

Freedom Week 2

The Tree of The Knowledge of Good and Evil

(John 8:32) Then you will know the **truth**, and **the truth will set you free.**"

(Genesis 2:16-17) And the Lord God **commanded** the man, "You are **free** to eat from any tree in the garden; **but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil**, for when you eat from it you will certainly **die.**"

Two Approaches:

Tree of Life

Freedom, Grace, Eternal life, God is good, God is forgiving

Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil

Bondage, The Law, Leads to death, God is only a judge, We are condemned

Separation and The First Sin

(Genesis 3:1-9) Now the serpent was **more crafty** than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "**Did God really say**, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?" The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or **you will die.**'" "**You will not certainly die,**" the serpent said to the woman. "For God knows that when you eat from it **your eyes will be opened**, and **you will be like God**, knowing good and evil." When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree **was good for food and pleasing to the eye**, and also **desirable for gaining wisdom**, she took some and **ate it**. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and **he ate it**. Then **the eyes of both of them were opened**, and they realized they were **naked**; so they sewed fig leaves together and made **coverings** for themselves. Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and **they hid** from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, "**Where are you?**"

Truths About the Fruit of The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil

1. The fruit is knowledge.

(I Corinthians 8:1) We know that "We all possess knowledge." **But knowledge puffs up while love builds up.**

Wisdom from God:

Pure, peace-loving, gentle at all times, willing to yield to others, seeking unity, full of mercy and good deeds, showing no partiality, always sincere

Wisdom from the world:

Jealous, selfish, divisive, earthly, unspiritual, motivated by evil

2. The fruit is deadly.

(Genesis 2:16-17) And the Lord God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it **you will certainly die.**"

3. The fruit is consumed.

(Genesis 3:6). When the woman saw that **the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom**, she took some and **ate it**. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and **he ate it**.

"Eating" is not just putting food in your mouth. It literally means to "**consume**" or "**ingest.**" Ideas are ingested in our minds and then sin is conceived. How did the first sin come about? Eve **talked** to Adam about it. Through a conversation, they **consumed** the idea and began to **process** it. **This progression tells us that sin does not begin with the act, it begins in our minds.**

"Our lives are always moving in the direction of our strongest thoughts." – Craig Groeschel

4. The fruit causes separation

(Genesis 3:8 NASB) Now they heard the sound of the Lord God **walking in the garden** in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife **hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God** among the trees of the garden.

(Hebrews 4:15-16) For we do not have a **high priest** who is unable to **empathize** with our **weaknesses** (human condition), but we have one who has been **tempted** in every way, just as we are—yet he did not

sin. Let us then **approach** God's **throne of grace** with **confidence**, so that we **may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need**

The Tree of The Knowledge of Good and Evil Produces Shame and Victimization

(Genesis 3:10-13) He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and **I was afraid** because I was **naked**; so I **hid**." And he said, "**Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?**" The man said, "**The woman** you put here with me—**she gave** me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it." Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "**The serpent** deceived me, and I ate."

Shame causes us to **separate** ourselves from God, making it so that we cannot **operate** in the freedom that Christ has for us. **Shame is a veil that comes between God and us**. Shame is so **deadly** because it **strips** us of the **power** to change!

The Results of Shame

1. Covering up with religion and becoming focused on works
2. Lying, deception, false pride
3. Making promises we can't keep
4. Getting our self-worth from the things that we do
5. Inability to come to a place of honesty with God because we believe we have no true value
6. Concentrating on our sin instead of concentrating on our Savior

The Results of Victimization

1. We notice others' sins, but not our own.
2. We excuse and condemn ourselves, saying, "I've just always been this way. I'll never change. I'll never be good enough."
2. We feel rejected.

Freedom Week 3

The Tree of Life

Tree of Life

Freedom, Grace, Eternal life, God is good, God is forgiving

(Galatians 5:13) You, my brothers and sisters, **were called to be free**. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love.

The Fruit of Living in The Tree of Life

1. The Tree of Life results in fellowship with God.

(John 17:3) Now this is eternal life: that they **know** you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.

