



FREEDOM IN CHRIST!

Introduce yourselves to one another by telling your middle name and where you were born.

Opening Prayer *(read together)*

Dear Heavenly Father, Thank You so much for giving us Your Word so we may know You better. Thank You, Jesus, for being the Word who came into our world restoring our relationship with God. Thank You, Holy Spirit, for bringing faith so we know the truth. Please guide us now as we study that truth, so we may grow and share with others the freedom Jesus has won for us. In Jesus' Name we pray. Amen.

Ask immigrants why they chose to come to America and most will answer, "for freedom." Freedom is the one thing that is considered to be vital to living a full and successful life.

1. a. Take three or four minutes in your group and come up with a definition of freedom.
- b. Name some secular freedoms we enjoy.
2. The greatest freedom we have is not secular, but spiritual. But unlike the secular freedom that we have just by being born in this country - or moving here - our spiritual lives were born into bondage. Describe the state of our spiritual lives at birth according to Galatians 3:22-23; 4:3; John 8:34-35.
3. Keeping the law is impossible because everyone is born a prisoner of sin. What is God's solution for releasing us from sin's bondage? Romans 8:2-4; 6:3-7

Those who believe in Christ are the only ones that have true freedom. Jesus' blood has set us free. We are no longer prisoners to sin, death or the law as the way to being right with God.

4. a. Read John 8:31-32 with John 14:6. Where is spiritual freedom found?
- b. Share in one or two sentences what you believe about your spiritual freedom.
5. In what sense are we still slaves or prisoners? See Romans 6:18-19.

We have faith in Jesus' redeeming blood to take away our sins so that we can go to heaven. BUT, that's not all! God is practical. He intends we live our everyday lives in faith and freedom, right here, right now.

6. What is the warning in Galatians 5:13? Give some examples of using freedom wrongfully. For starters, see Galatians 5:15-21.
7. More often than we care to admit, we slip back into bondage in our everyday living, though Christ has won our spiritual freedom. Share some ways we become prisoners again (e.g., fears, worries, etc.)
8. a. Galatians 5:1 says, *It is for freedom that Christ has set us free...* This sounds a bit redundant, doesn't it? Continue to read the rest of the verse. *Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.* What does this tell us to do?

We must fight to keep ourselves from being in slavery to the law. Discuss how the following scenario leads to slavery again:

Suzy has willingly lied about your family. She as much has said that, and although you know you should forgive, you cannot.

- b. How can we stay free? How do we stand firm? Romans 6:13-14; Galatians 5:16-18; 2 Timothy 3:16-17
- c. When we do fail, what must we do, and what does God promise according to 1 John 1:9?

The present age in which we live has many “gray” areas in which true freedom (the freedom found in Christ) is compromised because of ignorance of truth or distortions to the truth. For example, public opinion is sometimes substituted for truth.

9. Peter also warns of misuse of our freedom in 1 Peter 2:15-16. What should a Christian do when faced with a “gray” area, a situation where “truth” is not really true, but a theory, popular opinion or accepted practice (“everyone does it”), even though it is unscriptural?

Is freedom for everyone?

There are many people that touch our lives who are still living in bondage, even though they may not know it. Although they live in a country that is free, they are not free spiritually. God did not intend that we keep this amazing freedom a secret. *It is for freedom that Christ has set us free.* Galatians 5:1 NIV We are free to serve, tell the good news, love, forgive, etc.

10. a. What does 1 Peter 3:15 tell us to do? What should we tell about freedom?
- b. List some practical ways you can share the freedom Christ has won for all people. (See how many are found in 1 Peter 4:7-11.)

Christ's unselfish love for each of us individually sets us free. He is counting on us - on you - to *Let Freedom Ring!* Our lives, what we say and how we act, should loudly announce His love, so that others will see His freedom in our lives and want what we have.

As a group, proclaim to each other out loud:

So if the Son sets you free, you are free indeed. John 8:36 NIV

Closing Prayer

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