

Finding Freedom - Devotional

Week 1 - #1

I have considered my ways, and have turned my steps to your statutes. Psalms 119:59

Are you an introspective person? Do you regularly take time to calmly think about the way you think, feel, and act, especially after you lose your peace? If not, let me encourage you that this is a skill and a discipline which you need to put into practice if you desire to regularly experience breakthroughs in your life!

Take a few moments and read Psalms 119:57-64 right now.

In the first two verses, the Psalmist sets the stage for the remainder of the passage. Describe in your own words what you feel burns in the heart of the Psalmist in versus 57 & 58?

The foundation of your journey to find freedom in Christ starts with a surrendered heart. More than wanting to just be comfortable, at peace, or free from internal struggles, your motivation must come from the desire to live your life under the lordship of Jesus. Notice the first words of verse 57 says, "The Lord is my portion". Take a moment and ask God to show you if there is any area of your life that you struggle to fully submit to Him (to give Him Lordship). Write down what God shows you: _____

What you have just done is turned to God to help you "consider your ways". Know that "your ways" in this verse doesn't just refer to the way you behave, but also the way you think and feel. Remember, Jesus promised that He would send the Counselor. If you want to experience regular breakthroughs in your life, you need to learn to regularly partner with the Holy Spirit and call upon His counsel to help reveal what you need to take to prayer.

What does the scripture say the Psalmist did after considering his ways? *He turned his feet.* This means he decided to go in a different direction than the direction he was headed! I don't think it's any coincidence that the definition of the word repentance is to change one's mind or purpose. What do you need to do with thoughts and actions that aren't aligned with God's way? You need to repent to change them!

So, what did you write, in the space above, when I asked about an area of your life that you struggle to fully submit to God? Apply the Finding Freedom prayer model that you learned this past week and pray this issue through! If you need some help, go and grab your bookmark right now to get the prayer model in front of you. As you will keep hearing me say, your breakthrough prayers just need to start with one simple phrase, "Father forgive me..." Our acts of confession are powerful weapons in the Kingdom of God.

The people I know who regularly experience breakthroughs all have learned to be very introspective people. For instance, when they lose their peace, they ask God the question, "**Why did I lose my peace?**" They ask, "**Lord, what is it about my perception, or thinking, that contributed to me losing my peace?**" Becoming a more introspective person starts by asking yourself reflective questions like these on a daily basis.

Bonus Blessing: Set aside time every day to look at the list of emotional issues on the front of the bookmark and ask God, "What have I experienced in the last 24 hours?" Take each situation or issue to prayer, using the prayer model, and watch what God can do!

Finding Freedom - Devotional

Week 1 - #2

I have considered my ways, and have turned my steps to your statutes. Psalms 119:59

When problems arise, how quick are you to blame others? Are you one to say, "They made me mad"? Do you take responsibility for your thoughts, feelings and actions? I realize this is a really big shift for some of you, and I will admit, it is definitely not always easy for me, either. However, if you really want to find freedom in a situation, taking responsibility is a must!

You might have seen the scripture from Psalms 119 at the top of today's devotional, and thought, "We're going there again?" Yes, we are! The word "consider" in verse 59 simply means to think carefully about. So, what did the Psalmist think carefully about? **His ways!** I want you to think about what the Psalmist *didn't* say in this verse. He didn't say, "I have considered the ways of others" or "I have considered how bad my situation is." Nor did he say, "I have considered what God hasn't done for me."

Take a moment to think carefully about how you tend to respond when you get offended by someone or when situations get difficult. Who or what do you tend to blame?

We all have patterns of thinking (our ways). Some patterns are helpful, and others... not so much. When we live in a pattern of blaming others, which at times includes God, we assume the role of the victim and assign others the role as the villain! When we fall into this trap, just like you, I can wrongly come to the conclusion that I am innocent and have done nothing wrong. The truth is, I have often thought some very unloving thoughts and possibly said, or did, some hurtful things. Do you tend to fall into this pattern of seeing others as villains and yourself as an innocent victim? Yes / No I call this pattern of thinking the "blame game".

