



Seeking Freedom

IN PURSUIT: SEEKING THE MORAL LIFE
SESSION 04

Overview:

In this final session, we will discuss how living a moral life brings freedom and how we cannot ultimately free ourselves from sin. We need grace, especially grace in the sacrament of reconciliation. A considerable amount of time will be spent looking at the Ten Commandments in light of freedom.

This session has approximately 12 minutes of video segments.

Theme Scripture:

GALATIANS 5:1

"For freedom Christ set us free; so stand firm and do not submit again to the yoke of slavery."

A Key to Using this Guide:

ANYTHING IN ITALICS: Important information for leaders. Not necessary to share with the group.

REGULAR FONT: To be shared aloud with the group.

LEADER TIPS: Check out the “Leader Tip” boxes in the margins for helpful hints.

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Connect

1. Check-In

It is always good to check-in and ask, "How was your week?" demonstrating that you care about what is going on beyond your small group. You can ask generally or have them share "Highs and Lows." (High - best part of your week; Low - worst part)

2. Accountability

Ask how their COMMIT challenge from last week went (praying the Examen at least once during the week).

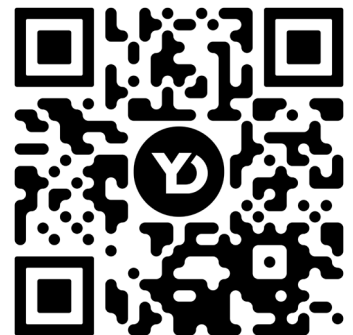
In the last session of *The Invitation*, your group was introduced to the concept of "The 5 S's of Accountability." These are 5 things that a disciple should be striving toward. Check in each time you meet to see how everyone is progressing.

The 5 S's of Accountability: Service, Praying with Scripture, Sacraments, Overcoming Sin, Sharing Jesus with Others

3. Optional Activity

This session's optional activity is a screen game that you can run with any smart device. Scan the QR code to choose your game.

These games were shared with YDisciple from our friends at ProjectYM. Want even more great screen games? Visit their website: <https://projectymgames.com/>



4. Opening Prayer

Read the theme verse, *Galatians 5:1* (found on the first page of this guide) and then lead them in a prayer thanking God for the opportunity to be together and the opportunity to grow in faith, inviting the Holy Spirit to guide your time together. Conclude with a prayer together such as the *Our Father*, *Glory Be*, or *Hail Mary*.

Discuss

- TODAY WE ARE GOING TO BE DISCUSSING FREEDOM. WHAT ARE THE FIRST THINGS THAT POP INTO YOUR MIND WHEN YOU HEAR THAT WORD?

Leader Tip

Allow them to come up with a wide range of answers, even some that feel “wrong.” You will be coming back to this list later.

Watch Video Segment #1

- TELL A STORY OF A TIME WHEN YOU FELT THE MOST FREE.
- REMEMBER LAST TIME WE MET, WE TALKED ABOUT CHRIST AS REDEEMER. WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER FROM THAT CONVERSATION? *Redemption in the Bible refers to buying back someone from slavery.*
- IN THE OLD TESTAMENT, “REDEMPTION” WAS SYNONYMOUS WITH “FREEDOM.” HOW IS THIS FREEDOM DIFFERENT FROM THE TYPES OF FREEDOM WE LISTED BEFORE THE VIDEO CLIP? HOW IS IT SIMILAR?

Watch Video Segment #2

- WHAT IS ONE THING THAT STOOD OUT TO YOU IN THAT CLIP?

There are two senses of freedom being addressed in this session. The first is free will: the belief that God gave us the ability to freely choose good and evil; to choose him or reject him. We discussed this in Session 3. The second sense is having freedom from things that hold us back - fear, anxiety, sin to name a few.

- **JURELL SISON QUOTES ST. JOHN PAUL II, "FREEDOM CONSISTS NOT IN DOING WHAT WE LIKE, BUT IN HAVING THE RIGHT TO DO WHAT WE OUGHT." HAVE YOU EVER HAD THE EXPERIENCE (OR DO YOU KNOW OF SOMEONE WHO HAS) OF DOING "WHATEVER YOU WANT" AND IT BACKFIRING?**

We have brought up the Ten Commandments several times during this series. Now let's take some time to look more closely at them. Even if you can recite them in your sleep, I challenge you to try to hear them again as if it were the first time.

Look up Exodus 20:1-17

Read it aloud while everyone follows along in their bibles. Encourage everyone to think about what's happening.

- **WHO IS SPEAKING IN THIS PASSAGE?**

God.

- **WHAT IS THE FIRST THING GOD REMINDS THE LISTENERS OF IN VERSE 2?** *He is the Lord and he brought them out of slavery in Egypt.*

Before God utters a command, he reminds his people that he has set them free. The Commandments, then, are not oppressive rules but are linked with our freedom. In one sense, God is saying, "I have set you free from physical enslavement, but there is deeper enslavement of the heart to sin. Follow these commandments to remain free."

