



## What Is Freedom?

### Key idea:

Freedom is the ability to live in accord with human nature as created by God, which was marred by sin but is restored in Christ and revealed in Scripture.

### Key text:

Genesis 1:26

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

Genesis 2:16-17

And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; <sup>17</sup> but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die."

John 8:31–36

To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. <sup>32</sup> Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." <sup>33</sup> They answered him, "We are Abraham's descendants and have never been slaves of anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?" <sup>34</sup> Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. <sup>35</sup> Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. <sup>36</sup> So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

### Key points:

1. True freedom is the ability to live in accordance with human nature as created by God.
2. Freedom includes limits that are inherent to our created nature.

3. Sin enslaves us, but Christ offers true freedom through redemption.
4. Freedom is found in receiving and obeying God's Word.

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. How does our culture's definition of freedom differ from the biblical understanding presented in the teaching?
2. The teaching looked at Genesis 1:26 and 2:16-17. How do these verses shape our understanding of human freedom and limitations?
3. Discuss the statement: "Freedom is found not in rejecting limits, but actually embracing the limits God has placed on us as his created image bearers." Do you agree or disagree? Why?
4. In what ways might our culture's emphasis on unrestricted choice actually lead to bondage rather than true freedom?
5. How does Jesus' teaching in John 8:31-36 challenge our notions of freedom? How does His statement that 'everyone who sins is a slave to sin' (John 8:34) impact your view of personal autonomy and free will?
6. The teaching declares that "freedom is the ability to live in accord with human nature as created by God." How might this perspective change the way we make decisions or view certain cultural issues?
7. What are some practical ways we can embrace the 'limits' God has placed on us as created beings, and how might this lead to greater freedom?
8. In what areas of your life do you struggle with wanting "freedom" that actually leads to bondage?
9. How does the concept of being 'renewed in the image of God' (Colossians 3:10) relate to experiencing true freedom in Christ?
10. How might viewing freedom in terms of responsibilities rather than rights change our approach to Christian living and societal engagement?
11. How can we as Christians promote a biblical understanding of freedom in our families, workplaces, and communities?

### **Practical Applications:**

1. Self-reflection: Take time this week to examine your own understanding of freedom. Are there areas where you've embraced cultural definitions rather than biblical ones?

2. Scripture study: Commit to reading and meditating on passages about freedom in Christ (e.g., Galatians 5:1, 13-14; Romans 6:15-23) this week.
3. Accountability: Partner with someone in the group to discuss how you can help each other embrace God-given limits and true freedom in Christ.
4. Prayer focus: Spend time daily this week praying for the Holy Spirit to renew your mind and help you experience the freedom Christ offers.
5. Share: Look for an opportunity to discuss biblical freedom with a non-Christian friend or family member this week.