

Life Group Guide: Finding Freedom in Christ

Opening Prayer

Begin your group time by inviting the Holy Spirit to speak, minister, and encourage each person present. Ask God to help everyone be open to His voice and willing to respond to His call.

Icebreaker

Share one area of your life where you've experienced God's freedom in the past year, or one area where you're currently seeking freedom.

Key Scripture References

- **Psalm 138** - The Lord will perfect what concerns us
 - **Isaiah 55** - God's word accomplishes what He sends it to do
 - **John 15** - Abiding in the vine
 - **2 Corinthians 3:17** - Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom
 - **Galatians 5:1** - Christ has set us free
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Main Themes

- 1. See Him - Encountering God's Presence**
 - 2. Be Free - Living in Finished Freedom**
 - 3. Abide - Staying Connected to the Vine**
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Discussion Questions

Part 1: Seeing God Clearly

1. **Personal Encounter:** Pastor Dave said, "You cannot abide in a God you have truly not encountered." When was the last time you had a genuine encounter with God's presence? What did that look like?
 2. **Altar Moments:** What is currently on the "throne" of your life? Is it God, or has something else (fear, Netflix, work, a relationship) taken that place? Be honest with your group.
 3. **Devotional Life:** What does your time with the Lord look like right now? What could it look like? What's one practical step you could take this week to deepen your time with Him?
 4. **The Uncomfortable Call:** The sermon mentioned that God often does His best work when we're uncomfortable. Can you share a time when God used an uncomfortable situation to grow you?
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Part 2: Being Free

5. **Freedom vs. Future:** "Freedom is a finished work, not a future destination." How does this truth challenge the way you've been thinking about your spiritual life? Are you waiting to be "ready" before stepping into something God has called you to?
 6. **Repeating Cycles:** What repeating thoughts or lies do you battle with? (Examples: "I'm not good enough," "I can't," "I'm not ready") How does the truth of Scripture counter these lies?
 7. **Living Fully Free:** The sermon stated, "The question is not whether you are free. The question is whether you're living in the fullness of your freedom." What would living in the fullness of your freedom look like practically in your daily life?
 8. **Here I Am, Send Me:** When you say "Lord, send me," are there places or situations you're secretly hoping He won't send you? Why? What does this reveal about your trust in God?
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Part 3: Abiding in Christ

9. **Staying Connected:** The branch doesn't produce fruit by trying harder—it bears fruit by staying connected to the vine. In what areas of your life are you "trying harder" instead of abiding? What would it look like to shift from striving to abiding?
10. **Abiding When It's Hard:** Can you abide in God when you don't see the situation improving? Share a current circumstance where you need to practice abiding despite the difficulty.

11. **The Pruning Process:** "The cutting and completing are happening simultaneously."
What might God be cutting away in your life right now? How can you cooperate with this process instead of resisting it?
 12. **God's Plans vs. Our Plans:** Pastor Dave mentioned we often want our plans, our timing, our temperature. Where have you been trying to get God to bless your plan instead of seeking His plan? What would surrendering to His plan look like?
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Key Takeaways

- ✓ **God is not done with you yet** - What He has started, He will complete (Philippians 1:6)
 - ✓ **Freedom is already yours** - The cross made freedom a fact, not just a possibility
 - ✓ **Abiding produces fullness** - Joy, peace, and purpose come from staying connected to Jesus
 - ✓ **We're sent because we're free, not because we're ready** - God's calling doesn't wait for perfect conditions
 - ✓ **The Lord will perfect His plans for your life** - Trust His timing and His ways
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Practical Applications

This Week, I Will:

Choose at least 2-3 to commit to:

- Create a specific place/time** for daily devotions and protect that time
- Evaluate my "playlist"** - What am I filling my mind with? Make adjustments to include more worship, Scripture, and godly content
- Join or commit to a Life Group** (if not already in one) for deeper community and accountability
- Identify one area** where I'm "running" instead of abiding, and choose to stay and trust God in that situation
- Write down specific lies** I've been believing and counter them with Scripture truths

- **Say "yes" to something God has been calling me to** that I've been avoiding because it feels uncomfortable
 - **Practice abiding** - Spend 10-15 minutes daily simply being in God's presence without an agenda
 - **Journal** about where God might be sending me and what "Here I am, send me" looks like for my life
 - **Memorize one key verse** from this sermon (suggest Psalm 138, 2 Corinthians 3:17, or John 15:4-5)
 - **Reach out to someone** this week to share the gospel or invite them to church
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Reflection Questions for Personal Journaling

- What specific thing did God speak to me during this sermon?
 - What am I afraid God might ask me to do if I fully surrender?
 - Where do I need to stop striving and start abiding?
 - What would my life look like if I truly believed God's plans for me are perfect?
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Prayer Focus

Spend time praying for:

- **Freedom** from specific fears, anxieties, or bondages group members shared
 - **Clarity** on God's calling and direction for each person
 - **Courage** to say "yes" to God even when it's uncomfortable
 - **Deeper intimacy** with Jesus through abiding in Him
 - **The church** - that Word of Life would continue to be a place where people encounter God and find freedom
 - **Pastor Chris's mother** for healing and the entire pastoral team
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Closing Challenge

Before next week, have each person share one specific way they're going to practice "abiding" this week. Encourage group members to check in with each other via text to support and encourage one another.

Remember: We're not sent because we're ready. We're sent because we're free. We're sent because we're called.

For Next Week

- Read John 15:1-17 daily and journal about what it means to abide
 - Come prepared to share one way you experienced God's presence this week
 - Consider: How has God been "perfecting" His plans in your life?
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"The Lord will work out and will perfect His plans for my life. For Your faithful love, oh God, endures forever." - Psalm 138