- **HOW MIGHT FOLLOWING THE RULES GOD GIVES US MAKE US MORE FREE?**



Jurell Sison

Jurell Sison is a Filipino American living in Cleveland, Ohio. He is a teacher, writer, and filmmaker on the quest for the living God. He is the co-founder of The Living Person which seeks to provide positive experiences of a God-centered life to the "nones" and the "dones" ("I'm just 'done' with God/Church/faith"). Their work focuses on the intersection of physical, spiritual, and mental health. Learn more about his work at <https://thelivingperson.com>

Leader Tip

There is so much more to discuss about the individual Commandments. For the sake of time, try to keep conversation general. If they are interested, consider going through an examination of conscience based on the Commandments together at another time.

- **WITH FREEDOM IN MIND, TAKE A LOOK AT THE COMMANDMENTS AGAIN. CHOOSE ONE, AND EXPLAIN HOW IT ACTUALLY MAKES YOU FREE.**
- **JESUS SIMPLY DIVIDES THE COMMANDMENTS INTO TWO CATEGORIES: LOVE OF GOD AND LOVE OF NEIGHBOR. (SEE MATTHEW 22:37-40). WHICH COMMANDMENTS WOULD YOU PUT IN EACH OF THESE TWO CATEGORIES?** *Traditionally, Commandments 1-3 are considered "Love of God" and 4-10, "Love of Neighbor."*
- **JURELL MAKES THE POINT THAT FREEDOM AND A FULL LIFE INVOLVE WHAT HE CALLS "PROFOUND BONDS OF LOVE" WITH OTHERS. HOW DO OUR PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS INCREASE OUR FREEDOM?**

Watch Video Segment #3

- **MARINA LEARNS THERE IS A CONNECTION BETWEEN FREEDOM AND VIRTUE. DOES ANYONE KNOW WHAT VIRTUE IS?** *A virtue is an interior disposition, a positive habit, a passion that has been placed at the service of doing good (CCC 1803,1833).*
- **THE KEY TO UNDERSTANDING VIRTUE IS THAT IT IS A HABIT. WHAT ARE SOME HABITS YOU HAVE IN YOUR DAILY LIFE, UNRELATED TO VIRTUE, (I.E. BRUSHING YOUR TEETH RIGHT BEFORE BED, GRABBING A SNACK WHEN YOU WATCH TV, ETC.)?**
- **WHAT MAKES SOMETHING A HABIT?** *Doing something over and over again so that we start to do it without thinking.*
- **VIRTUE, THEN, IS DOING THE GOOD OVER AND OVER SO THAT WE START TO DO GOOD WITHOUT EVEN THINKING ABOUT IT. WHAT IS ONE SMALL THING THAT YOU CAN START DOING TO BUILD A HABIT OF VIRTUE?**

Building virtue takes effort, but as the YOUCAT (Youth Catechism) says, “By our human abilities we can only do that in fits and starts. With his grace God supports human virtues and gives us, above and beyond that, supernatural virtues which help us come closer to God and live more securely in his light.” (YOUCAT 299). In other words, we need to strive, but we can’t do it totally on our own power. We need God’s grace.

- **MARINA MENTIONS THIS KEYWORD TO ALL OF THIS TALK ON THE MORAL LIFE: GRACE. WHAT IS GRACE?** *Grace is God’s life at work in us. It is free and undeserved. Grace is from God and God alone. We have to cooperate with it, grace doesn’t make us do stuff, but it gives us the ability to do stuff that we could do on our own.*

“Grace is favor, the free and undeserved help that God gives us to respond to his call to become children of God, adoptive sons, partakers of the divine nature and of eternal life,”(CCC 1996).

Leader Tip

You could spend several weeks talking just about grace. If you want to go deeper into understanding grace, we recommend looking at the YOUCAT #338-341.

Commit

Go around the circle and share one of the most important takeaways from this series.

Once everyone has shared freely, make sure to emphasize the following points:

- We are made for more than this earth; we are made to be happy with God forever in heaven.
- The heart of the moral life is a relationship of love with God.
- Being good doesn’t make God love us, being good is the fruit of being loved by God.
- By our free will, we can choose to sin. Sin leads to brokenness that we cannot fix ourselves and we need a Redeemer. Jesus’s redemption offers us healing.
- We need to strive to build habits of virtue.
- While we strive, we cannot overcome sin solely on our own effort. We need grace.
- In living a moral life, we find true freedom.

The best way we can access Jesus’ healing and forgiveness is to receive the sacrament of reconciliation. In this sacrament, we are also given the grace we need to combat future sins. This sacrament is an essential part of coming into the fullness of freedom offered to us in the moral life.

Commitment

This week's commitment is to go to confession.

Leader Tip

Consider arranging a time for your group to go to confession together.

Follow-up Checklist

- Send the Parent Sheet.
- Remind them to bring a Bible to every meeting.
- Consider sending them a reminder between sessions of the COMMIT.
- Pray!

Before You Move on from This Series

This series is not about digging in to the fullness of Catholic moral theology. Rather it was designed to spark curiosity that the moral life can lead us to happiness. Consider diving into some of the other topics they were interested in.

We also strongly encourage you to NOT move on to another video series, but to take a break from videos. Here are just a few ideas:

- Go to confession together
- Do something social
- Do a service project
- Look up answers to their burning questions about specifics of morality