

Truly Free: Discovering Your Freedom in Christ

“If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” - John 8:31–32

Life is full of ups and downs. Good days and bad days. Fun times and not so fun times. It’s part of what it means to be a human being. Like all people, our students love the moments when things are going their way. But what about when things don’t go their way? What about the times when they feel overwhelmed by the pressures of the world around them? What about the times when they are exhausted and overwhelmed by stress? What about those moments when they just can’t seem to overcome the sin that drags them down?

For many students, the stress, pressure, and brokenness of their lives is at times, too much to bear. But the excellent news is that there is tremendous hope in the Gospel.

When students feel trapped by their sin, the Gospel says, "You're a slave no longer." When students feel like they don't match up, the Gospel says, "You have immense value to God." When students feel overwhelmed by the stress of their lives, the Gospel says, "There is rest in Jesus." And when students don't feel like their lives matter, the Gospel says, "Your life is meant for more than this." In a word, the Gospel sets students free. Truly free.

Teach *Truly Free* to your students and empower them to discover their freedom in Christ.

Small Group Outlines

Session 1: Set Free from Sin

What We Want Students to Learn: For students to learn that in Christ they have been set free from the penalty of their sin. In Christ, they are forgiven.

Main Scripture: Romans 6:15–23

Session Snapshot: Many things burden students. But the most burdensome thing they face is sin. Apart from Christ, we are enslaved to sin. And this sin separates us from God, permanently. How awesome it is, then, that when we come to saving faith in Christ, we are set free from the chains of sin that bind us. This session will help your students understand the life-changing, soul-transforming freedom that is available to them through a saving relationship with Jesus.

Session 2: Set Free from Measuring-Up

Session Purpose: For students to learn that in Christ they have been set free from the pressure to “measure up.” In Christ, they have value.

Main Scripture: Romans 8:31–39

Session Snapshot: Teenagers receive so many messages from culture about their value. They constantly compare themselves to the standards set by others. And overwhelmingly, they don't feel like they add up. They don't feel as pretty or as put-together as the people they follow in Instagram and Snapchat. They don't feel as athletic as the other guys or girls on the team. They don't feel as smart as their friends. Or as funny. Or as popular. Or as accepted. Overwhelmingly, many of our students don't feel like they add up, and they doubt their self-worth. Into this environment of doubt, the Gospel speaks life and light. In Christ, God sees teenagers as invaluable. There is no condemnation, no judgment, no comparison-making for God's children. They are eternally valuable and immeasurably worthy because the Father has welcomed them in the name of the Son. When students truly internalize this, it changes everything about how they see themselves.

Session 3: Set Free from Stress

Session Purpose: For students to learn that in Christ they have been set free from the stress and anxiety of their lives. In Christ, they can know true rest.

Main Scripture: Matthew 11:28–30

Session Snapshot: One of the most defining characteristics of this generation of young people is how stressed out they are. Anxiety has reached epidemic proportions in teenagers. The stress students feel from the expectations put on them, by themselves and others, can be overwhelming. Relationships. Academics. Athletics. Money. The future. These factors (and so many more) contribute to the stress our students feel. It leaves them overwhelmed, exhausted, and sometimes, hopeless. And yet, the promise of the Gospel is rest. Rest and peace and purpose. A new way of life with a different outlook. In Matthew 11, Jesus promises rest for the weary, and freedom from the stress of our lives. THIS is a message your students need to hear.

Session 4: Set Free for a Purpose

Session Purpose: For students to learn that in Christ, they have been set free from the world's definition of success. In Christ, they have a purpose.

Main Scripture: Ephesians 2:1-10; Matthew 5:16

Session Snapshot: Up to this point, you have made a case for your students that the Gospel sets them free from the bondage of sin, from the weight of expectations, and from the stress that weighs them down. In this session, you'll help students see that more than just setting them free FROM these things, God has set them free FOR a purpose. When students come to saving faith in Christ, God frees them from pursuing unfulfilled or misguided purposes. Paul shows us that God called us so that we might fill the world around us with goodness. And Jesus says in Matthew that this goodness is designed to point people to God. We were freed for a purpose. Our students' lives are rich with meaning. This session will challenge them to embrace the purpose God has for each of them.