

Freedom Through the Power of the Cross

Lloyd Gingrich on Calling, Prayer, Forgiveness, Rejection, and Finding Freedom in Jesus

Lloyd Gingrich

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Program Summary

In this Testimony Wednesday edition of Mark & Friends, Mark Burns welcomes Lloyd Gingrich from the Arthur-Arcola area to share his faith journey and preview the Freedom Through the Power of the Cross seminar. Lloyd describes growing up in a Christian home, hearing his grandfather preach in German, sensing God's call from childhood, and experiencing salvation at age eighteen while alone in a horse and buggy. Later, God renewed that call through Christian community, prayer, marriage to Judith, and years of prison ministry together. The conversation becomes a practical message about prayer, broken relationships, forgiveness, rejection, bitterness, identity, and the redemptive work of Jesus. Lloyd emphasizes that forgiveness is a choice rather than a feeling and does not excuse wrong; it gives up the right to get even and makes room for God to work.

Key Takeaways

God can hear the cry of my heart anywhere.

A Christian upbringing provides a foundation, but each person still needs a personal response to Jesus.

God often confirms His calling through Scripture, Christian community, prayer, and people.

When God unexpectedly brings someone to mind, that may be an invitation to pray.

God can join people with complementary gifts for ministry purposes they could not have planned.

Forgiveness is a choice, not merely a feeling, and does not mean the wrong was acceptable.

Forgiveness gives up the right to get even and makes room for God's healing.

The past can become a guiding post without becoming a hitching post.

Unresolved rejection can grow into anger and bitterness, but identity in Jesus provides a place of acceptance.

Freedom is possible because of what Jesus accomplished on the cross.

Scripture References

Luke 4:18-19, Psalm 103, Ephesians 6:2-3, Isaiah 43:18-19, James 5:16, Romans 5:8, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Colossians 3:13, Ephesians 4:31-32, John 8:36

Quote of the Day

"Forgiveness is a choice, not a feeling."

Broadcast Notes

Lloyd traces his spiritual roots to a Christian home and a grandfather who preached in German. At about age eight or nine, he remembers preaching to squirrels and birds from a tree stump. At eighteen, while driving a horse and buggy alone on a moonlit night, he experienced a personal awakening to his need for a Savior. Several years later, a midweek prayer gathering renewed his sense of God's calling. Lloyd later met Judith and describes recognizing a godly presence in her before they married. Together they served in prison ministry, often filling fatherly and motherly roles. Mark pauses to encourage listeners to pray whenever God unexpectedly brings someone to mind. The final portion previews the Freedom Through the Power of the Cross seminar at the Come and See Event Center in Champaign and addresses identity, wounds, rejection, bitterness, forgiveness, and freedom.

Practical Applications

Pray when someone unexpectedly comes to mind.

Thank God for someone who helped build my faith foundation.

Ask whether I have postponed an act of obedience God has placed before me.

Pray for God's calling and character to be formed in my spouse or family.

Identify one past wound that has become a hitching post and ask God to redeem it.

Separate forgiveness from approval of wrongdoing.

Notice whether rejection or fear of rejection is controlling a relationship or decision.

Replace a repeated thought of bitterness with a prayer for healing.

Ground my identity in God's love rather than another person's acceptance.

Read Luke 4:18-19 and ask Jesus where I need His freedom today.

Today's Challenge

Choose one relationship, memory, or rejection that still carries emotional weight. For seven days, pray about it without rehearsing revenge or blame. Write down what happened truthfully, what forgiveness does not mean, what you are choosing to release to God, and one step toward freedom.

Closing Prayer

Father, thank You that You hear the cry of my heart wherever I am. Show me where I am still carrying wounds, resentment, rejection, bitterness, or memories that have become a hitching post. Give me grace to forgive without pretending that wrong was right. Help me surrender my desire to get even and trust You with justice, healing, and the future. When someone unexpectedly comes to mind, make me faithful to pray. Root my identity in Your love rather than in another person's approval or rejection. Redeem my past and use it as a testimony of Your grace instead of a chain that keeps me bound. Jesus, bring freedom where I have felt captive, sight where I have been blind, and release where I have been oppressed. Teach me to walk in the freedom You purchased through the cross. In Jesus' name, Amen.

