



Session 1 Break Free of Deception

In Series 1 “*Start Strong*” you learn what Jesus has done to set you free.
In Series 2 “*Power Up*” you learn what you need to do to release God’s power in your life.
Now, in “*Break Free*” you will learn how to use God’s power to break sin habits, resist temptation, rid yourself of destructive anger, and start to fully experience your new life in Christ.
It all starts with knowing and claiming the truth.

Jesus said it:

“You will know the truth and the truth will set you free.” John 8:32

That’s our starting point. We must learn the truth that will set us free!

OPENING

1. If the group is new, or if there are new people in the group, share your names and briefly tell the group a little bit about yourself.
2. What are your honest thoughts and feelings about the devil?
 - a. *Not sure he exists*
 - b. *Too scary to think about*
 - c. *He “made me do it”*
 - d. *I leave him alone and hope he won’t bother me*
 - e. *He has unlimited power to do evil*
 - f. *I can’t beat him*
 - g. *He’s a myth made up to explain what we now know is mental illness*
 - h. *or _____*

SMALL GROUP EXPECTATIONS

It is good to know what the group expects of each other. This helps ensure that everyone has a positive experience and avoids misunderstandings. Review the small group guidelines on the back page then go through the study so everyone can get a taste for what the small group experience will be like. After the study, review the guidelines again and decide if you are willing to commit to them.

BIBLE STUDY

1. Read the following verses. What do they say about the type of life a Christian is to live and what reasons are given for living that way? When you read these verses what gut-level reaction do you have to them?

1 Thessalonians 4:7

1 Peter 1:15-16

John 14:23-24

1 John 3:4-6

We Have an Enemy

Read John 8:44

2. Jesus would be in a position to know about the devil. What do Jesus' comments tell you about whether or not the devil is real? What do they tell you about the devil's tactics?

Read Revelation 12:7-10

3. What additional information do you learn about the devil from this passage?

Read 1 Peter 5:8-9

4. What happens if we ignore the existence of the devil or disregard his abilities? Does this passage suggest we should be afraid of the devil? Explain. How does Peter instruct us to respond?

Know Where You Stand

Read Romans 1:7

5. What does Paul call the members of the church in Rome? Is he writing to the whole church or just a select group? What does this say about you and what is your reaction to this? Is Paul crazy? What difference will it make in your behavior if you believe you are a sinner versus believing you are a saint?

Read Romans 6:1-7 & 2 Corinthians 5:17

6. What do these verses say happens to us and our sinful lifestyle when we become Christians? What do the verses tell us about the reason this happens?

Read Romans 8:1, 31-34

7. The devil's tactic is to first tempt you and then, once you fall for the temptation, keep you defeated through a constant barrage of accusing and condemning thoughts. In response, what do these verses say is true for the believer? Does Romans 8:1 apply to everything you've done or just some things? Based on what you have already learned in Romans 6, how do you know this is true?

Read Ephesians 2:1-6

8. What does this passage say about who we were before we believed in Jesus? Who are we now? Most importantly, where are we said to be now? What kind of security and authority does that suggest you have in Christ?

Read 1 John 5:18 and Philippians 4:13

9. What do these verses say about the ability and strength believers have to stand up to the devil, break free of sinful habits, and live the kind of life God created us to live?

APPLICATION

1. Given what you have learned about the devil's tactics, why is it so important to know the truth? How will it set you free?
2. What are some of the lies and condemning thoughts the devil uses to keep you, or people you know, trapped in a destructive lifestyle of sin?
3. What have you learned that gives you confidence that you can break free of sin habits, stand up to temptation, and change your lifestyle?

PRAYER *"And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one."
Matthew 6:13 from the Lord's Prayer.*

Praying for each other is an important part of learning to "Break Free." Prayer is a powerful weapon that accesses God's power for helping yourself and others break free of sin and defeat temptation. So, although this is voluntary, we encourage you to pray out loud for each other. If people have a specific prayer request please share it. Otherwise, pray that God gives you and the others in your group the power to stand against temptation and break free of sin habits.

REMEMBER: Whatever is shared is confidential.

NEXT SESSION

You will learn why, even though you have "died to sin," you still struggle with it and about the powerful tool God has given us for breaking free.

PERSONAL GROWTH

Spending time in God's word unleashes the power of God's living word in us, a power we need to break free. It is also a good habit that will replace the bad habits we're breaking.

Set aside at least 15 minutes a day for Bible study and prayer. If you can, we recommend doing this at the beginning of the day so that your time spent with God's Word doesn't get crowded out as your day gets busy. As you read we suggest using a simple Bible study method we call "The 4 C's", a series of simple questions to help you apply what you are reading.

The passages we are recommending for your study will teach you truths that you will want to use to be alert and to take your stand against the devil and break free of his temptations and condemnation. Many of these passages will come up in future sessions. Reading and thinking about them between meetings will help you get even more from each study.

If there are things that you don't understand as you read, don't worry. Just make a note to ask someone like your group leader about it later. Don't feel like you have to dissect and understand every nuance of the passage. If you are able to gain even one lesson a day that you can put into practice, then you are off to a great start.

When you use these "4 C" questions, you may not be able to come up with answers for all four questions. That's okay, answer those you can. When you're done, spend a little time in prayer. The "4 C" questions can be used to guide your prayer as well. Start by praising God, then confess sin, make commitments, and finally, pray for your needs and requests.

The 4 C's

CELEBRATE: What can you praise God for from this passage?

CONFESS: Does this passage convict you of something you need to confess to God?

COMMIT: What commitment does this passage challenge you to make?

COMMUNICATE: What did you learn that you could share with someone else?

Day 1: Ephesians 6:10-20

Day 2: Romans 8:1-17

Day 3: Romans 8:28-39

Day 4: Galatians 5:16-26

Day 5: 2 Peter 1:2-4

The Unshakeable Faith Series

Start Strong (4 weeks)

Learn what every Christian needs to know about their new faith in Jesus and how it will make you strong.

Power Up (4 weeks)

Learn how to use God-given tools for developing an unshakable faith. If you want to experience God's best every day, these tools are indispensable.

Break Free (4 weeks)

Learn how to break sin habits and deal with the temptations that can choke out God's best for your life.

Small Group

Guidelines & Agreement

It's a good idea for every group to put words to their shared expectations and commitments. These guidelines will help you avoid unmet expectations. We recommend that you discuss and commit to these guidelines as a foundation for a healthy group experience. Feel free to customize these guidelines to express your group's expectations.

WE AGREE TO THE FOLLOWING VALUES:

Group Attendance	To give priority to the group meeting (call if I am absent or late)
Safe Environment	To create a safe place where people can be heard and feel loved (no quick answers, snap judgments, or simple fixes)
Be Confidential	To keep anything that is shared strictly confidential
Spiritual Health	To give group members permission to help me live a healthy, balanced spiritual life that is pleasing to God
Welcome Newcomers	To invite our friends who might benefit from this study and warmly welcome newcomers
Building Relationships	To get to know the other members of the group and pray for them regularly
Other	<hr/> <hr/>