

SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE



**PRINCE
OF PEACE**
Called to Connect



From Bound to Free

March 23 & 24, 2019

We struggle to believe that we are bound or enslaved and yet as Lutherans, we freely admit that we are “in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves.” We are bound by the lies we believe about ourselves and the world around us, told to us by the culture. We are bound by the lies our inner critic tells us about ourselves. We are bound by destructive and sometimes addictive patterns of behavior that do not bless us. But Jesus says, “I have come to set captives free.”

SCRIPTURE TEXT : JOHN 8:31-36

Read the scripture text together as a group.

BACKGROUND INFO

This passage is set within a series of encounters in which Jesus focuses on his identity as Messiah and Son of God – the main issue in John’s Gospel. In verses 21-30 Jesus gives a warning to those who do not believe in him – those who do not recognize him as the Son of God and therefore do not entrust themselves to Jesus. It’s interesting to note that in the section we’re looking at today, Jesus is speaking to those who DO believe in him, but it’s obvious that even within their belief they don’t quite understand who Jesus is, why he’s come and how he teaches about spiritual realities. It is a common theme in John’s Gospel that people understand Jesus’ words and actions at a literal, surface level while Jesus is almost always pointing to deeper realities.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What bondage/slavery are you currently experiencing?
- When and how has Jesus set you free?
- How do you experience a “living relationship” with Jesus? How do you nurture that relationship?
- Reflecting on the obedience quote below...when have you responded in simple or radical obedience? How did you know you were being called to obedience? What happened when you obeyed?
Obedience is indispensable. Not to a static code, however helpful it may be at time. But obedience to God, who is present with us in every situation and is speaking to us all the time. Every obedience, however small (if any obedience is ever small) quickens our sensitivity to him and our capacity to understand him and so makes more real our sense of his presence. - Albert Edward Day

APPLICATION: This week, take note of your inner critic. Can you catch yourself in a lie? Tune your awareness to identify when your mind tells you a lie about yourself and then remember God’s truth for you.