About Today's Speaker

Lloyd Gingrich is a farmer from the Arthur-Arcola area whose Christian faith and ministry have been shaped by family, prayer, Scripture, marriage, and years of prison ministry. Raised in a Christian home and influenced by a grandfather who preached in German, Lloyd experienced a personal awakening to Jesus at age eighteen and later sensed a renewed call to follow God more fully. He and his wife, Judith, served together in prison ministry, often ministering to incarcerated men through complementary fatherly and motherly roles.

About Today's Host

Mark Burns is General Manager of the WLUJ Family of Stations and Great News Radio Network and host of Mark & Friends. For decades, Mark has been involved in Christian radio and ministry, with a heart for helping listeners know Jesus and grow deeper in God's Word. Through Mark & Friends, he brings pastors, ministry leaders, teachers, missionaries, authors, and everyday believers around the microphone for biblical teaching, testimony, conversation, and encouragement.

Proofread Broadcast Transcript

We're glad you're here, we're glad you're here, fellowship sweeter, knowing you're near. It's so good to see you, we hope that it's fair, everyone loves you, we're glad you're here. We're glad you're here, we're glad you're here,

fellowship sweeter, knowing you're near.

Reading from Luke chapter 4 verses 18 and 19, and these are words of Jesus. Red letter words for some of you with the Bibles that highlight everything that Jesus had to say and share his parables. It's in red ink.

Mine is a 1986 Marketplace Bible, it's NIV, but rendering here is, The Spirit of the Lord is on me because he is anointing me to preach the good news to the poor. He has set me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor. That was Luke chapter 4 verses 18 and 19.

Oh, magnify the Lord with me, let us exalt his name together. It is Wednesday, September 9th, 2026. Oh, listening friend, you know how much I love Testimony Tuesdays.

Well, it's Testimony Wednesday, as I met a new friend, actually I've known him for some years, but because he lives in the Arthur Arcola area, we haven't met up for a number of years, but I'm familiar with his name, Lloyd Gingrich. He has a heart for ministry, he's served in the prisons, he's involved in his church, he farms, he loves his beloved wife Judith, they have four children, eight grandchildren, and he was at our last Thursday Pastor and Ministry Leader Luncheon, and he made an announcement about a special conference that's coming up in two days. It's called Freedom Through the Power of the Cross.

It's happening at the Come and See Event Center. Our dear friend, Amika Asaji, he hosts that event center, and we promoted many of the different activities. There's actually an upcoming youth worship night for high schoolers and a lot of different activities.

I have attended many sessions there, but in two days, September 11th and 12th, there's the Freedom Through the Power of the Cross, and we're going to talk about that a little bit today. Lloyd's going to be one of the presenters, and there's another gifted person that's going to talk about the importance of when you've had broken relationships, how to bring healing and hope, how to forgive, how to get over the wound of rejection, or if you're experiencing bitterness or have troubles, recognizing that God forgives you, that you are created in His image to have a relationship with Him, but sin is that barrier. And so how to find that redemptive work that He desires to work out in and through us.

But Lloyd's joining me in the studio. We didn't have a lot of show prep, but we did talk about a lot of our life story and faith journey, and so I'm getting to know him and appreciate him. He's one of these friends that's soft-spoken and a good listener, you know, like those German farmers.

They're men of few words, but when they do speak, they have substantive things to say where, you know, I like to tell a lot of stories. I don't know how substantive they are. But Lloyd, I'm glad you're joining me for today's edition of Mark & Friends.

And before we talk about this special Freedom Through the Power of the Cross, which I know you're excited about, I want to have you share a little of your faith journey growing up in the Arthur Arcola area. Was it your parents? Was it the church? Was it a youth minister? I think it was around 18 where you really came to know the Lord in a personal way, but help for our listener, maybe somebody that's unfamiliar with having a relationship with God or being able to trust the Bible. Walk us through some of that faith journey.

Thank you, Mark. I appreciate being here. Yeah, it's an honor.

I feel very privileged. My journey began, I was raised in a Christian home. Grandpa was a preacher, and he preached in German, and I would listen.

I didn't always understand what he was saying, but I would listen. And I could quote some of those verses still today. That's Psalms 103 in German.

But I always had an interest. I remember I would listen intently about the gospel. And there seemed to be a call on my life to do something for God.

