

Complex Inquirers

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As you proceed with your Community Freedom Ministry, you may encounter an Inquirer, if you have not already, who is much more difficult than most. We sometimes refer to them as “complex Inquirers.”

Complex Inquirers will often display one or more of these traits:

- Extreme difficulty processing through *The Steps to Freedom in Christ* and/or experience very little resolution of core issues even after going through the “Steps.”
- History of going to many different counselors, treatment centers, ministry leaders, etc. for help with little or no apparent improvement
- Difficulty getting connected with or staying connected to a healthy, healing community of believers.
- May have an aversion to being under authority.
- Tendency to gravitate toward an unhealthy, over-dependent relationship with one person that can become extremely draining and overwhelming to the caregiver.
- Struggles with a wide array of overwhelming needs -- including financial, legal, medical, relational/social, marital, familial, transportational, and vocational.
- Catastrophic thinking, use of histrionics or caustic, guilt-inducing behavior in order to gain attention and control over a caregiver
- Looking for Deliverance – a power encounter rather than a truth encounter

When working with a complex inquirer you may experience some pretty disturbing reactions yourself such as:

- weariness,
- anger,

- sadness,
- frustration,
- defeat,
- guilt,
- fear,
- a sense of being trapped,
- helplessness
- hopelessness.

Sometimes, though, you might experience great joy being able to help them find freedom in Christ.

There are ways that you CAN help Complex inquirers. Today I want to address some principles for you to keep in mind regardless of if you are dealing with a Complex Inquirer or not.

FIRST PRINCIPLE: Stay in the role of ministry to which God has called you – **a healthy operation of a Community Freedom Ministry**

Remember a Community Freedom Ministry is designed to provide a freedom presence in your church or community.

That presence needs to include:

- **Teaching** the message of freedom
- **Taking** people through *The Steps to Freedom in Christ*
- **Training** others how to use *The Steps to Freedom in Christ*

TEACHING

For an Inquirer to find freedom in Christ, it is essential that they understand their identity, position, and authority in Christ.

If teaching is neglected, your CFM is in **danger of being seen as:**

- a ministry that **just takes people through *the Steps***
- a ministry that **only helps people with severe problems**

- a ministry **exclusively of spiritual warfare or deliverance** instead of a comprehensive discipleship ministry.

So be sure that teaching the principles of freedom as Dr. Anderson has outlined them is a primary component of your CFM.

Two of the best sources for teaching include:

- The Freedom In Christ Course
- A chapter by chapter study of *Victory Over the Darkness* and *The Bondage Breaker*

SECOND PRINCIPLE: You are not called by God to work individually with everyone who asks for help.

You most likely are compassionate and merciful or you would not have been drawn to this ministry in the first place.

The question is how do you know what your role is in God's plan for any Inquirer who comes to you for help?

Don't assume that an opportunity to work with someone constitutes a call from God to work with that person!

When confronted with a Complex Inquirer:

- The **first thing** to do is to **ask God for His wisdom and guidance concerning the situation.**
James 1:5-7 – “If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. ⁶ But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. ⁷ That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord.”
- **Also** you can seek input from your pastoral staff
- **Also** you can consult with other godly people at your church or on you CFM team
- **Also** ask others to pray with you for God's wisdom

In assessing what to do with a Complex Inquirer, keep in mind that there are some legitimate reasons why this might not be the right time to take them through a **personal Freedom Appointment** (FA), even though it might be right at a later date.

Some reasons why now might not be the best time do a FA with a Complex Inquirer:

- 1) The person is not truly a follower of Jesus Christ. This can be deceptive because sometimes true believers doubt their salvation. It takes prayer and God's wisdom to discern the truth here. This may present an opportunity for you to:
 - Invite an Inquirer to receive Jesus Christ with you giving a clear presentation of the gospel.
 - Help clarify an Inquirers salvation when in doubt

- 2) The person is just not ready. Most likely because they do not exhibit understanding of the principles of freedom.

You can wait until they have had an opportunity to learn and process these principles to avoid them expecting a "quick fix" from a FA.

- 3) The person seems unable to learn due to physical or mental impairment or even severe spiritual interference.

In this case, it would be wise to find someone on your team or in your church willing to spend individual unhurried time teaching them the freedom principles. Maybe even going through *The Steps to Freedom* booklet with them to explain each step thoroughly to them in advance of a FA.

- 4) The person is seriously at risk for any number of possible reasons:
 - Suicidal
 - Using street drugs
 - Traumatic events in their life recently
 - Deeply grieving a recent loss
 - Victim of serious crime

- Extreme anxiety due to disturbing life issues such as financial difficulty, legal issues, severe medical conditions
- Any issue that requires immediate attention

You must remember that you are not qualified to help every Inquirer with every need they have. It's ok to admit that to an Inquirer.

It is wise to direct the Complex Inquirer to other sources of help so they can resolve these serious issues that you are not qualified to do.

THIRD PRINCIPLE:

Continually develop an **up-to-date network of other caregivers and professionals** to whom you can refer Inquirers.

Your network could include:

- Your pastoral staff
- Licensed professional counselors (especially Christians who understand the principles of freedom in Christ)
- Medical physicians or psychiatrists
- Marriage and family counselors
- Legal professionals
- Financial advisors

Keep in mind that *The Steps to Freedom* may not be an automatic cure or a complete answer, especially for a Complex Inquirer.

Be assured that if you have done what God has called you to do, you are not responsible for correcting all the issues a Complex Inquirer is still struggling with.

You will need to balance compassion and mercy by admitting you have done all you can and referring Complex Inquirers to others for further help.