

The Ten Freedom Rules- Session #1 Small Group Notes

Introduction:

Are you the type of person who could be described as a rule follower or rule breaker? Explain.

Why is it difficult for some of us to follow rules?

What are ways that you have seen someone try to “manage God” in your life? What is the difference in managing God and living in freedom?

Read Exodus 20:1-6

Discuss:

1. Rules are the guardrails to freedom. (Read Exodus 20:1-3)

- The Ten Commandments were never intended to make bad people good, but free people free (read Galatians 2:16)
- Rules empower relationships (John 14:21)
- Relationship without rules equals chaos

Explain: The Christian faith is absolutely about relationship. When we are saved, we are saved into a special relationship with God, and thereby into special relationship with other believers. Christianity is about relationship with God and others. Christianity is also about rules, for rules show us how to live in those relationships. Rather than threaten relationship, rules enable it. We know that this is true from everyday life. Therefore, we should love the law because we love Jesus, and because Jesus loved the law. (*Wilkin, Ten Words to Live By, 13-14*)

Ask:

Before this discussion, how would have rated your obedience to the first commandment? Has your perspective changed any? If so, what accounts for the change?

Why do you think God prefaced the First Commandment with a reminder about Egypt?

How does Jesus words in Matthew 4:8-11 affirm this commandment?

2. Undivided worship of God is the foundation of true freedom. (Read Exodus 20:4-6)

- The first commandment is the starting place for anybody who wants to experience the freedom of God.
- God clearly explains that He will not put up with anything that competes with Him.
- The opposite of Christianity is not atheism; the opposite of Christianity is idolatry.
 - o An idol is anything we love more than God.
 - o An idol is anything we trust more than God.
 - o An idol is anything that we bow down to

Explain: The second word portrays idol worship as progressive: do not make, do not bow down, do not serve. It portrays idol worship as contagious, causing trouble for generation after generation. It portrays God as zealous for his glory: deeply committed to begin worship as he serves. His jealousy is right and righteous because it is inflamed by the denial of what is rightly his. His steadfast love is shown to the obedient. (*Wilkin, 34*)

Ask:

What idol are you tempted to worship alongside God? What are you hoping to control or avoid by being allegiant to both God and an idol?

What are ways that we can be tempted to let idols slip into church?

How can the Bible and Holy Spirit help reveal areas of idolatry in a person's life? What are the implications if we allow idols to remain?

3. Awe of God brings freedom from God! (Read Exodus 20:18-20)

- Without awe, there will always be competition
- Without awe, there will always be fear

Explain: The message to the Israelites at the foot of Mount Sinai is clear: before you can obey me as the God of the Ten Words of life, you must revere me as the God of the ten plagues of death. The response required is obvious too. If the God who toppled all rivals in Egypt has brought you out of Egypt by his outstretched arm, the only logical response is to obey the first word: "You shall have no other gods before me." (*Wilkin, 23*)

Ask:

What false teaching have you encountered firsthand that diminishes God? How can today's discussion help to combat this false teaching?

What are some specific examples of things the world tempts us to believe are more appealing than following God with complete devotion?

What are some ways we, as a church, show that God is our priority over any worldly thing? What are some ways we need to do better?