This is kind of funny, but I remember I was young, and I'd go out in the backyard, and I'd stand on a tree stump, and I would preach to the squirrels or birds or whatever to listen. I had a captive audience. And this is how old are you? Oh, I was probably eight or nine maybe.

Yeah, but I always had that. And at 18, I had a salvation experience. I had that first love come over me.

And I didn't really understand all that happened, but I knew I needed a Savior because of my sin. I knew I needed help with that. And God answered my prayer in just a powerful way.

I had that first love come over me. I remember it was a moonlit night. I was actually driving my horse and buggy.

I was all by myself. Now, listening friend, you did hear him right. He said a horse and buggy.

If you're down in the Arthur area, it's a common sight. But for many of you, especially our listeners maybe in Springfield or different parts of the listening area, a horse and buggy? Yeah, that's commonly used in the Arthur area to this day. But this was many years ago.

So you're in a horse and buggy. You're kind of having a stirring in your heart that there's a sovereign God. I mean, you look at the handiwork.

You're a farmer. So you see crops. You see the sky.

You know there's something behind the universe. There's some conviction because you knew Jesus is Savior. So it was that part of that recognition that, you know, I'm a sinner.

I'm flawed, but I can't get into heaven because of my good works. I need that Savior. Driving my horse and buggy wasn't going to save me.

I say that I've used that story many times. God will hear the cry of your heart wherever you are, whatever your circumstance is. God will hear the cry of your heart.

But I didn't really know what to do with that in my culture there. It was not something you talked about a lot. So I kind of lost some of that that first love.

And it wasn't until I was later. I was about maybe 25. I actually was working at a boy's home in Kansas City.

And there I was attending, I think, a Methodist church. That was what was close by. And I remember going to their midweek Bible study prayer meeting.

And we'd sit in a circle on the floor. And those people talked about a God that was so real to me that answered their prayers. And that's when God really, really began to call me.

I'm real. I'm here. I have a calling on your life.

Will you follow? And there were some big steps I took to follow that. I went back home and I had to step out of some things to follow God's call on my life. But I just know that God calls everybody at some point.

I've talked to a lot of people. And almost without fail, they can recollect a moment when God began to call them. Now, you're 25 around this time.

Was Judith into the picture yet? No. When did you get married then? We got married in 1980. But I started attending this other church where I had a friend that invited me.

Well, I left the one church, the Amish church. God called me out of that. I didn't fit in anymore.

So I started attending another church. A friend invited me. And I saw Judy.

I wasn't really drawn to her necessarily. But here's the story. And this is whoever's listening.

God has a plan. Listen. Follow him.

But it was summer Bible school. The teachers would sit on the end of the bench and would sing their song, Come to Bible school, come to Bible school. And the students would go out.

The teacher would get up and lead them out. And I was sitting in the back listening. I was only youth in the adult class, but I didn't care.

I was hungry for the gospel. But when she stood up, she's this little girl, five foot one. But Mark, she was as tall as that ceiling.

To me, it was a moment. And out of her came something I'd never seen before in a woman. There was a godly presence that came out of her that just took me, knocked me off.

I was sitting, but it took me off of my feet. And it wasn't a voice that anybody else heard. But in my spirit, the voice said, Hey, if you choose to get married, there you go.

And I know she's kind of a quiet little girl, and I was more outward and talking. And my brother said, What do you want with that quiet little girl? And I didn't know, but I knew what God had called me to do. So how much longer after that did you start dating or get engaged and then married? It was probably four years before we got married.

But God was shaping me and molding me for the call that I'd had all my life. And he was preparing her. I remember I lived as single guys for a number of years down in Florida or whatever.

And I wasn't an alcoholic. I wasn't into drugs, but I'm just kind of doing my own thing. You know, I would have said, I'm a Christian.

I accepted Christ, but I wasn't really connecting. I wasn't connecting with God. I remember one night after all the other guys had gone to bed, I was out in the living room by myself, living with some guy down in Florida.

And it was just a moment when God touched me. And I knew that somebody was praying for me. And I always blamed my mother.

But I later found out that at that point, Judy was praying for her husband. So it might have been a combination. But that's kind of how we got together and what God called me to later, prison ministry.

Judy really fit into that very well. You have this little woman, five foot one, quiet. But God had gifted her with a voice and a heart to speak to incarcerated men.

Most people would not have thought that of her. But get her a Bible, get her behind a pulpit. She spoke with power and with authority.

