

ICEBREAKER

Brian started his sermon by highlighting how Hollywood loves origin stories—Spider-Man, Iron Man, Mike and Sulley, or even the 1985 Oregon Trail game—because they reveal a foundational past that helps us make sense of the present. Our origin stories shape who we are and who we're becoming.

- What is your favorite "origin story" (from a movie, a book, or even a legendary family story)? What is it about that specific moment of transformation that resonates with you?
- If you had to pick one "seminal moment" from your own past that shaped who you are today, what would it be?

IDEA 1: THE MYTH OF TOTAL AUTONOMY

Paul argues in Romans 6 that there is no such thing as total human autonomy. We aren't asking, "Will I have a master?" but rather, "Who will that master be?" The sermon used the illustration of walking a big dog: you might have the leash, but the dog is the one in control.

- Why do we find the idea of "total autonomy" so attractive, even when it leads to exhaustion or "speed-running" through life?
- Paul says sin is "slavery masquerading as freedom." Can you think of a time when something that felt like freedom actually became a constraint?
- The sermon mentions "little things" that start as freedom but end up owning us (the snooze button, the "add to cart" button, the drive to be #1). What is a "small freedom" in your life that has started to feel more like a chain?

IDEA 2: MAXIMUM FREEDOM UNDER AUTHORITY

The "Big Idea" of the message is that maximum freedom is found under the authority of Jesus. This seems paradoxical—that we gain freedom by giving up our rights to a "Good King." We don't give up our freedom to follow Jesus; we gain our freedom by following Jesus.

- The sermon states: "We don't give up our freedom to follow Jesus; we gain our freedom by following Jesus." How have you seen "obedience" lead to a positive, life-giving outcome rather than a "miserable" one?
- Tom Brady's success was attributed to being "regimented" so he could be free to play." In your spiritual life, what is one "constraint" or discipline that actually expands your capability to live well?
- Which of the "freedoms" mentioned (freedom from negative self-talk, freedom from the need to be in control, freedom to put others first, freedom from condemnation, freedom to be adopted into God's family) do you most need to experience this week?

EXPERIENCING GOD TOGETHER

1. Identifying the "Taskmaster" (3 mins)

Invite everyone to close their eyes. Ask the Holy Spirit: "What is the 'Pharaoh' or 'Taskmaster' currently tightening its grip on my life? Is it pride, a coping mechanism, the pressure to perform, a specific addiction, or a secret shame?"

2. Partner up and pray

In pairs, briefly name the "Taskmaster" you identified and pray for one another that God would bring freedom in this area.

PRACTICE FOR THIS WEEK

Choose Every Day (Daily Surrender)

This week, we want to move from the "nostalgia of slavery" to the "freedom of allegiance." Joshua 24:15 reminds us: "Choose today whom you will serve."

Here are some ways to choose the freedom of allegiance this week. Read through and discuss with your life group what you feel led to practice in response to the sermon.

- 1. Morning Surrender:** Each morning, before you check your phone or start your "speed run," take 60 seconds to hand the "leash" to Jesus. Say: "Jesus, I am under Your authority today. Lead the way."
- 2. Catch the "Add to Cart" Moment:** When you feel the urge to use a "small freedom" to mask stress or pain (shopping, binging, anger, scrolling), pause and ask: "Is this a choice or a chain?"
- 3. Reflect on the Gift:** At the end of each day, name one moment where you felt "maximum freedom" because you chose obedience over your own way.