

THE ORDER IS NOT OPTIONAL

We have to start where God starts.

01

Good

What God designed
and declared.

02

Truth

Reality as God
sees it and sets it.

03

Freedom

Living inside
that design.

Culture starts at Freedom and works backward. That is trickle-down morality.

God speaks first. He sets reality. Then He invites us to live inside it.

tob

Good. Beautiful. Fitting. Functioning as it was meant to function.

Light

Separates and reveals.

Land & sea

Hold their appointed places.

Humanity

Image-bearers who rule and relate.

The world

Harmonious. Relational. Fruitful.

THE TEMPTATION

Not just breaking a rule.

Seizing the right to define good and evil for ourselves.

Everything that follows — shame, hiding, blame, exile — is a world no longer functioning as God intended.

"Everyone did what was right in their own eyes."

Judges 21:25

makarios

Blessed. Fortunate. The truly flourishing life.

1 **Poor in spirit**
They know their need of God.

2 **Those who mourn**
They will be comforted.

3 **The humble**
They inherit the earth.

4 **Hunger for justice**
They will be satisfied.

IF IT PULLS YOU TOWARD GOD, IT IS GOOD.

**The good life is whatever puts you
in right relationship with God.**

LOOKS GOOD

Winning the lottery

If money makes you rely on yourself and stop trusting God, the worst thing that can happen to you is getting rich.

LOOKS BAD

Losing the job

If it makes you poor in spirit and you cry out to God, it may be the best thing that happens to you.

You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.

Remain

Faithful to His teachings. Stay.
Don't sample.

Know

Truth is a Person before it is a
principle.

Free

The Son sets you free. Then you
are free indeed.

TWO PATTERNS

FORMATION

By the Spirit and by obedience to the truth, we are transformed into the image of Jesus — and set free to live in line with all that is good and true.

DEFORMATION

By isolation and by lies we are deformed into the image of the devil — and locked into a cycle of disorder and death.

**"No right, no wrong, no rules for me.
I'm free."**

That line is not just a song. It is the anthem of our culture.

The fantasy

Complete autonomy. No dependence.
No claim on you. Impossible. We are
inherently dependent.

The contradiction

You love food and you want health.
Desires fight each other. "No limits"
cannot hold.

The real thing

Freedom is the wise choice of
liberating limits. You surrender lesser
freedoms to gain greater ones.

REMEMBER THE DOG

Training is not a cage.

A five-year-old behind the wheel of a well-made car does not set the car free. The car disintegrates.

Body

Limits on food and sleep give you energy.

Love

You give up independence. Mutual self-giving produces freedom.

Soul

"Do not bear a grudge" is not picky. You are made in the image of a God who forgives.

Slave or son.

SLAVE

May live in the house.
May even like the master.

The relationship lasts only as long as the work
is done.

You never feel you have done enough.

SON

Belongs forever.

Even a parent's heart often moves toward the
child who is failing.

If the Son sets you free, you are free indeed.

THERE IS A DOUBLE SLAVERY

You do not belong to yourself.

RELIGIOUS

God as boss

I obey so I can get heaven, answered prayer, or a righteous self-image.

You never feel you have done enough. You remain a slave.

IRRELIGIOUS

Private moral universe

There is no such thing as not worshiping. Money never says enough. Beauty never says you are finished. Power leaves you afraid of losing it.

You can force the device to do what it was never designed to do.

It feels like freedom for a minute. Then updates break. Security fails. The thing you "freed" starts falling apart.

Violating God's design is not freedom.
It is a jailbreak of a soul made in His image.

God adjusts first.

A love relationship with God would look like exploitation if only we adjusted and God never did. Christianity claims the opposite.

01

Incarnation

Jesus stepped out of heaven and became a human baby. That is giving up freedom.

02

Gethsemane

He looks all the way to the bottom of the human heart — and does not walk away.

03

The cross

He was nailed there. That is giving up freedom — for you.

GOOD

Whatever lines you up with God. Functioning as you were designed to function.

TRUTH

Reality as God sees it. Embodied in a Person. The Truth who sets you free.

FREEDOM

Not "no rules for me." A son or daughter who belongs in the family forever.

REMAIN IN HIS TEACHING

Know the Truth. Then you will be free indeed.

Not the shallow freedom of "no rules for me."

The deep freedom of a child who belongs — living once again
in the goodness God declared at the beginning.