According to Vine's Bible Dictionary, "know" in this verse is the Greek word "*ginosko*," which means to recognize, to understand, or to understand completely. **It indicates a relationship**. The only way to experience abundant life is by truly knowing the living God.

(I John 4:9-10) This is how God **showed** his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might **live through him**. **This is love**: not that we loved God, but **that he loved us** and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

2. Fellowship with God results in innocence—not the other way around.

(Genesis 3:7) Then the eyes of both of them were **opened**, and they realized they were **naked**; so they sewed fig leaves together and made **coverings** for themselves.

"They realized they were naked." As we spend time walking with God, listening to His voice, talking to Him, obeying Him, worshipping Him, and enjoying Him, we will notice a transformation taking place, not only on the outside, but on the inside as well. We will become, in a sense, "naked" or transparent and unashamed before Him.

(Genesis 2:25) Adam and his wife were both naked, **and they felt no shame**.

Simple innocence is born out of a friendship with God.

3. Innocence is a conduit of God's power.

(Luke 4:18-19) "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has **anointed** me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

An attitude of **dependence** on God is fertile ground for the **anointing** of the Holy Spirit. As we seek God and submit our lives to Him,

(John 15:5) "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you **remain** in me and I in you, you will **bear** much fruit; **apart from me you can do nothing**."

4. Innocence results in freedom.

(Psalm 37:23-24) The Lord **makes firm** the steps of the one who **delights** in him; though he may **stumble**, he will not **fall**, for the Lord **upholds** him with his hand.

"It's wonderful that God's grace never grows weary or runs out because, this side of eternity, no one is a grace graduate." – Paul David Tripp

(Romans 8:1-2) Therefore, there is now **no condemnation** for those who are **in** Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life **has set you free** from the law of sin and death.

How to Live in The Tree of Life

1. Know who you are. (Psalm 139, Psalm 82:6, John 1:12, Galatians 4:7)
2. Change the way you think. (Matthew 11:28-30, Romans 12:2)
3. Choose life. (Romans 12:2, 2 Corinthians 12:2, Ephesians 4)

Freedom Week 4

Spiritual Order

(I Thessalonians 5:23-24) Now may the God of peace **make you holy** in every way, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept **blameless** until our Lord Jesus Christ comes again. The one who calls you is **faithful**, and **he will do it**.

To daily live in the Tree of Life, you need to know two things: God designed you with three distinct parts, and you need to **embrace the principles of spiritual order**. Understanding spiritual order will help us get rid of the sin in our lives and **walk in holiness and freedom**. As believers, we long to live lives of **fellowship** with God. But while this is our desire, life in fellowship with God **does not come naturally for us**.

God created us with three distinct parts:

1. A spirit that must be redeemed (Ephesians 2:1, II Corinthians 5:17)
2. A soul that must be restored (Colossians 3:1-10)
3. A body that must surrender (Romans 8:12)

Justification simply means right standing with God. (Instant at salvation)

(Romans 3:24 AMP) and are being **justified** [declared free of the guilt of sin, made acceptable to God, and granted eternal life] as a **gift** by His [precious, undeserved] grace, through the redemption [the payment for our sin] which is [provided] **in** Christ Jesus

Sanctification (ongoing process)

(Philippians 2:12-13 AMP) So then, my dear ones, just as you have always obeyed [my instructions with enthusiasm], not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence, **continue to work out your salvation** [that is, cultivate it, bring it to full effect, actively pursue spiritual maturity] with awe-inspired **fear and trembling** [using serious caution and critical self-evaluation to avoid anything that might offend God or discredit the name of Christ]. For it is [not your strength, but it is God who is **effectively at work in you**, both to will and to work [that is, strengthening, energizing, and creating in you the longing and the ability to fulfill your purpose] for His good pleasure.