Before we can begin to experience significant breakthroughs in our lives, we must clearly recognize what we are responsible for. Here is the great news: you can apply the Finding Freedom prayer model right now to begin breaking through the "blame game" pattern of thinking! Here is a simple prayer to get you started:

Confess: Father, forgive me for blaming others when I get angry or offended. Forgive me for focusing solely on them and not taking responsibility for the ways I've contributed to the situation. I ask you to forgive me for my desires to retaliate when I get hurt.

Renounce: Lord, I renounce the lie that I am a completely innocent victim. I renounce the lie that I am not to blame. I renounce the lie that I have the right to hurt those who have hurt me.

Rebuke: Lord, I rebuke the victim spirit right now in Jesus' mighty name. I break and release the retaliatory spirit in the name of Jesus. Lord, close every door to the kingdom of darkness that I have opened in this area of my life.

Declare Truth: Holy Spirit, prompt me to reflect upon my ways when I am hurt or offended. Help me to see the negative contributions that my thoughts, feelings and actions have had on others as well as myself. Father, I pray that you would fill my heart with compassion and mercy for those who hurt or offend me.

As you pray through this prayer, be aware of any other destructive thoughts or ideas (lies) that do not line up with God's truth and add them to your prayer time!

Finding Freedom - Devotional

Week 1 - #3

Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord. **Acts 3:19**

Are you in need of some “refreshing” in your life today? Could you use some of God’s refreshing power and love in your life right now? I encourage you to begin asking God to reveal anything blocking the flow of His refreshing in your life. You just might be surprised at how quickly you can tap into God’s refreshing power that your heart is longing to experience.

Take a moment and read the scripture at the top of the page out loud.

Do you remember the definition of the word repent that I shared in class this past week? Take a moment and write out the definition. Feel free to go back and look at your notes from last week’s teaching to check your answer, or get the answer! (*This is a great scripture to memorize.*)

Repent: _____

When you **confess** your sins, **renounce** lies, **forgive** others, **rebuke** demonic spirits, and **declare** truth, you are actively taking steps to appropriate the power of the cross to help change the way you think.

Write down the definition of sin in the space below.

Sin: _____

The more you realize that even the smallest of your hopeless, unloving, and faithless thoughts falls into the camp of sin, the quicker you will likely be to take them to prayer. If you really desire to become more aware of your sinful thoughts, feelings and actions, give the following prayer a try:

Father, I confess that at times I have desired to hide my sinful ways from you. Forgive me for ignoring and hardening my heart to your loving convictions. Holy Spirit, I give you permission to reveal my sinful thoughts, feelings and actions to me.

You might want to take a moment and ask God if there is anything else you need to confess or renounce to clear the path for the Holy Spirit to reveal to you the ways you “miss the mark”.

Are you still in need of some refreshing? Grab your bookmark or a Ministry Time Handout sheet. Still your heart before Your Father right now and simply ask:

Show me any sinful ways that are blocking the flow of your refreshing love and power in my life.

Once you have confessed, renounced, forgiven and rebuked the things God has revealed, pray this prayer and just see what happens!

Heavenly Father, release your refreshing love and power in my life right now!

Finding Freedom - Devotional

Week 1 - #4

At last week's class, you identified your Finding Freedom Focus, which is an area of your life where you would like to experience breakthrough as a result of attending Finding Freedom. Today's devotional is about spending time with God to peel a layer off that issue.

Right now, grab your Finding Freedom bookmark and a blank Ministry Time Handout or your journal. Take a few minutes to just worship God. I encourage you to sing a song, read a Psalm, or just speak out your personal praises to Him. Let Him hear your voice!

Once you have done that, simply ask the Holy Spirit to reveal an event or situation to you that has contributed to the relational breakdown or emotional condition that you want breakthrough in. Here is an example prayer to ask for revelation:

Holy Spirit, I ask you to release your revelation right now. Show me a specific event or situation that has contributed to (your Finding Freedom Focus). Reveal what I need to experience breakthrough in this area of my life right now.

Combine the leading of the Spirit with the tools and knowledge you have gained to pray through what He shows you!