



The Bag That Doesn't Want to Let Go

Warm-up

Have you ever tried to change a bad habit like biting your nails and just couldn't? What did you do to finally overcome it? Or, did you just give up and try not to think about it?

The Word

Many of us struggle day-to-day with issues in our lives that we can never seem to get rid of. We want to change, but time after time we just find ourselves experiencing the same thing over and over. Today we're going to talk about how God can help us overcome everything that weighs us down like excess baggage.

Read John 5:1-9

- Why did Jesus ask the crippled man if he wanted to be made well? What was perhaps the main issue that would cause the man not to receive healing from Jesus?

To receive God's healing in our lives, we must desire to be changed and be ready to put the past behind us.

Read Romans 7:15

- Why would the Apostle Paul, the writer of the majority of the New Testament in the Bible, feel that he couldn't always do what he desired? Have you ever felt there was something you just couldn't let go of, even though you wanted to?

That's what holding on to addictions, habits and lifestyles that are not good for us do. They cause us to feel defeated and unable to fulfill all that God has for us to be.

We need to recognize this baggage and the effects it can have on us:

1. It becomes part of our identity. We buy in to the feeling we can never be free of it.
2. You feel increasingly hopeless by fighting the same thing over and over.

3. You become defensive and trying to defend your problem.

4. You become a slave to it and it starts to rule our life.

5. You begin to lose your life and you become resigned to carrying the baggage forever.

- Have you ever made the statement, “That’s just the way I am...”? Did you believe you could ever change if you wanted to?
- Did you ever try to use excuses to explain your behavior away? How did you feel about it?

Read Romans 6:12-14

- What does this Scripture tell us about controlling sin? How can you identify a sin that controls you? What is the answer to freeing yourself from sin’s control?

Read 2 Corinthians 3:17 and Galatians 5:1

- What does God promise to do about freeing us from sin?

Three things that help us experience Freedom:

1. **Read Luke 14:18-20** Eliminate the excuses. Take responsibility for where you are say it stops today.

- What does **Philippians 4:13** say about your power to take control?

2. Cut the ties of influences that pull you down. Read **1 Corinthians 15:33-34** and **James 4:7**

3. Fill the void and put something meaningful in it’s place. Look at **Ephesians 5:18, 26; Hebrews 4:15-16 and James 5:16.**

- What would God say would be valuable to put in its place?

God’s Word, prayer, an accountability partner, and ministry in relationships are key to freeing ourselves from the excess baggage that won’t let go. We must remember, in the name of Jesus, it must go!

Prayer

Pray that each group member would seek to be free of all of the excess baggage in their life, and that they will take the proactive steps, regardless of what it takes to eliminate it. Take time to pray for the needs of the people at your group.