

## **JOURNEY TO FREEDOM**

### **UNIT I Key 7 RE-BUILDING**

**SCRIPTURE PRINCIPLE:** Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things (Philippians 4:8).

Change begins on the inside and works outward. The Spirit through the Word plants faith in our hearts, we are moved to repentance, we receive God's mercy in Christ, and our self-will changes. We become willing to repent of anything and everything that stands between us and God. He is holy, sovereign, and just; and in Christ He becomes totally approachable.

When change has begun on the inside and worked outward, and it has become visible, how does it look? We begin to raise certain questions. How do we live our daily lives? What personal habits do we need to change? How do we speak to other people, and how do we relate to our families, friends, acquaintances, strangers, the same sex, or the opposite sex? How do we respond to hostility and rejection? How do we use our time? Doing what? Or with whom? How do we present ourselves? How do we spend our money or handle material possessions? How do we treat our bodies? Do we need to change our eating, drinking, sleeping, and exercise habits?

If we have caused problems, change includes working to solve them. If we have lived unhealthy lifestyles, we need to make changes that build healthier bodies. If we have hurt others, we need to explore ways to make amends where possible. If we contributed to broken relationships, we need to seek ways to improve those relationships. If we owe debts, we need to commit ourselves to paying them off. If we have rebelled against self-discipline and demanded instant gratification of our desires, we need to develop habits

that might be uncomfortable and frustrating at first but will pay off dividends in the long run.

When we surrender to God's will, our priorities change under His direction. We receive only 24 hours in a day and a limited amount of energy. How do we live so that we make the best use of our time and energy, and how do we practice self-care?

The more we surrender, the more we receive answers to these questions. Obviously we need to avoid people and situations that tempt us. Clearly we need to avoid sinful actions and speech. But we cannot live life in a vacuum, and something needs to replace the old habits.

This may be a time in your life to develop hidden talents and explore new things for which you never before had the time and energy. This may be the time to open yourself up to new interests. This may be the time to explore healthy relationships that are based on shared interests and common goals, rather than on sexual activity.

When we get our priorities in order, we are building our self-esteem. We do not build self-esteem by giving into whatever temptation we feel at the moment. We build self-esteem by obeying God's will, because of love and gratitude for how much He has given us. If our lives of dignity and service gain us approval from others, that is an additional blessing, but never what motivates us. Knowing that God approves our work is the source of our joy.

We are called to be good stewards of what God has given us. We need to be good stewards of ourselves and our surroundings. We need to learn to balance service to others with care of ourselves.

Everyone has spiritual gifts and a calling from God. There are paper-and-pencil tests that help one discover one's spiritual gifts. Such tests often affirm what people already sense in themselves. When surrender of self-will becomes an on-going habit, gradually one

becomes more aware of one's gifts and calling. God has a special job that only you are equipped to fill, and all your life experiences, both good and bad, have prepared you for it.

**SCRIPTURE:** Write out what each of these verses or passages mean to your life and situation.

Jeremiah 18:1-4

2 Timothy 2:21

Luke 11:14-26

Matthew 25:14-29

### **STUDY GUIDE**

1. On a scale of 1-10, how much rebuilding have you done already?
2. List the things you still need to do to rebuild.



11. How is your spiritual life in general, how are your private devotions, and how are things at your church/fellowship group?

12. Is there anything special you would like to talk about?

Plan of Action: (Read the description of Plans of Action and make your plans as specific as possible.)