So did you do prison ministry together? Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. Okay.

Oh, yeah. I played the father role. She played the mother role to many, many men.

She had a reputation. This is what the guy said. She's not very big, but she's going to get you with that word.

Yeah. Sure. Wow.

I didn't know you could have couples in the prison. I know the singing men have sang in women's prison, but we were all men. I didn't know you could.

Okay. So that's. Oh, yeah.

It's a powerful thing. It's a powerful thing. Yeah.

Yeah. For women going into the men's institution, you have to be prepared. You know, but it's a powerful thing.

It's a powerful thing, especially a woman that plays a mother role, because they all miss their mother. And I would say, you know, you want to hear your mother pray tonight? Things got really quiet. I said, what do you do when mother's about to speak? They all knew, you know, shut up and be quiet.

So it was a powerful. And I look back over that, and that's why God called us together. He knew that.

Yeah. He knew that. Yeah.

He had gifted her for that. So it was a powerful thing. We still do some of it, not as much as we used to.

As we're getting older, we just can't do all the late nights and the long nights. Well, and you farm, and so that takes a lot of time and effort and energy. And I wanted to pause you, but I also wanted to keep having you tell the story.

But I wrote down a little principle that I think is important for all of our listeners to pay attention to, because you talked about the importance of whether it was Judith praying for you or your mom being responsible. But listening friend, if God puts somebody on your heart, and out of nowhere, maybe it's a grade school teacher. Maybe it's your pastor.

Maybe it's a neighbor. Maybe it's a coworker. But if suddenly somebody comes to mind, just stop and pause and say, you know, Lord, I don't know what activity or what's going on in this person's life, but draw them closer to you.

That's one of my favorite prayers overnight when I wake up. I think the best prayer I can ever pray for anyone. Obviously, we pray for health and jobs and the surgery that they're going through or whatever it is.

But I oftentimes pray, Lord, allow them to experience or feel your love or your touch or your care. I don't know if there's a better prayer than that. If somebody like laying and suddenly feels God's comfort or care, that's like the best thing in the world.

So if somebody comes to mind today, this week, this month, just stop and pray because I think we're going to spend a billion years in heaven just part of the time recounting, oh, you were the prayer behind that thing coming to fruition, or it was because you were praying. I think we're going to swap stories for maybe a billion years, and that's after about 10 billion years of just worshiping God nonstop. I think we're going to be so enamored and excited about being in God's presence that a billion years will go by and then we'll just like, okay, now I have a little time.

And then we're going to see all those answered prayers or unique ways that we prayed for somebody and it was answered. But anyways, listening friend, I just wanted to pause in part of Lloyd's testimony because if God brings somebody to mind, pray for them, pray that God would be ever close to them. And so God has used you, and I'm thinking we almost could do a whole program on prison ministry, but primarily I wanted to have you talking about this freedom through the power of Christ because it begins in two days.

It's this Friday and Saturday. Friday night it's basically 6.30 at night. And then Saturday there's three sessions, nine in the morning, 12.30, and then 2.30 and there'll be a box lunch provided and some snacks.

So this special gathering at the Come and See Events Center, 1304 Anthony Drive in Champaign. I'm hoping to make it both days. It's this Friday and Saturday, like I mentioned, Friday night, September 11th at 6.30 and then Saturday three different sessions.

That's September 12th, 9.00 AM, 12.30 and 2.30. And there's times to break. Sometimes people go and run errands and then come back or stay and have the box lunch and relax and fellowship. And then the next session's at 2.30, but you can find out more.

And I think it's your phone number, right, Lloyd? The 217-273-0751, 217-273-0751. The theme is called Freedom Through the Power of the Cross, Bondage to Freedom Seminars. So there'll be some interaction, studying of God's

Word, some messages shared, and I think a testimony of somebody that's going to share the freedom that they experienced when they learned to forgive.

So talk a little about this freedom through the power of cross conference and what people can expect and why they should come. We start at the beginning. We're created for relationships.

And we started off, you know, we're creating God's image, his likeness, and God breathed into us his very own breath. So everything God created, he created with a purpose and order. You know, grass grows in the ground, birds fly in the sky, fish swim in the water.

And he created man for a relationship with God. And there's where we find our purpose, our identity in that. So we began by helping people understand that.

