off their identity as slaves

They considered returning to slavery instead of persevering through the wilderness (Ex 16:3)

They could not believe they were capable of defeating the inhabitants of Canaan so again planned to choose another leader and return to Egypt. (Num 14:4)

The Galatian Church returned to legalism after being set free from Judaism. Paul wrote-

Gal 3:1 *You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you?*

Gal 5:1 *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 Gospel message is a message of freedom

At the beginning of His ministry Jesus announced His purpose for coming to earth as predicted by the Prophet Isaiah(Chap 61)

*"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim; freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight*

*for the blind, to set the oppressed free,<sup>19</sup> to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour."*

Luke 4:18

### How is Freedom a CHOICE?

God created humans to live in freedom

Humanity became slaves to sin at the fall

Jesus died on the cross to set us free, reversing "the effects of the Fall" and offers freedom to all who will accept His gift of forgiveness

Those who repent and choose to follow Jesus begin to experience Freedom (they are set free POSITIONALLY)

However it usually takes time for our new status as free people, and behaviour, to align

Thus our journey to complete freedom in all areas of life takes time (is PROGRESSIVE)

Sadly, many Christians never enter into the freedom that is rightfully theirs.

### Things that take away our freedom

#### 1. Sin

- Enslaves

*Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. John 8:34*

- Separates

*But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear. Isaiah 59:2*

#### There is a difference between being forgiven and being set free

✚ As Christians our sin is forgiven

✚ But unconfessed sin can still damage us

#### Restoring Freedom

Repentance removes the weight of shame and guilt

And the "Sin barrier" is removed... restoring relationship with God and freedom

*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. 1John 1:9*

#### 2. Addictions- take away our freedom by MASTERING us...

Drugs, Alcohol abuse, Gambling, Addiction to Gaming, Porn- all promise joy, happiness and excitement but actually take away freedom and joy

#### Restoring Freedom

Be honest with God- repent and ask for help.

Freedom from addiction is most effective with the help of a trusted advisor/ counsellor

#### 3. Unwise binding contracts

- Excessive "Bad" Financial Debt
- Becoming Unequally yoked in marriage
- Poorly constructed Business partnership agreements

#### Restoring Freedom

Getting out of contracts can be very difficult but not impossible

Pray and get advice before entering into binding partnerships- be careful

#### 4. Legalism

- Cults often enslave innocent participants
- False Religions
- Legalism with the church

##### Restoring Freedom

Get out of any organisation that enslaves

#### 5. Negative words / Curses

Negative words spoken over us can damage and take away freedom IF we accept and believe what is said. We empower what we believe!

Words of rejection are particularly damaging and rob us of freedom

Curses can be broken with prayer (Praying with someone spiritually mature will help)

Focus on the Truth of God's Word; Read Scripture (especially passages that teach us truth of what God thinks and says about us)

If you belong to Jesus, you are:

*Chosen, Redeemed, Worthy, Adored, Loved, Included in God's family, have an inheritance waiting in heaven, Blessed with every spiritual blessing, God thinks about you constantly and has good plans and purposes for your life etc*

#### 6. Unforgiveness, anger or bitterness

All rob us of personal freedom and joy

##### Restoring Freedom

Develop a habit of being quick to forgive

Living constantly filled with the Holy Spirit will produce fruits of the Spirit rather than the fruit of our carnal nature

#### 7. Pleasing people, rather than God can enslave us

- Trying to live up to the expectations of others is exhausting... and wears us down
- Trying to be like someone else... can rob us
- Often expressed in Church through stifled worship...

##### Restoring Freedom

Fix your eyes on pleasing Jesus

*And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. Heb 12:1*

#### 8. Generational curses

Some of us have inherited a past that includes bondage because of the activities of parents, grandparents or great grandparents. (Ex 34:6&7)

We are not personally guilty of what previous done, but we can still be damaged by their involvement in forbidden activities (eg Freemasonry, Occult, Yoga, Idolatry, witchcraft, voodoo, Ouija, murder etc)

##### Restoring Freedom

Through prayer, the power over us can be broken. This is most effective with the help and support of an experienced, spiritually mature Christian

## Finally

### 1. CHOOSE FREEDOM

Determine that you will not allow anyone or anything to take away your Spiritual and emotional freedom

### 2. FIGHT for your FREEDOM

Freedom doesn't happen accidentally... it is something we must fight for.  
Determine today to take the next step to ensure you live free

### 3. Practise Freedom

- + Keep focussed on Jesus...Live to please God alone...
- + Develop the habit of repenting... allow nothing to separate you from God
- + Read the Bible Daily- immerse yourself in TRUTH
- + Be creative- in music, art, worship
- + Live full of the Holy Spirit

*So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.* John 8: 36

## Questions for Personal reflection

Firstly, consider what might be limiting you from living in complete freedom.

Carefully consider the many ways in which you might have lost some freedom.

Carefully consider each of the following and ask God to reveal to you what needs to be dealt with:

1. **Sin**- is there some unconfessed sin bringing guilt and distancing you from God?
2. **Addiction**- are you being mastered by an addiction that is robbing you of freedom?
3. **An unwise Partnership**
4. **Legalism**
5. **Negative words**- have you believed untruths spoken over your life to harm you?
6. **Unforgiveness, anger or bitterness** – who do you need to forgive?
7. **Pleasing people, rather than God**
8. **Generational Curses** – Do you need someone to pray with you?