

High School Small Group Guide: Foundations of Freedom

Based on Colossians 1:15-23

Opening Prayer

Thank God for the freedom we have through Jesus and ask Him to help you understand His Word and show you how to live it out this week.

Ice Breaker

If you could instantly be free from one thing (homework, chores, fear, anxiety, social media pressure, etc.), what would you choose? Why?

Lesson Summary

Our culture talks a lot about freedom—doing what we want, saying what we want, or living however we choose. But the greatest freedom isn't political or personal—it's spiritual.

In Colossians 1:15-23, Paul shows us that real freedom is found only in Jesus. He is the foundation of our lives, the One who made a way for us to have a relationship with God, the One who makes us right with Him, and the hope that keeps us grounded no matter what happens around us.

Key Takeaways

1. Jesus Is Our Foundation

Paul mentions Jesus (He, Him, His) over and over because everything starts with Him. Our identity isn't built on popularity, sports, grades, or achievements—it's built on Christ.

2. Jesus Reconciles Us to God

Sin separated us from God, but Jesus paid the price so we could have a relationship with Him. We don't earn God's love—we receive it through Christ.

3. Jesus Makes Us Blameless

When we trust Christ, God doesn't see our sin—He sees Jesus' righteousness. Our worth comes from Him, not from our mistakes or successes.

4. Jesus Is Our Hope

Life changes. Friends change. Culture changes. Jesus never changes. He is the anchor that keeps us steady when everything else feels uncertain.

Discussion Questions

Understanding the Passage

1. Read Colossians 1:15-23 together.

What words or phrases describing Jesus stand out to you the most? Why?

2.

Why do you think Paul focused so much attention on who Jesus is before talking about what Jesus has done?

3.

Verse 15 says Jesus is "the image of the invisible God." What do you think that means? What does Jesus show us about God's character?

Going Deeper

4.

Where do teenagers often look for identity today? (Friends, sports, social media, relationships, appearance, success, etc.)

How is building your identity on Jesus different?

5.

What are some things people your age believe will make them happy or fulfilled—but often leave them empty?

6.

Verse 23 encourages believers to remain "steadfast" in their faith. What are some pressures students face that can pull them away from following Christ?

Personal Reflection

7.

Do you ever struggle to believe that God truly forgives you? Why do you think that's difficult sometimes?

8.

What "anchors" compete with Jesus in your life? (Phones, sports, relationships, popularity, entertainment, academics, etc.)

9.

How does knowing that Jesus loves you unconditionally change the way you see yourself?

Application

10.

What is one practical way you can put Jesus first this week at school, home, or with your friends?

11.

How can you encourage another Christian friend who may be struggling in their faith?

12.

Who is someone in your life that needs to know about the freedom Jesus offers? What is one step you could take this week to show or share His love?

Practical Applications

This Week's Challenge

Choose one challenge:

Option 1: Know Jesus Better

Read Colossians 1:15-23 every day this week. Highlight one thing you learn about Jesus each day.

Option 2: Identity Check

Whenever you catch yourself comparing yourself to someone else, stop and thank God for one truth about who you are in Christ.

Option 3: Share Hope

Pray every day for one friend who doesn't know Jesus. Ask God to give you an opportunity to encourage or talk with them.

Option 4: Anchor Yourself

Spend five minutes each day without your phone reading Scripture and praying. Ask God to help Him become your strongest foundation.

Memory Verse

Colossians 1:18a

"And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent."

Challenge: Try memorizing the entire verse by next Sunday.

Prayer Focus

Praise

Thank Jesus for being greater than anything this world offers and for holding your life together.

Confession

Ask God to forgive you for the times you've looked to other things instead of Jesus for your identity, security, or happiness.

Thanksgiving

Thank God for forgiving your sins, giving you new life, and making you part of His family.

Intercession

- Pray for your school and classmates.
 - Pray for friends who don't know Jesus.
 - Pray for courage to live out your faith.
 - Pray for your church's student ministry and leaders.
 - Pray for one another's specific needs.
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Closing Thought

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Our world tells us freedom means doing whatever we want. Jesus teaches that true freedom is found in following Him.

This week, ask yourself:

"Am I building my life on things that change—or on Jesus, who never changes?"