And we have a little time for, like, the salvation thing too. And then we address some of the wounds, what breaks relationships. If you're struggling in a relationship with your father, especially this is a huge one we do in the prisons.

I would play the father role. We just had some tremendous experiences. People found freedom when they began to forgive and release and honor.

A lot of people don't understand what forgiveness is. Forgiveness, when you forgive somebody, forgiveness is a choice, not a feeling. Forgiveness is established by God, flows through us.

But when you forgive, then God can begin to work. We're called to respect, honor your father and mother, which is the first commandment that promises it may be well with thee and thou mayest live long on the earth. And regardless, we're called to forgive.

Now, forgive, like I said, it doesn't mean that what they did is okay. Not at all. But we give up the right to get even.

So it's a powerful thing. We talk about where the bondage began and try to get it to go back. Now, where did you first begin to pick up these resentments? Where did you begin to pick up the things that made you angry? The abuses, verbal, physical, emotional, mental abuse.

What is all that? We talk about the past. God can redeem your past. Use your past as a guiding post, not a hitching post.

We live too long in the stench of our past. We begin to smell like our past. And Jesus says to remember not the former things, neither consider the things of old, Isaiah 43.

Behold, I will do a new thing. Have I not already begun it? I'm going to make a way in the wilderness and streams in the desert. So don't get stuck in your past.

And we work through rejection issues. Rejection and the fear of rejection control many people's life. Having been rejected or the fear of being rejected are very controlling.

But if you understand, most rejection is the way we perceive it. And when other people do reject us, we're not usually the problem. Hurting people hurt people.

But rejection left unchecked always turns to anger, always turns to bitterness, and it just creates a whole ton of issues from not being able to understand and work through rejection. This is a hard one to teach many times, but over the years I've learned to help people find their way out of rejection. And I love to teach it.

Rejection is something you choose to live in. You don't have to live in it no matter what they say or do. So you'll be sharing and teaching this Friday and Saturday, but isn't there another member also that will be sharing? Tell me a little about him in our closing minute.

Yeah, his name is Russell Bloom, and we will teach together. We've kind of done it before. And you need to come to hear Russell's story of forgiveness.

He chose to forgive his dad after many, many difficult years. God just kept him right there and just wouldn't let him continue to live with the resentments. And he chose to do that.

And where he is today, if you're struggling with any kind of relationship at all, forgiveness is a powerful thing. Forgiveness is a reset. Forgiveness is a new start.

Forgiveness is everything. It heals. Our verse heals the brokenhearted.

It sets the captive free. It opens blinded eyes. And it heals all the bruises.

It gets things back the way God intended. It gets us back in the right relationship with God. And other people cannot control what we pick up and live out of when we learn to forget.

So it's a beautiful thing, only because of what Jesus did on the cross. Listening friend, it begins two days from today. It's this Friday and Saturday at the Come and See Events Center, 1304 Anthony Drive in Champaign, Freedom Through the Power of the Cross, Bondage to Freedom Seminar.

You can be a part of it. For more information, call 217-273-0751. That's 217-273-0751.

Now maybe you're driving to work or you weren't able to write that down. Just call the station. We'll give you the information and get you set up.

It's this Friday and Saturday. Friday night beginning at 6.30 p.m. And then Saturday, three different sessions. And if you can't make all three, that's okay.

Still come and enjoy it. If you can make it at 9 a.m. or 12.30 or 2.30 p.m., it's going to be well worth it as we all struggle with relationships, with broken relationships, with feeling rejection, needing forgiveness or forgiving others, finding your identity in Christ. God loves you.

He cares for you. And He wants you healed. And He wants you to be His ambassador, working to bring healing and hope into this hurting world.

So this would be a great start this Friday and Saturday. Find out more by calling Lloyd at 217-273-0751. Now, if you missed a portion of today's broadcast, want to hear it again or read a transcript or pass it on to a friend, there's ministry resources, those great verses out of Luke 4 that were mentioned, talking points and other tips on your faith journey to model Christ better.

Stop by GreatNewsRadio.org and WLUJ.org and you can listen to the program again or utilize those other resources. Well, I hope you're going to join in on the Freedom Through the Power of the Cross seminar. It's this Friday and Saturday.

Well, thanks for listening. Thanks for being a part of our radio listening family. This is Mark Burns and Lloyd Gingrich with the Ministry of Great News Media.

God bless you and have a great day and night.