



Freedom Leader Training

Freedom groups are based on a small group Bible study followed by a conference experience that is designed to help believers move from the experience of salvation to the abundant life that Jesus desires for them. The mission of Freedom groups is to equip participants to remove every obstacle to intimacy with God and walk in the true freedom provided through the work of the cross.

The 12-week Bible study curriculum focuses on six areas of personal growth: LIVING IN THE TREE OF LIFE -WALKING IN THE SPIRIT – SURRENDERING OUR LIFE TO GOD – LEARNING TO SPEAK WORDS OF LIFE – BECOMING A VESSEL GOD CAN USE – LIVING AS A WORSHIPPER OF HIM

Following the 12th week Bible study is a powerful conference, on a Friday evening and Saturday morning and afternoon, designed to allow participants to personally encounter the Lord and receive freedom in many areas of spiritual life. The 2021 Spring Conference in May 14-15th, a Friday evening and Saturday morning and afternoon. The Freedom Bible study + Conference = the Freedom experience. The Week 13 “Celebration” meeting is celebrated in each Freedom Group on the regularly scheduled meeting day and time the week following Conference.

Leading an Effective Freedom Group

Excellence

- Your environment should be viewed as carefully as a Sunday at your campus
- Be on time, stay on time, dismiss on time – establishes trust
- Once you are a Freedom leader, you are always a Freedom leader. People will remember their Freedom leader for semesters to come.
- As leaders, we have the discipline not to flaunt our freedoms or opinions publicly. We risk losing influence with people that don't have the spiritual maturity to maintain unity in the face of disagreement. We care about the gospel advancing; that is our calling. Everything else takes a back seat.
- If you have questions, we will have Q & A at end, also your Freedom Coach/Coordinator is there for you at any and all times.
- Freedom Leader Covenant – you received earlier please review and sign and leave in baskets at door on way out.

The Role of the Leader

- Create the Environment
 - Create an atmosphere of “Yes, God” and of hearing the Holy Spirit
 - Safe environment where people can be transparent

- Inviting & clean
- Light refreshments - optional
- Limit distractions
- Worship
- Discussion – not like other small groups – we want them to talk about what the Holy Spirit is showing them in the week and in the study
 - Guide the discussion to stay on topic
- Two reasonably private spaces for prayer
- Minors (under 18 years old) safeguards – Freedom is not for those under 18 years of age.
- Take the Lead
 - Ask: “What did the Holy Spirit show you this week in your study?”
 - After that, use the questions in the leader section ONLY if needed
- Develop your Apprentice – We will no longer be using the word coleader anymore.
 - Be intentional
 - Fill in gaps they may have had in their Freedom experience
 - Empower apprentices to contribute to discussions and lead discussions
 - Be certain they lead lessons that they feel least prepared to lead so they practice with support
 - Model and coach prayer with participant during individual prayer
 - Have your apprentices observe you pray
 - You observe them praying (and fill in gaps as needed)
 - Release them to pray for participant on their own when they’re ready
 - Coach how to take attendance and leave useful notes in CCB
- Feedback
 - Life-giving words for every participant and your apprentice each week
 - Coach your apprentice after each group meeting as needed
- Encouragement and support – Contact group members once per week
- Attendance and notes (LEAD. App)
 - Use the LEAD. App or CCB online to take attendance each week
 - Leave detailed notes about each session
 - Select “leaders only” on the app when sending notes so your coaches and Freedom Coordinators can stay up to speed and pray with insight
 - Communicate with coaches on apprentice progress
 - Communicate with your Coaches/Co-leads within 48 hours. They try not to bug you but need you to communicate with you when important things come up.

-Your Spiritual Health is IMPORTANT – Be honest with your leaders.

-Are you in the word, are you staying in posture of worship and is your prayer life alive. These should all be active!

-You need to be living out your freedom journey correctly in your own life

-You represent Christ well.

The role of the Apprentice

- Support the leader – unity above all else
 - Pray daily for them and their family
 - Get there early to help set-up and to pray together with leader
 - Be prepared to lead every week, just in case
- Participation
 - In group discussion
 - In praying for group members after week's discussion
- Facilitate the Lessons
 - Lead the weeks you feel weakest in
 - Ask for feedback from your leader so you can grow in leadership
- Pray with Participants
- ALLOW YOUR APPRENTICES TO APPRENTICE – THEY ARE IN TRAINING – BUT THEY CANNOT LEARN WITHOUT GETTING TO USE THE WHEEL AT TIMES. ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THAT THEY ARE NOT THERE TO RUN MEETINGS W/O YOU!

