

Study Guide

Lenten Sermon Series: Case for Hope

Week 3 – Exhibit C: Freedom

Sunday March 19th

Review

Romans chapter 5 places two people in front of us. One through whom sin and death came into the world, Adam. And the other is the one through whom salvation and life are now a reality. Even as we look to Jesus death can still exercise “reign” over us through our shame. Being set free from our shame means we choose to forgive ourselves for the things Jesus has already forgiven, and thereby come out from the shadows.

Introduction

This week we are again invited to view ourselves from two perspectives. Paul says in verse 11, “consider yourself dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.” Living in freedom means we no longer go back to the wells that once poisoned us, Jesus put these to death. Living in freedom also means we are alive to the body of Christ, namely that true freedom is not independence, but community.

Read: Romans 6:1-14

Pray

Lord it is for freedom that you have set us free. Help me to consider those things that still have power over our lives. Let me look to you Jesus and see the one with whom we died to sin, and the one in whom we are given the gift of freedom. Help me to live into the freedom you’ve already given. Amen.

Discussion

1. Can you think of the hope-suffocating habits in your life that draw you back, even when you want to be free from their grip?
2. Martin Luther realized that divine justice did not mean punishment by evening the score, but sheer mercy and grace. How does this change your perspective knowing that God’s desire is to release you from the habits that kill our hope?
3. Paul says in verse 11 “consider yourself”. One way we can consider ourselves is in our baptisms. If you remember your baptism think about what each movement meant: downward move/death to sin; and upward move/alive to God in Christ. This is a tactile reminder of the life you are given. How can this be a strength to you this week?
4. Freedom does not mean independence, but community. When we are raised to God in Christ we are joined with Christ in his body. Community can be the place where we find true freedom. How can you be an example of freedom in Christ for another this week?

Application

Have coffee with someone this week, and share something from which you have been set free.

Prayer

Jesus, thank you for our baptisms, and the reminder that with you we have died to our sin. Help us to consider ourselves *reborn* into a new and living hope in you. Give us strength to avoid old wells, and courage to live into our true reality, unique and special members of your body. Amen.