“Sanctification means more than being **freed from sin**. It means the **deliberate commitment** of myself to the God of my salvation, and **being willing** to pay whatever it may cost.” - Oswald Chambers

The Spirit

Did you know that you are a spiritual being having a temporary physical experience on earth rather than a physical being having a temporary spiritual experience? God's plan is that our spirits become the strongest part of our three-part design and be the **"command center"** of who we are and what we do.

(Colossians 2:13-14) When you were **dead in your sins** and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, **God made you alive** with Christ. He **forgave us all our sins**, having **canceled** the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and **condemned** us; He has taken it away, **nailing** it to the cross.

The Soul

The soul is one of God's most beautiful creations. It enables us to experience relationships and appreciate the beauty of our surroundings. We have been made in the image of God with the capacity to think, reason, and express emotions. God could have programmed us to do and be whatever He wanted, but instead **He gave us the ability to choose.**

Our souls are made up of three parts:

1. The mind, which thinks and reasons
2. The will, which makes choices
3. The emotions, which believe, feel, and remember

(Romans 12:2 AMP) And do not be **conformed** to this world [any longer with its **superficial** values and customs], but be **transformed** and **progressively** changed [as you **mature** spiritually] by the **renewing** of your mind [focusing on godly values and ethical attitudes], so that you may prove [for yourselves] what the will of God is, that which is **good** and **acceptable** and perfect [in His plan and purpose for you].

The Body

Our bodies have appetites, both good and bad. The Bible says to be careful of any sin that leads to our flesh getting anything it wants. Often, **people want to know how much they can sin and still enjoy the benefits of God's blessing.** The snare with sin is that it never satisfies. We are constantly looking to fulfill the next craving. Carnal desires cause us to need satisfaction, and though we may satisfy them in the moment, the craving soon returns and brings with it increased intensity. This cycle will repeat itself time and again **until we break it by the power of the Holy Spirit.**

(I Corinthians 6:12) "I have the right to do **anything**," you say—but not everything is **beneficial**. "I have the right to do **anything**"—but I will not be **mastered** by anything.

Another real consequence of sin is the **ripple effect**. A filter for sinful actions should be: “**How will this action affect those around me?**” We should rehearse daily the consequences of sins and how they would affect our spouses, our family, and our friends. **Would your actions cause another to stumble or be offended**

(I Corinthians 8:9 MSG) But God does care when you use your freedom **carelessly** in a way that leads a fellow believer still **vulnerable** to those old associations to be thrown off track.

Ordered Living

Spiritual order provides a framework for living in the Tree of Life. It allows you to live with your spirit **united** with God, and your soul and body **submitted** to your spirit. In other words, **your spirit, which is now one with God, calls the shots**, and the soul and body follow.

Our spirit can only lead if we feed it more than our soul and body.

The world around us **constantly feeds** our souls through things we **see** and **hear**. And our bodies, if starved, make it known that they’re **hungry**. If we withhold gratification from our souls and our bodies, **they get loud**. Our spirit, on the other hand, when not fed, **gets quiet**. We have to be **intentional** to feed our spirit.

What we feed will grow, and what we starve dies.

Who is in control? (Spirit or Flesh)

When the Holy Spirit controls our lives, He will **produce** this kind of fruit in us: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22–23).

What your full of, you’ll be led by.

Daily Living

Living in spiritual order brings with it incredible benefits, such as protection, spiritual growth, and power to overcome obstacles in our lives. It keeps our spirit in **control of all areas of our lives**, including our emotions.

Staying in Order

We face decisions every single day, and **the choices** we make **dictate** the lives we lead. So how do we make good decisions? **We need to change the way we think.** Knowing your **identity** is also a key to being **led by the Holy Spirit.**

“Every action you take is a vote for the type of person you wish to become.” – James Clear

Are your daily choices, actions casting a vote for the old person you used to be or the new person you are in Christ?

To walk in spiritual order, **we need the power of the Holy Spirit.** He is our counselor, our friend, our guide, and the One who reveals truth. Start getting to know Him today.

(John 16:13) But when he, **the Spirit of truth**, comes, he will **guide you into all the truth.** He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.

