



FOR GROUPS MEETING: Feb 23-28

SERIES: Freedom

INTRODUCTION TO STUDY

If someone were asked to say one word that describes America or what it means to be an American a common answer would be freedom. We live in a culture and a society which is obsessed with this idea of freedom. We have our freedom of speech and our freedom to protest. If you venture into the great state of Texas you will hear a lot about the freedom to bear arms. The trouble is that for a people obsessed with Freedom we very rarely live free in our day to day.

In our next series we are exploring how the Gospel frees us from a variety of things in our lives that would love to hold us captive. This week we will be specifically looking at how the gospel frees us from performance anxiety. The truth is that often times we live day to day afraid that we weren't good enough. That God is happy with us one day and angry the next all depending on the level of our performance. This simply is not true and we will see how the gospel frees us from performance anxiety.

Dig Deeper

Some people would like to go deeper in their study. If you would like to do so and have the time, please take advantage of the Dig Deeper sections of this Group Life lesson.

TO COMPLETE THIS WEEK'S STUDY

- You will need:
 - A Bible
 - A quiet place for prayer, reading, and reflection
 - A pencil or a pen
- Read the **Introduction to Study**.
- Move through the daily studies consecutively.
- Open and close each day in prayer.
- Meditate on each question as you feel led.
- Record your answers in the space to the right of each day's questions.
- If you miss a day, don't worry. Simply pick up where you left off.
- If you are in a small group, strive to have all



(day 1)

Prayer: Lord help me to read and understand what you have done for me in Christ.

Read: Romans 3:23-31

Intro: *We are going to be looking at Romans 4 in depth this week but before we venture there it is important to understand the context of what is going on in the larger argument Paul is making within the book of Romans.*

Question 1

According to this passage whose work makes salvation possible? What did he do?

Question 2

How do we receive this?

DIGGING DEEPER:

Read Ephesians 2:8

What is repeated in this verse as it applies to our discussion?



(day 2)

Prayer: Lord today help me to learn from the life of Abraham and see how his life can teach and inspire me.

Intro: *In the midst of the verses and chapters it can sometimes be hard to remember that the book of Romans was one letter. As a result the different chapters tie together to form one big argument. In this section the message Paul is building upon is what we read yesterday, that salvation comes by grace through faith.*

Read: Romans 4:1-3

1.) Paul asks if Abraham gained salvation by his own merits, what is the response he gives?

2.) What does Paul state is what gave Abraham his salvation.

DIGGING DEEPER:

Read Genesis 15

Where do we see this idea presented in the early years?



(day 3)

Prayer: Lord help me to understand that grace means I do not earn my Christian walk.

Read: Romans 4:4-5

Intro: *Remember Paul is teaching that only faith in God brings salvation and hope. In these verses Paul is drawing a comparison between someone who places their trust in themselves versus someone who trust in the One that can bring salvation.*

1.) What is the difference between the two people Paul talks about in verses 4 and 5?

2.) In this comparison the first person is earning what he receives while the second is trusting God for his salvation. Which one should have anxiety over his performance? Why then do we as Christians often have anxiety over our performance?

DIGGING DEEPER:

Read Galatians 2:21

What does this verse add to this teaching? Specifically when it says "of righteousness came through the law, Christ died in vain"



(day 4)

Prayer: Lord help me to believe that you do not hold my sins against me.

Intro: *Paul in this section is now going to give one of the results of placing our faith in God; that our mistakes are no longer held against us in His eyes.*

Read: Romans 4:6-8

1.) According to this passage what happens to our sin and mistakes when we place our faith and trust in Jesus?

2.) Why should this free us from anxiety over our performance?

DIGGING DEEPER:

Read Colossians 3:3

What does Paul state God sees when He looks at us?



(day 5)

Prayer: Lord help me to see and experience the joy available in giving.

Read: 1 John 4:16-21

Intro: *John is writing to the churches about why we as believers can be free from performance anxiety. He brings out the idea of perfect love. By definition to be loved with perfect love means there is nothing that you can do to make God love more or less. Let's see how John uses this idea to help us be rid of performance anxiety.*

1.) What does John say drives out fear?

2.) Why does He say this is possible?

DIGGING DEEPER:

Read Romans 8:37-39

How does the Love of God help us to not fear in this passage?

