

MAINTAINING FREEDOM FROM YOUR PAST

Now we are at the end of tearing down the wall, dismantling it completely, between you and God. Are you seeing a freedom come? Do you have a sense that your life is going to be better than ever and things that have tormented you are gone? I hope so because it can be that way for anyone that goes through this process. God does not have favorites. He wants to help you. He will help you in ways that I cannot even think of helping you. As we look back over it and we summarize what we have been talking, what makes up this wall between you and God, as we name the things, I want to talk to you again about what even causes you to have this wall. If God is so loving and so good and so kind, what in the world put up this wall between you and Him? It is really based on three things I talked about in the very beginning of this study. They are unhealed hurts, unmet needs, and unresolved issues. Hurts, problems, issues, disagreements all come from one of those – your hurts, your needs, or your issues. What did we talk about in these lessons? I want to review very quickly with you because I want to be sure you say, “Yes, I got that. Yes, I got that.”

The first one was that God wants you to be free. He longs for you to be free. Jesus died so that you might be set free. He wants it. He is going to help you.

The next one I talked about was six keys for changing yourself. If you remember, one of them was about the blame game. You have to quit blaming other people, and name the baby, and just say, “I did this. This was my fault.” Then you can move forward so much quicker.

We also talked about forgiving yourself and forgiving others. We especially talked about forgiving the unforgivable, and the peace that can come into your life if you can do this, and not waiting for them to know what they have done or get the payback they deserve. You just allowing God to work in your heart, remembering that Jesus said in the Bible that God cannot forgive your sins if you do not forgive others. You can do it. I know you can.

Then we discussed sins and iniquities, the different types of sins.

Judging others was next, the good kind of judging and the bad kind of judging and how to break that in your life, and what causes it.

We discussed inner vows and soul ties. Then the last lesson was on exposing the unseen enemy in your life.

Today, we are going to talk about how to maintain freedom from your past. If you go through all of this and you do not maintain it, what have you done? Jesus died just so that you could walk in this freedom. When He sets you free, you are free indeed. Old things are passed away, all things become new. I want to say to the worst person listening to this right now, there is no sin that can keep you from the freedom that Jesus offers you. There is no bad past, nothing, that can stop what God wants to do for you, if you will just open up your heart and say, “Come into my life and change me. I know I need to change in all of these ways. Heal me Jesus.” Never forget the little quickie process, “I forgive them, I forgive myself. Please take the hurt away.” No matter how bad it is, if you will say that over and over, it will eventually completely leave and the thing that hurt you the most is the thing that is the freest and you have the most peace about. It is an amazing miracle. Jesus wants you to help other people. He does not want you to keep this knowledge just for yourself. It specifically says, “Let godly men who are entrusted with the things of God teach it to other Godly men. Let the older women teach the younger women.” God wants you to do this. As He has set you free in this process, have you thanked Him? Have you thanked Him over and over, “Lord I am so grateful that you have done this for me. I am free and I thank you.” I know it is the cry of my heart.

Look at this picture of a person with arms up in the air. That is what you can feel like. If you have gone through this process, you do feel like that. It is like, “I am free. The burden is gone.” The old burden is sin. Isn't it terrible? In Galatians 5:1, it says, “Christ has set us free to live a free life, so take your stand.

Never again let anyone put a harness of slavery on you." This week I heard a testimony on the radio of the man who was the Son of Sam, a serial killer. He was demonized and mentally ill. He murdered so many people and is in prison for life. He found the true living Jesus, he got the real deal. He has had such a changed life in prison that he has influenced many, many people in prison to turn toward the Lord. Anyone can come out of anything. Never think your past is so bad that there is no hope for you. There is. Turn to Jesus, it is there.

There are some very practical steps that you are going to have to do to walk out this healing, proving this wall is down. One of the main ones is to remember that people do not know you have been through this process. They are going to keep on being the same that they have always been. They will be the same people. Those wrong thoughts come from being around wrong people. The second step in maintaining your healing is that you may have to quit running around with the people you are going around with. They might not want to change. They might want to just go right on in their rebellion or sin or whatever. You have to say to yourself, "I want a changed life. I mean it. I have to be around people who live the right kind of life." You might just have to say goodbye to your friends.

Look at this rolling sidebar. Another way you have to maintain your freedom is to let go of your misconceptions about God. The devil tells you God is harsh, mad, a perfectionist that we cannot please, disappointed with me, impersonal, distant, critical, angry. Detached, dominating, uncaring, moody, temperamental, my personal servant, has favorites, is not powerful, and is not relevant. The devil will tell you all of that about God. Actually that is who the devil is. That was a good description of the devil. What is the truth about God? God is gentle, He is peaceful, He is holy, He is forgiving, He is personal, He is close, He is wise, He is kind, He is strong, He is caring, He is stable. God has good rules, He is not partial. He is affirming. He is powerful and He is relevant to today.

