



How Do You Build Something That Will Last? (Get Really Free and Take Control)

Date: June 7, 2026

Quarterly Themes for 2026:

1. Be Honest
2. Be Aware of Blind Spots
3. Be Really Free (John 8:32)
4. Be Aware of Your Level (Romans 12:3)

June 2026 Series Summary: “Get Free for Real”

Part 1: Gain Control (Am I managing my life or is my life managing me?)

Text: Matthew 16:24: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me”

Part 2: Find your Purpose (Why Am I Here?)

Text: Genesis 2:15: “The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.”

Part 3: Becoming Fruitful (Am I producing what God designed as my full potential?)

Text: John 15:8 “This is to my father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.”

Part 4: Always Strive to Progress (Am I Still Moving Forward?)

Text: Philippians 3:13–14 “...Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal...”

Statement:

God designed humanity for real freedom—not a life controlled by stress, debt, endless work, or circumstances, but one marked by self-control, purpose, fruitfulness, and growth. Yet, countless people feel trapped in cycles that drain their physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being. As explored in the book *Dying for a Paycheck*, unhealthy work environments and the relentless pursuit of income can leave people feeling powerless rather than free. God’s design offers something greater than mere survival: a flourishing life lived according to His purpose.

This study draws from *Dying for a Paycheck* by Jeffrey Pfeffer, which examines how unhealthy workplace cultures, chronic stress, and the relentless pursuit of income can damage physical, emotional, and relational well-being. The book highlights a sobering reality: many people sacrifice their health and peace, in order to earn a living. As we compare these findings with

God's original design for humanity, we discover that true freedom *is not found* in endless work or financial striving, but in living with purpose, balance, fruitfulness, and stewardship according to God's plan.

Four Elements in God's Original Design for Man (Main Text: Genesis 1:26–28; Genesis 2:15)

1. Control (Both the freedom side and the responsibility side)

Adam and Eve were not created as robots or slaves. God gave them the ability to think, choose, manage, create, and govern.

Key thought: Freedom begins when your life is no longer controlling you.

2. Purpose (Part 2)

God started man with his own life alone, then God gave him a wife, then God gave him meaningful work: to name the animals, tend the garden, and finally children (in Genesis 4)

Key thought: When purpose becomes unclear, life quickly becomes scattered.

3. Fruitfulness (Part 3)

God said, "Be fruitful and multiply." Fruitfulness means producing something meaningful with your life.

Key thought: Debt, disorder, and discouragement can rob people of the sense that their lives are fruitful.

4. Progress (Part 4)

God intended humanity to grow, expand, build, and move forward.

Key thought: A free life is not stagnant; it continues to develop and become.

What Causes Life to Get Out of Control?

1. Losing sight of your Responsibilities

- Bills, taxes, repairs, children, relationships, and everyday demands can become overwhelming when they are not managed well.

2. Losing Your Sense of Purpose

- When people lose sight of what they are designed and gifted to do, they spend their days reacting to circumstances rather than living intentionally.

3. Losing Your Sense of Fruitfulness

- When people work hard but see little or no result, they can feel trapped, discouraged, and unproductive.

4. Losing Your Sense of Progress

- As people grow older, they often ask themselves: Did I grow, or did I get stuck?

III. Four Things the Responsibility Side of Control Might Require (Matthew 16: 21 – 28)

²¹ From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.

1. It can require **courageous conversations** (“Jesus began to explain to his disciples”)
2. It can require **geographic responsibilities** (They had to go to Jerusalem)
3. It can require **painful people moments** (“suffered many things at the hands of the elders”)
4. It can require **getting over naïve assumptions** (See Matthew 16:22-28)
 - ²² *Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. “Never, Lord!” he said. “This shall never happen to you!”* ²³ *Jesus turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns.”*
 - ²⁴ Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Whoever wants to be my disciple must **deny** themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ²⁵ For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it. ²⁶ What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul?
 - ²⁷ For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father’s glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what they have done. ²⁸ “Truly I tell you, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.” (Matthew 16:21–28, NIV)

Closing Thought:

Real freedom is not the ability to do anything you want. Real freedom is living the life God designed you to live—with control, purpose, fruitfulness, and progress.

Next Time:

Purpose (Part 2)

God gave Adam meaningful work: to name the animals, tend the garden, marry, multiply, and fill the earth.

Key thought: When purpose becomes unclear, life quickly becomes scattered.

Question: What does the Bible say about the importance, the pathway, the influencers that help you find your way.