

# Practicing Personal Freedom

## Leader Resource

### PURSUING GOD'S PRESENCE - Small Group Resource

Confession and repentance are essential practices within the Christian faith. Genuine repentance leads us to Christ and to a different relationship and attitude towards sin. Within a small group, we journey with each other in a more personal way, knowing each other and being known. We can witness both the beauty of who we are but also the struggles and sin we are wrestling through. The Practicing Personal Freedom tool is one way that a small group can encourage each other to live free from the bondage of sin.

#### *Small Group Dialogue*

- What does confession or repentance mean to you?
- How does repentance differ from regret or remorse?
- Do you ever ask God to search you and show you your sin (Psalm 139:23-24)? Why or why not?
- Where have you experienced victory over sin or bondage in your own life?
- How have you pursued freedom from ungodly behaviours or attitudes?
- How have you seen God bring freedom to you?
- What would you say are the sinful patterns in your family tree?
- Are there any that are being repeated in your own family that you are wanting to change?
- Is there anything that is challenging for you in this?
- How can we as a small group encourage one another in our sanctification journey?

## *Key Scriptures:*

Psalm 32:5 *"Finally, I confessed all my sins to you and stopped trying to hide my guilt. I said to myself, 'I will confess my rebellion to the Lord.' And you forgave me! All my guilt is gone."*

Psalm 51

Proverbs 28:13 *"People who conceal their sins will not prosper, but if they confess and turn from them, they will receive mercy."*

2 Corinthians 7:10 *"For the kind of sorrow God wants us to experience leads us away from sin and results in salvation. There's no regret for that kind of sorrow. But worldly sorrow, which lacks repentance, results in spiritual death."*

1 John 1:9 *"But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness."*

James 5:16 *"Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results."*

## **Additional Leader Resources**

- "Prayer: Healing & Wholeness" Leader Training Workshop
- "Shepherding: The Sanctification Journey" Leader Training Workshop
- Encounter God Retreat

# Practicing Personal Freedom

## Small Group Leader Guide

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*“Search me O God and know my heart, test me and know my anxious thoughts.  
See if there is any offensive ways in me and lead me in the way everlasting.”*  
Psalm 139:23-24

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God desires us to be free from the bondage of sin in our lives. Here are some essential steps to guide you in leading your small group through confession and repentance of sin.

### 1. Invite

- Pray the above Scripture together.
- Invite the Holy Spirit to show us any sinful attitudes, actions or patterns in our hearts.

### 2. Pay attention

- What is the Lord bringing to the surface?
- It could be an attitude, action, a memory, a lie we have believed or an emotional trigger.

### 3. Identify

- Lead the group to identify what the Holy Spirit has brought to light for them personally. Use the inventory list provided to help them identify what may be brought to light.
- Guide the group to process this in the most helpful way. For example, split into gender specific smaller groups such as same gender triads/groups of three.

<input type="checkbox"/> Anger/Rage	<input type="checkbox"/> Apathy	<input type="checkbox"/> Argumentative
<input type="checkbox"/> Arrogance	<input type="checkbox"/> Comparing	<input type="checkbox"/> Covetousness/Envy/Jealousy
<input type="checkbox"/> Fear	<input type="checkbox"/> Greed	<input type="checkbox"/> Hatred
<input type="checkbox"/> Judgmental	<input type="checkbox"/> Laziness	<input type="checkbox"/> Materialism
<input type="checkbox"/> Negativity	<input type="checkbox"/> People-pleasing	<input type="checkbox"/> Perfectionism
<input type="checkbox"/> Pride/False humility	<input type="checkbox"/> Procrastination	<input type="checkbox"/> Racism
<input type="checkbox"/> Revenge	<input type="checkbox"/> Sarcasm	<input type="checkbox"/> Self-pity/Self-righteousness
<input type="checkbox"/> Self-hatred/Self-rejection	<input type="checkbox"/> Unbelief	<input type="checkbox"/> Unforgiveness/Bitterness
<input type="checkbox"/> Vengeance	<input type="checkbox"/> Other(s) _____	

#### **4. Confession**

- Within the same-gender triad, invite each person to confess without telling stories. Invite them to pray: “Father God, I confess \_\_\_\_\_ as my sin. I admit that I have missed the mark with You Lord, within myself and with other people around me. Please forgive me and cleanse me from this sin.”

#### **5. Repent from this action**

- To repent is to turn away from this action and to go God’s way instead.
- Within the same-gender triad, invite each person to pray a repentance prayer: “Lord God, I turn away from this sin and I decide to go Your way, Jesus, and not my own. I ask for Your strength and grace to live Your ways Lord and not my own.”

#### **6. Receive forgiveness**

- Within the same-gender triad, pray for each person that repented, saying: “[Confessor's name], the Word of God says that if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. I affirm that you are forgiven. Do you receive the forgiveness of Almighty God through the blood of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit?” (1 John 1:9)
- Wait to hear his/her response.
  - If yes, move to the next step.
  - If no, ask the Holy Spirit to show what barrier there is to receiving forgiveness.
  - Invite him/her to offer that barrier to the Lord in prayer.

#### **7. Minister Deliverance**

- Within the same-gender triad, pray to break bondages for each person who repented: “In the name of Jesus, I cut you free from all attachments to \_\_\_\_\_ (name the sins the person confessed). Based upon [confessor's name]’s confession, I now close this door to the enemy in his/her life. In the name of Jesus, I bind and cast away every spirit of \_\_\_\_\_ (name the sins from the confessor’s list). I command you to go to Jesus to be dealt with as He wishes and do not return to [confessor's name].”

## **8. Filled with the Holy Spirit**

- Within the same-gender triad, invite the Holy Spirit into the places that the enemy has now vacated.
- For each person who repented, pray: “Holy Spirit, please come and fill \_\_\_\_\_ where the enemy has been at work in regards to these sins. Please bring healing and wholeness to \_\_\_\_\_, in Jesus’ name.”

## **9. Connect to Jesus**

- Within the same-gender triad, invite each person to connect to Jesus right now.
- Pray “Lord Jesus, You are here with us. Please connect with and shine on our friend, \_\_\_\_\_ right now.”
- Ask how Jesus is connecting to him/her in that moment.
- Thank Jesus for being there with you.

## **10. Listen in prayer to affirm**

- Within the same-gender triad, spend time to listen in prayer for each other.
  - Ask the Holy Spirit to speak, show or reveal His truth and blessing for the other person(s).
  - Wait and listen to the Holy Spirit.
  - Where appropriate (and for their encouragement), share or pray those things over the other person(s).
  - Remember, words must be for their strengthening, encouraging and comfort (1 Corinthians 14:3). If what you hear is negative, ask God to show you how it can be said so that it is strengthening, encouraging or comforting. If that doesn’t become clear, don’t share it.

## **11. Follow up**

- Pray a closing prayer of blessing and protection for everyone.
- Encourage your group to follow up with their triad members again in the future for accountability and encouragement where appropriate.
- Consider any other follow-up steps that may be needed.
- If you have questions or encounter issues, please talk to your small group coach or pastor.