The role of the Coach

- Pray daily for leaders and apprentices, cover them in prayer
- Call leaders weekly to encourage
- Group visits for quality assurance
- Coaches are a resource and here to support you. Lean on them to answer questions that arise, to verify you are creating the expected environment and to coach you in issues that arise (a dominant member, too-long prayer session, etc.)
- Next steps and identifying prospective new leaders

Individual / Personal Prayer Guidelines for Success

- **Start Prayer 1st week at FG Meeting!** It's NOT corporate prayer, it's NOT members praying for each other. It's personal prayer WITH a leader and/or apprentice (at least the 1st few weeks until apprentice is ready on their own. Leader, you will know.)
- **Designated Prayer Areas** for each leader. Crank up the worship songs! Back yourself into a corner to not let them feel trapped in prayer.
- **Stand during prayer-Mimic Conference-Keep time to 2-5 minutes**
- **Prayer time** is designed to encourage participants to hear Holy Spirit for themselves. Not us **"TRYING TO"** impress them with our prayers.
Turn off your thoughts and listen for Holy Spirit

- **It is required each week...** No participant gets a pass, even if they try and leave early to avoid it. Lovingly pursue them that night, the next day.
- **You have permission** to gently encourage during prayer.
NO wide-open question like “what can I pray for you?” This is too broad & leads to what they want to bring up from their personal prayer list.
This is **THEIR PERSONAL** prayer time, **Great Opportunity to Teach and focus them on –** God wants to hear their heart.
JOURNAL page and use the Prayer Focus notes in the Leader’s section. HS will put His finger on something . . . **Listen**
- Finally, **Ask PERMISSION** to touch the person during prayer

PRAYER FORMAT

1) BRIEF INTERVIEW-LISTEN

What did Holy Spirit show you this week that I can join you in?

What have you written on your **Journal Page**?

Did the lesson bring up something we can pray about?

2) LISTEN FOR ANY LIES

- Anything that doesn’t line up with God’s Word about us, counter it with truth.
No gossip!

3) REPLACE LIES WITH TRUTH

- Praising God’s Word, Pray Scripture
- Life-giving Prayer, in short, don’t pray anything over them that you wouldn’t want spoken over you.
- **PLEASE** -- Do Not pray in tongues with participants present. It is a private gift for you to use in your time with Jesus. However, you may pray in tongues together leader/co-leader/Apprentice in agreement, in preparation before the FG Mtg. And, as needed after the meeting... to clear the house.

Prayer is the Foundation of Freedom Groups

- Cover your Participants
- Cover your Co-leaders/Apprentices
- And utilize your campus Prayer Team and Intercessory Prayer Group personally

Special Circumstances

Children on-site

There is no obligation for you to provide childcare for your attendees. If you do, please make sure they are intentionally protected, and you have adequate space and physical separation from adults participating and a good ratio of sitters to children. Sharing the responsibility to care for children by having group members take turns is discouraged because the members will miss key parts of the foundation for their Freedom.

If your own children are in the home, please be sure they are in a separate space where they will not distract the participants or overhear the discussion/prayer. If your children are young, please have a sitter hang out with them. If your children are capable of stewarding themselves (older children), please make sure they are clear on how to get your attention in an emergency and have enough things to keep them busy and away occupied.

If you are having an online group and are the leader. Please encourage people and please consider wearing headphones or removing all distraction where no one will hear or pop or walk into room. People may feel uneasy to share if there is constantly someone walking in.

Coed group recommendations

If you have a second non-bedroom (dining room, sitting room, kitchen, basement) space, separate male and female groups for discussion and prayer for ALL weeks.

Minors (under 18 years old) safeguards

- We have mature high schools' students interested in going through Freedom. The selection process is the responsibility of the student ministry leaders at your campus. Once they recommend someone, your Hub leader would contact you about placing a student in your group if you indicated you're willing.
- When a student joins your group, your objective will be to provide a safe environment free from any accusation or harm.
- As a leader, you are never going to have a student alone with an adult group member or leader. The student will be made aware of these special considerations by their Student Pastor prior to taking Freedom. Please confirm with them that you understand the expectations.
- Communication during the week with a student must be in writing through text or e-mail and have a fellow leader or co-leader included. This protects all involved.

- At group meetings, individual prayer can be done 1:1 within line of site of the group members.
- If you have a co-leader of the same gender, the student can pray with both leaders in a normal prayer place.
- We require the student to be the first group member prayed for and dismissed to avoid the possibility of being alone with another group member, if the student is dropped off by a parent, remind the parent to pick them up promptly.

Radical opinion or resistance to the process may happen during group discussion or prayer time. It can be very disruptive to other people in the group. It can also be the work of the enemy to distract the group. Please take the following steps.

