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Freedom to Live

Romans 8:1-11

Shouts of “freedom!” and “we’re free!” echoed through the hallways and across the schoolyard. It was as though the shackles of their public school education had been loosed and the prison doors of their classrooms thrown wide open. The wondrous glory of summer vacation reflected off their faces in great gap-toothed grins. Of course, as second graders, they were far too young to understand the long-term benefits of education. All they knew in this moment was that life would be different for the next two and a half months, and they couldn’t wait to embrace all it had to offer. In this study, we’ll explore the kind of freedom we experience through Christ’s resurrection.

Group Discussion. What are some common uses of the term *freedom* in today’s world?

personal reflection. When in your life have you felt truly free? What emotions or actions accompanied your sense of freedom?

After describing in detail the sad state of humankind in captivity to sin and death (Romans 7), the apostle Paul looks to the Spirit who raised Christ from the dead for hope in an otherwise hopeless situation. *Read Romans 8:1-11.*

1. How would you define or describe the nature of true freedom?

2. What assurance is offered in verse 1 to those who are in Christ Jesus?

3. In what way has the Spirit of life set us free from sin and death (vv. 2-4)?

4. What does the Spirit desire and what does the flesh desire (v. 5)?

5. What does it look like for us to “live in accordance with the Spirit” in everyday life (v.5)?

6. What comes to those who set their mind on the Spirit instead of the flesh (v. 6)?

7. If we are Christ’ s people who live in the Spirit, why do we sometimes still experience the hostility of the flesh toward God (vv. 7-8)?

8. In what areas of your life do you seek freedom from the flesh in order to live for God?

9. In what way are our bodies already dead (v. 10)?

10. The very same Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead lives in us. According to verse 11, what is this Spirit doing for us?

11. Where do you see the Spirit of the risen Lord at work in your own life?

12. How might you more fully embrace the freedom of the Spirit?

Celebrate that you are no longer condemned for your sins and failures. Rejoice in your freedom from captivity to sin and death through the Spirit of the risen Lord. Ask God to help you live more fully in step with the Spirit of resurrection at work in you so you may experience his life and peace more each day.

Now or Later

The nature of true Christian freedom seems to have been one of Paul's favorite subjects. Reflect on Romans 6, Galatians 5 and 2 Corinthians 3. How does the biblical understanding of freedom compare with popular notions of freedom? What role does the Spirit play? Why does the resurrection matter?

