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Week 3
3 of 3

December 24, 2018

Bottom Line: We need freedom from sin.

Icebreaker: What's the Christmas song you most enjoy and why? The Christmas song you most dislike and why?

Key Verse: "She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because **he will save his people from their sins.**" Matthew 1:21

Ron was a young man who had been drug addicted for a number of years. He always made excuses, saying he could quit if and when he really wanted to do so. Trouble was, he never seemed to get the want to. His parents bailed him out of trouble over and over. The judge was sick of seeing him return again and again to his courtroom, and after he got arrested for yet another possession and use charge, the judge had enough. There was ample evidence that he had sold drugs as well, but in an act of mercy, the judge did not sentence him to prison. He sent him to an intensive longterm rehab program. It was just a few weeks before Christmas, and Ron couldn't believe it. He was full of self-pity. He expected forgiveness. He expected his parents to beg the judge for mercy, but they didn't. He was alternating crying to be out for Christmas, and threatening dire consequences if he wasn't. They told him they forgave him for his actions and the stress he had brought to their lives. But forgiveness was not the big issue. They wanted him to have freedom from his addiction, and this was the only way. Ron couldn't see it. He knew what he wanted; the judge and his parents knew what he needed.

That is the way it was when Jesus came into the world, and the way it still is for many of us today. We want that baby to be the forgiver of our sins, the warm and fuzzy person who makes our past all okay. But Jesus is so much more than the One who forgives our sins; Jesus is the One who came to FREE us from our sins. He is the only one who can. We need so much more than forgiveness over and over again. We need victory over sin. We need to be empowered through Christ to break the power of sin. Because of Christmas, sin no longer must be our master. We may want simple forgiveness, but Jesus loves us too much for that. He knows we need freedom from sin. If we miss that, we miss the true message of Christmas. If we don't get that, we miss the true gift of Christmas. His name is called Jesus, because He will save His people from their sins.

THINK IT OVER >>>

What impacted you most from the message?

Why was it important that it be clear Jesus was born of a virgin?

"As great as Moses was in their history, they weren't looking for another prophet—they were looking for a military man." Discuss. How would Jesus' name (Yeshua) have encouraged them?

What/who do you think people are looking for today?

"If we are not careful, we will reduce Christmas to forgiveness." That's quite a thought. Discuss.

Jesus says, "I have not come simply to forgive you from something, but to deliver you from something." Discuss.

"Wherever there is sin, things die." How do you know this to be true?

LOOK IT OVER >>>

What is your favorite way to redefine sin?

What's the meaning of "eternal life in Christ Jesus"?

"Christmas is a standing invitation for sin to no longer be your master." Discuss.

"We are mostly concerned about the penalty for sin. But Jesus came to not only pay the penalty from sin, but to free us from the power of sin." Discuss. What kind of a difference does that make in your life and future?

The name Jesus in the original language is Yeshua which means "to deliver, to rescue." How has Jesus rescued you and delivered you from the power of sin in your life?

What is life like when you experience forgiveness but no freedom?

NEXT STEPS

This week consider taking some next steps together as a group:

- 1) Memorize Matthew 1:21 and John 10:10.
- 2) Find some time during your Christmas festivities to publicly thank God for both forgiveness of sins and freedom from sin.

EVALUATION/ACTION

Realizing and reaching your full potential in Christ

Bottom Line: We need freedom from sin.

Rate yourself from 1 to 10 1 (never), 10 (always)	1	2	3	4		6	7	8	9	10
Why did you give yourself this rating?										
What benefits will you obtain by raising your rating?										
Do you know someone who demonstrates this bottom line well? What do you admire about that person?										
What specific action can you put into practice to raise your rating?										
At the end of this week, reflect - where did you see the bottom line show up in your actions throughout the week?										

PRAYER

List group members and their prayer requests for this week:

DAILY STUDY

Want to dig deeper? Check out **The Daily** this week at newpointe.org/daily:

Monday: Matthew 1:21

Tuesday: Luke 2:8-1

Wednesday: Romans 3:22-23

Thursday: John 10:10

Friday: Galatians 4:4-5

Don't let the conversation stop here. Keep talking it over with others throughout the week.
(Don't forget to bring this paper to your next small group meeting)