- Pray silently or quietly for God to restore order to the group
- Remind the participant that the group is focusing on the lesson topic
- Encourage them to submit to the process even if it is uncomfortable or challenging
- If they persist in distraction, take them aside and suggest this may not be the best time for them to go through Freedom and ask them to leave and make their decision
- Notify your coach and follow-up with the rogue group member within 24 hours

Abuse claims or confessions

We do take abuse claims seriously and address the people involved with care. Pastor Daniel has determined that we will defend the abused and report abuse. If someone says they are being abused, we believe them and attempt to offer them a safe alternative. If child abuse or elder abuse comes up as an active problem in a person's life, invite their repentance and pray for them. Invite them to read 2 Corinthians 7:10-12 and to take appropriate action to demonstrate repentance by turning themselves in to the appropriate authority. If they refuse, you will need to report this to the appropriate authority. Let the person know you have to report it and give them the option to do it themselves. Call your coach for help in these situations.

Freedom Leader Safeguards

- (If you are married) Don't go to lunch alone with the opposite sex.
- (If you are married) Don't have the opposite sex pick you up or drive places when it is just the two of you.
- (If you are married) Be careful showing affection with the opposite sex that could be misinterpreted.
- Avoid visiting the opposite sex alone at home.
- Don't discuss detailed sexual problems with the opposite sex
- Don't discuss your marriage problems with a member of your group who is the opposite sex.
- Be careful in answering emails, text messages, chat room messages, cards or letters from the opposite sex
- Have a protective ally; for example your spouse or trusted friend
- Pray for the integrity of other Freedom leaders.

Freedom Leader Commitment

As Christian leaders, we need to be above reproach.

Paul wrote, *“Don’t be so naïve and self-confident. You’re not exempt. You could fall flat on your face as easily as anyone else. Forget about self-confidence; it’s useless. Cultivate God-confidence.”* (1 Corinthians 10:12 Message)

Online Tip

If you are having an online group and are the leader. Please encourage people and please consider wearing headphones or removing all distraction where no one will hear or pop or walk into room. People may feel uneasy to share if there is constantly someone walking in.

Freedom Week One

Your first week of Freedom group sets the foundation. You will have some additional “housekeeping” tasks to accomplish. Here is a suggested outline for things to address with your group. Remember, there is a 35-minute video that you will need to watch, discuss and leave enough time for individual prayer.

On week one only, if you are short on time, you can reduce the discussion time. Individual prayer time needs to be given the priority.

Another option is to start your group 15 minutes early.

1. Leaders & apprentices should arrive 10 min early and pray before attendees arrive.
2. Attendees arrive – fellowship time
 - a. Music playing
 - b. Food & drink - optional
 - c. Name tags – suggest the first few weeks
3. Opening Prayer – 1-2 minutes
4. Housekeeping – 5-7 minutes
 - a. Parking, restroom, snack sign-up (optional)
 - b. Start on time, end on time. Please arrive early and be respectful of everyone’s time
 - c. Format meetings – worship, discussion of the lesson, **individual prayer**
 - i. 50/50 general rule - weekly study experience, conference experience
 - d. Importance of attendance each week
 - e. Spending time with God each week preparing for the week’s lesson
 - i. What jumps out to me?
 - ii. What resonates or challenges me?

- iii. What am I avoiding or disagreeing with?
 - f. Confidential – speak freely, what is said here stays here
 - g. Semester Schedule – distribute copy of schedule noting any weeks group will not meet
 - h. Conference dates May 14th & 15th
 - i. Register for conference
 - ii. Arrange for childcare now – have a backup plan
 - iii. Scholarships available
 - i. Group me – To communicate and pray for each other – will receive an invite
- 5. Introduction – 2 minutes per person
 - a. Who you are?
 - b. How you came to Lifepoint?
 - c. How you serve/involvement?
 - d. Fun fact about yourself?
- 6. 2-3-minute testimony – Leader and co-leader
 - a. 30-seconds – how my life looked before Freedom
 - b. 60 seconds what God did to change my life, thinking, circumstances – set free from
 - c. 30 seconds – how my life is different because of experiencing Freedom
- 7. Worship Song
- 8. Week 1 Video – 35 minutes
- 9. Discussion of Video – 10-15 minutes
- 10. Individual prayer time – 2-5 minutes per attendee (shorter for week one)
 - a. Establish salvation – “do you remember a time when you asked Jesus to be the Lord of your life?”
 - b. Brief interview
 - c. Listen for lies – anything that doesn’t line up with the Word of God
 - d. Replace lies with truth by praying God’s word
- 11. Post meeting – Leader and co-leader
 - a. Review meeting & discuss planning for future lessons

Any Meeting After

- Leaders still come early and pray over that day. Pray if in a Host Home.
- Prayer
- Worship (1 song)
- Discussion
- Prayer

This meeting structure is required! It is not to be altered! I have heard this statement – We have always done this. Yes, we have always done this, and we will continue, because it works. It is as Pastor says our **SECRET SAUCE!**