

# Southwest Life Groups

A Place to Belong...A Place to Transform

*Focus:* To examine how fear and freedom are interconnected as we explore how we might offer an atmosphere of freedom only in as much as we choose to conquer our fears.

**Introduction:** There are all sorts of phrases that people use that raise a red flag for me when I hear them. One of these phrases is this: “I don’t care with people think”.

- Do you believe that statement from people eager to say it?
- Evaluate what you believe these people are really saying.
- How does fear shape us? Share what some of those fears are?
- Contrast a life dominated by fear versus a life dominated by freedom?
- Assess this statement...The degree to which fear controls your life is the degree to which freedom is taken away. The degree to which freedom controls your life is the degree to which fear is taken away.

## Dig:

Read Mark 2:13-17

- Describe Matthew’s job and how he was received by the people as a tax collector.
- Examine what Jesus was really asking Matthew to give up. (money, security, etc)
- Contrast how that was different from other apostles like Peter. (Remember, Peter could always go back to being a fisherman if things with Jesus didn’t work out so well.)
- Discuss the choice Matthew makes and the consequences it produces.
- Express your feelings on what you might have done here.
- How could fear have changed Matthew’s life?

**Application:** We are called to live in freedom because of Christ. Many of us simply do not. Below is a quote out of a Marianne Williamson book ...Critique what you hear.

“Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, ‘Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, and fabulous?’ Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small does not serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won’t feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine, as children do. We are born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It is not just in some of us; it is in everyone. And as we let our light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others.”

- Are you free?
- Does the way you live invite others to a life that is about freedom or slavery?