In the final thing of walking out and maintaining your freedom, I want you to think about the wall is down and I am looking at God. I can see Him now. What has colored your impression of God, your thought of God. I am going to talk about some things in your background that could have occurred that have affected your relationship with God and you are scared to get close to him. First, if you came out of a legalistic, harsh, disciplinarian type of background, like the Army sergeant, we have rules and you have to keep the rules to serve God, you will think God is mad. You will think he is an authoritarian. You will think he is impersonal and you will think He is demanding, and you will think that His rules are impossible to keep. There is no way you can keep all of that. If you come out of a perfectionist background where you have gotten little praise and little affirmation, then you begin to think "I can never please God. I will never be good enough. I can never satisfy him. He is always going to be disappointed with me. When I sin, He is always going to be upset with me. I have to be perfect in order to win God's praise, and I am not perfect. What am I going to do?" Feeling this way is because you have come out of a perfectionist background. They demanded unreasonable standards. What if you came from a background that had little or no affection? Then you would think that God is impersonal and distant and does not show emotion. What if you have grown up in one of those families and situations where they are critical and verbally abusive? You think you have to walk on eggshells around God because He is angry all of the time and you never know when He is going to zap you. God puts up with people but He does not really love them. That comes from being around critical, verbally abusive people. God will never be verbally abusive with you. He wants to heal you of that. What if you come from a family situation that was a workaholic situation. Always away from the family, always working, always making excuses for why they did not have time for you. That makes you grow up thinking God is detached and uncaring. You feel it is difficult to get his attention and He is too busy with everyone else that is important to have time for you. In fact, the people that have grown up with that kind of atmosphere tend to say, "I am not going to pay about that.

God is busy running the world. He does not have time for my little stuff." That is not true. God has all of the time, not only in this world, but all the time in eternity. He has plenty of time to hear about you trying to find a parking place. It does not matter. I will give you a guideline. If it is something that is important to you, it is important to God. He wants to know about it and He wants to help you with it. If you came from a dominating, physically abusive background, you think God rules by fear and that you have to obey him but you do not trust him. You have learned to protect yourself. You have had to be careful. You did not know when it was going to fall and hit you. What if you grew up with a family member who was moody and temperamental? You might never know when they are going to be in a good mood or when they were going to be in a bad mood. Perhaps, you could not get them out of their bad mood and you did not know what caused it. That would make you think that God is temperamental and in a bad mood. One day He loves you; the next day you did not quite measure up, or God is having a bad day so He does not love you as much. What if you grew up in a background where no one ever told you no, or never disciplined you?

Maybe you just ran free and did what you wanted to do. They would let you do whatever you wanted to do. No one held you to any rules or requirements. If that is the case, you would think, "God exists to make me happy and I don't have to obey His rules. I may not agree with them. I believe in some and I do not believe in some; but, I do not have to obey them. I can do anything I want to do." What if you grew up in a background where they had favoritism and they liked some of the children in the family better than the others? If so, you would grow up thinking God has favorites. You might think "He loves some people

children. If so, you could grow up thinking God has forgiven. You might think, "He loves some people more than sinners. He does not love the bad sinners very much. He wants them to go to hell." You might grow up thinking God loves you based on how you perform. That is just not true. God loves people. He hates sin. He tells you, "It will hurt you. It will kill you. Don't do it. Stay away from it. Here is what I am telling you to do." He loves people. He loves you so much that he wants to help you. God loves you just like you are but He loves you too much to leave you there. He wants to change you into the image of Jesus Christ. What if there was no God at all in your background? What if everyone kind of acted normal but there was no place for God? Did you know that you will come and say, "God is not powerful. He is not relevant. It is all a fairy tell. He does not relate to my life. That is an old book that was written thousands of years ago."

We have to learn to separate God's character from the failures of the people in your past. You can do that by forgiving them. At some point, you have to reach a place where you say, "My parents did the best they could do. They had problems but they tried and look at me. I can be okay." You do not get to pick your parents. But, you do get to choose who you serve. You get to make that choice. Are you going to serve God wholeheartedly, in all of His ways? Partial obedience is really 100% disobedience. This is a God that wants to help you be set free from your past, to walk out of it.

