

Breaking the Labels that Bind**October 7, 2012**

Talking through the message during the week helps you turn what God is saying to you into action steps. These talking points, questions and scriptures are designed to help you take the next step.

- What was one of your least favorite nicknames you were called growing up? Why did you dislike your nickname?

With your Bible or YouVersion read 2 Corinthians 5:17-21 and Isaiah 62:2. We learn in these verses that in Christ we are all new creations and labels no longer apply because of the new name God has given us.

- What negative labels follow your name? How have these labels influenced the way you see yourself?
- Why do so many of us accept negative labels and let them define us?
- How should having a God-centered view of yourself change the way you see yourself?
- What new name would best describe your new life in Christ?

Read Matthew 16:17-18, Jeremiah 29:11 and Philippians 3:13-14. These passages show us that God has given us a purpose and a new future.

- In what ways have you seen your strengths grow out of your weaknesses?
- What God-given purpose are you growing into? What next step do you need to take to embrace that purpose?

- How have you let the labels of your past limit God's plan for your future?
- How can knowing the future God has planned for you help you overcome your negative labels?

Here are some specific things you can do this week that will help you overcome the negative labels of your past and embrace the purpose and future God has given you.

- Take time to read Rahab's story in Joshua chapters 2 and 6. She is one of the best examples in the Bible of a person breaking free from the bondage of their negative labels.
- Write down the negative labels that continue to define you and influence the way you see yourself. Next to each label write the new name that God has given you to replace that label. For example if your label is "average," write "extraordinary" next to it. If your label is "addict," write "overcomer" next to it. Place the list where you'll see it often to remind you that you are defined by your life in Christ.

Talk It Over with God:

These prayer tips can guide your time alone with God each day. Praying with a friend or a small group might help you stick to it.

- Share with God the negative labels that you have in bondage. Ask for His help to free you from them.
- Ask God to show you the purpose He has designed for you.
- Thank God for the new name, purpose and future He has given you because of your life in Christ.
- Commit to God that you will no longer allow the labels of your past to hold you back from embracing His purpose and future for you.