

BETTER

INTRODUCTION

Most of us want this year to be better. But “better” requires a bit of honest and sometimes awkward evaluation. This week we’re asking ourselves: What are we holding onto that’s holding us back?

PART 2

VIDEO NOTES

Buck opened the message with an illustration about trapping a monkey. The monkey finds fruit wedged into a coconut and sticks his hand in to try to get it out. Because he doesn’t want to surrender the fruit, he hangs on to the entire contraption and gets trapped. He could have easily avoided capture by simply letting go of the fruit. What keeps us enslaved? How can we live a life of freedom that God wants for us?

What are you **holding onto** that’s making a **monkey out of you**?

LET’S TALK ABOUT IT

1. What’s one thing/object that you kept around for way too long (old college T-shirts, a broken tool, etc.) Why were you holding on to it? What did it take for you to finally get rid of it?
2. Is there a sin/habit that you’ve been holding onto for way too long that has actually come to master you and rule your life?
3. Romans 6:16-17 says, “Don’t you know that when you offer yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you have come to obey from your heart

the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance.” How does “sin kill” in your life? What has it destroyed, ruined, or robbed you from?

4. As a Christian, we know Jesus is our Savior. How do we live our lives so it is also clear to us and to those around us that He is **Lord** of our lives? What tangible steps do we need to take in order to obey God’s pattern of teaching so that we might experience freedom that leads to a better life?

THIS WEEK

If you really want this year to be *better*, take one of these challenges:

1. Ask someone, “Am I holding onto something that’s holding me back? (If asking your spouse, consider asking them this question as well: Am I holding onto something that’s holding **us** back?)”
2. If you already know what is holding you back, take the next step of telling someone and being vulnerable with them.

Spend some time this week processing what it might look like in your life to begin to let go of the “banana” and hold onto Jesus.

Don’t be mastered
by **anything** or **anyone**.

You already have
a **Master**.