Possessed by the Word - Small Group Guide

Romans 7:1-6 | "If I've Been Set Free, Why Am I Still Fighting?"

Overview

This week's message walked us through the opening verses of Romans 7, where Paul addresses the tension every believer faces: we have been declared free through Christ, yet we still find ourselves drawn back to old patterns and habits. Using the backdrop of Romans 6:21-23 and the marriage analogy in Romans 7, the sermon challenged us to move beyond casual Christianity and possessing the Word to actually being possessed by it.

Key Takeaways

1. The wages of sin is death, but God offers what we could never earn -- eternal life through Jesus Christ (Romans 6:23).

2. Possessing the Word of God does not change our lives. Allowing the Word of God to possess us is what changes our lives.

3. The law reveals sin, but it cannot save us from it. Freedom is not found in the written code but in the risen Christ.

4. Cleaning up the outside of our lives without allowing God to change the inside is the same mistake the Pharisees made.

5. Rescued people rescue people. When we understand what God has saved us from, our natural response should be to bring others with us.

Icebreaker

Think about a time you were genuinely excited to be somewhere -- an airport, a stadium, a family reunion. What made that excitement real rather than just routine? Share with the group.

Discussion Questions

Opening the Text

1. Read Romans 6:22-23 together. In your own words, what is the difference between a wage and a gift? How does understanding that distinction change the way you think about your salvation?

2. Read Romans 7:1-6. Paul uses the analogy of marriage to describe our relationship to the law and to Christ. What do you think he is trying to communicate? What does it mean practically to be "released from the law" without the law being bad?

Going Deeper

3. The sermon raised this central question: "If I've been set free, then why am I still fighting?" How would you personally answer that question based on your own experience?

4. Solomon wrote in Proverbs 26:11 that a fool returns to his folly the way a dog returns to its vomit. That is a vivid and uncomfortable image. Why do you think we are drawn back to patterns and habits we know have hurt us? What does that reveal about human nature?

5. The pastor described three negative effects of the law that Paul outlines in the first six chapters of Romans -- the law stirs up consciousness of sin, the law brings wrath, and the law increases trespass. How have you seen any of these realities play out in your own life or in the lives of people around you?

6. The pastor drew a contrast between possessing the Word and being possessed by it. Be honest with yourself: which one more accurately describes where you are right now? What does the difference look like in daily life?

7. The sermon described the difference between knowing how to be a Christian and actually being in love with God. Have you ever lived through a season where you were going through the motions? What did that feel like, and what, if anything, changed?

Personal Reflection

8. The pastor shared that at 19 years old, something shifted for him -- from casual Christianity to genuinely wanting Jesus to be made much of. Has there been a moment

like that in your life? If not, what do you think might be standing in the way?

9. The image of someone finding their way out of a cave and then going back to rescue others was used to describe what it means to live as a rescued person. Who in your life is still in the cave? What would it look like for you to go back for them?

Practical Applications

This Week, Choose One

- Set aside fifteen minutes each day not just to read Scripture but to sit quietly afterward and ask God what He wants that passage to do in you, not just what it says.

- Identify one area of your life where you have been going through the motions -- attending church, praying out of habit, serving without heart. Bring that area honestly before God and ask Him to reignite genuine desire.

- Think of one person in your life who does not know Jesus. Write their name down. Pray for them every day this week and ask God to show you one practical step you can take to point them toward Him.

- If there is a sin or pattern you keep returning to, consider confessing it out loud to a trusted friend or group member this week. First John 1:9 reminds us that confession opens the door to forgiveness and cleansing.

Closing Reflection

The pastor closed by saying that every one of us is capable of being the fool who returns to his folly. But he also said that a regeneration -- a genuine change -- is possible. Take a few minutes as a group to pray for one another. Ask God to move each person from casual faith to a faith that makes much of Jesus, not just on Sunday morning but throughout the entire week.

Memory Verse for the Week

Romans 6:23 -- Reflect on the contrast between what sin earns and what God freely gives through Jesus Christ.