

GROUP DISCUSSION

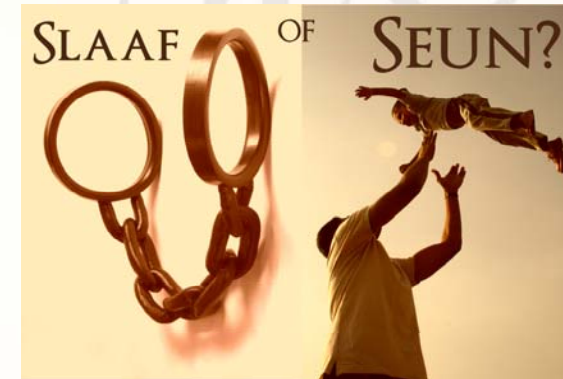
- Describe in your own words how a healthy Father-son relationship looks. How does it differ from a master and his slave? Share aspects of your relationship with your dad or with your child (if applicable).
- Read Galatians 4:7 and John 8:35 in various translations and memorise the scripture passages in your favourite translation.

PERSONAL APPLICATION

Perhaps you have been a child of God for a long time already but you realise that there are certain areas in your life where you still have a slave mentality. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you identify these areas and then bring them before God in your personal time with Him.

PRAYER

Pray for those in the group who want to become born again and for those who want to renew their commitment to God. Pray that God will help to reveal a true Father-child relationship to everyone and to help build such a relationship.



WEEK 1

CONNECTION

Not all of us had or have the privilege of a good relationship with a dad in our lives. But perhaps there are one or two special memories of your dad or the father figure in your life. Share those memories with the group.

WORD

We start today with a new series - Slave or Son? Somewhere in your life you must have come across or answered the following question, found on most forms: To which religion do you belong? The word "Religion" is described according to the Webster dictionary as "a personal set or institutionalized system of religious attitudes, beliefs, and practices".

God never wanted Christianity to be a set of rules but a Father-child relationship.

Religion brings us to a place where we feel we have to do certain things to be acceptable before God and this will only make us feel like nothing more than slaves. A slave is not allowed entry into any room in his masters' house. He always has to be clean and neat when he comes before his master. A slave has to work hard to earn his bread and butter and can be dismissed or promoted at the drop of a hat depending how good or bad his work is.

In the Bible we read about various people who stood in a better

relationship with God and were considered friends of God. John the Baptist was one of these.

John 3:28,29

"You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, 'I am not the Christ,' but, 'I have been sent before Him.'

"He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is fulfilled.

Even though John the Baptist had a very special relationship with God, and no one was as great as he, the least in the kingdom of God is seen as greater than John. All of this is because of the even better relationship Jesus acquired for us on the cross.

Luke 7:28

"For I say to you, among those born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."

There is most definitely a difference between the relationship of that of friends and that of a slave, but even a friend does not have free access to every room in the house and cannot visit for too long before it starts becoming uncomfortable.

God does not want us to be His slaves or even just His friends. He wants us to be His children.

Romans 5:15

But the free gift is not like the offense. For if by the one man's offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many.

Ephesians 1:5

having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will

In contrast to slaves, children have access to every room in the house. They can go to the fridge and take whatever they want. A child can even go to his father dirty. He doesn't have to work to receive something from his dad, on the contrary, a child inherits everything that belonged to his parents, undeserved.

Galatians 4:7

Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

John 8:35

"And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever.

How do we become children of God?

1. Born again

To be a child in God's house, you have to be born in God's house.

1 Peter 1:3,4

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,

2. The Holy Spirit

When we become a part of God's house, we need a Chaperone to teach us how everything works in this new house. The Chaperone also helps us to get to know the Father and His endless love and commitment to us better. He also leads us in a Father-child relationship with God. This Chaperone is the Holy Spirit.

2 Corinthians 3:17-18

Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is

liberty.

But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the

Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory,

just as by the Spirit of the Lord.