What else do you need to do to stay free? Look at this picture. The man is looking up. Looking up is all you have to do. If you cannot remember any of these lessons, just remember to look up. Look up and say, "Jesus, help me. Don't forget me Lord." He will say, "I would never forget you. I have your name written on the palm of my hand. I know every hair on your head. I know when you sit down. I saw you just stand up. I know you. I have known you since before the foundation of the earth. Of course I will help you. I love you. You are special to me." That is how God feels about you. People ask me to give them some actual things to do, things that if they do them they can feel pretty sure they are going to make it okay. "Tell me some actual things to do."

Look at this rolling sidebar, "What do I need to do to stay free?"

Daily Bible reading. Open up the Bible and say, "God speak to me today and tell me where to read." He will.

Daily prayer. Learn to pray all day long. Learn to pray about everything that is important to you.

Praise and worship. These are two different things. Praise is different from worship. Praise is thanking God for all that He has done for you. Name the things He has done. Worship is telling Him how much you love Him for just who He is, telling God how wonderful He is.

A transformed mind. You have had a mind that followed a course based on all that has happened to you. God wants to transform your mind. He wants you to think differently. There are books you can read, there are people you can know, and people you can talk to. You can have a mentor or someone you can run your things by as you are walking this out and they can say, "That is not right. This is what is right."

An accountability with strong Christians. You have to have some people in your life that are more mature than you are so you can go to them and say, "I am thinking this. Is this right?" They can tell you, "No I don't think that is right. This is what is right," or they might say, "Yes, I think you are hearing God. I think you are doing the right thing."

Regular church attendance. People often say, "I don't go to church because of those hypocrites. I saw what they did to my mom and my dad, and how they hurt them. I don't want anything to do with it." The Bible says, "Jesus was in the synagogue, as was His custom." If there is anyone that knows and can recognize a hypocrite, it is Jesus. He can see all the way to the core of your being, and He can recognize hypocrites. Do you not think it was hard for Him to go to church and listen to what these people were saying or doing, and see how they were acting when he knew the living God? He was in church as was his custom. Why is that so important in maintaining your healing? Because you can learn from others. You need the strength of others. You need to hear what they are going through and how God helped them. You need Christian friends. You need to know how to use those warfare tools that I talked about in the last lesson against the devil. Did you go over those tools? If you cannot remember any of the others, remember the name of Jesus and the blood of Jesus and to praise Him for His power.

You need to have a daily walk with God and it consists of reading the Bible, praying, praising and worshipping.

If you learn to meditate on God's Word, your mind will be transformed. I heard about a man who had been really messed up in drugs and he had lost a lot of his mental capabilities. He had finally gotten his life

straight with God, and he wanted to go to college. He said, "I am not going to be able to concentrate. I read the books but I can't get it. I need help. Somebody help me." At about that time in his life, a man came along and told him, "If you will meditate on the Words of God, if you will pick some scriptures that mean a lot to you personally and memorize those, that will transform your mind." The man wondered if that would really work. He was desperate and had to have help, so he began to do it. Slowly, over the months, his mind became clearer and he was able to focus more and more. It was all because of the Word of God.

When you are walking this out, there will be people who have walked it out before you. They have been through this same process and they have learned so much. They have great wisdom about it. You can call them and say, "I need to talk to you about something. I am in a situation. I know God has set me free. I know God has pulled this wall down and I have accepted all of that. I am walking in all of that. I know that. But, what do I say now? What do I do now?" If that person is trained in that, they can say, "This is what you need to say and this is what you need to do." Sometimes, you actually have to write it down on a piece of paper and look at it to help you remember why you are doing the new way and why you are not doing the old way. Maybe you need to write down the pain of the old way and how you do not want to go there again. You will have the piece of paper to remind you.

In conclusion, I want to read this verse to you. In John 8:34-38, Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin." A slave is transient, he cannot come and go at his own will. Jesus said, "The son has an established position, the run of the house. So, if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed." Don't you want to be like that? Can you see that as you have worked your way through these lessons that things have fallen off? Let us give thanks to God for you right now. I want to pray for you. I want to pray specifically for you. Right this minute I feel the love of God all over me for you. God is going to help you. It is going to be better than this. This is just the beginning. This is like the skin of an onion. You work through all of this, and in a few years from now God will bring up another thing. You will think, "I thought I got rid of all of it." No, you got as much as you could handle. Then God will bring the next, and the next, until the day you die. It will always be happening. There is this initial time that God pulls this wall down. Close your eyes now.

Jesus, I pray for the person who is watching this. I thank You that they have listened so carefully to Your Words and to what You are saying. Lord, I pray for a tremendous victory to come into their lives, a tremendous crash of that wall, and the love of God to overflow in them. In Your name I pray it, Jesus. Amen.