

SHARE THE JESUS YOU KNOW
WHO LOVES YOU PERSONALLY AND INTIMATELY

Sharon Chapman

It is good to have so many of you here this week to learn how to launch and grow your own Community Freedom Ministries.

Freedom In Christ is a discipleship ministry which considers the whole person when working with Inquirers. Our desire is to assist people in surrendering their lives to God so they can experience and live in the freedom that Jesus Christ purchased for them.

The **Steps to Freedom** is an important tool to help Inquirers find their freedom in Christ. We want to help you become more familiar with how to facilitate the Steps. You will have an opportunity tomorrow and Friday to take one another through a Steps to Freedom appointment.

You will hear from Patty Minnihan later how to prepare Inquirers for a successful Freedom Appointment.

I want to focus for a few minutes on the fact that *the Steps* are the Steps to Freedom **IN CHRIST**. You must never lose sight of the ONE in whom that freedom resides and upon whom it depends. Jesus Christ our Lord is the one to whom we must always be pointing Inquirers. It is too easy for an Inquirer to feel that you are the one who can lead them to freedom. That you are the one with whom they will be working through their issues.

To avoid this wrong focus, as you prepare Inquirers to go through a Freedom Appointment, I encourage you to take seriously the need to educate them about Jesus.

- His nature,
- the depth of His love for them,
- the nature of His sacrifice for them,
- the forgiveness that He offers no matter how bad the offenses, guilt, or shame that the Inquirer is carrying.
- the new identity they have because they are In Christ
- the position and authority they have in the spiritual world because of their relationship with Jesus.

Don't make this teaching an intellectual exercise. **It must be an outpouring of your personal experience with your Lord Jesus Christ.**

Often an Inquirer will be mired in conflicts both spiritual and personal that are foremost in their hearts and minds. These are the things that are causing them pain. These are the

things that have caused them to come to you for help. These are the things that they want to be done with!

In order for them to appreciate the miraculous healing that only Jesus can give, they must have a clear understanding of who He is and how much He loves them. To proceed without clarifying this truth could set you up for a relationship with an Inquirer where you are seen as the one who is going to deliver them from their conflicts, take away their pain, and set them free.

I want to share with you two pictures of Jesus that exemplify aspects of His nature that I always try to keep in my heart, so that I can honestly testify to Inquirers about the Jesus that I know personally.

First there is the Jesus who loves me so much that he said about me and you that “He will take delight in you, he will quiet you with his love, he will rejoice over you singing.”
Zephaniah 3:17

SHOW SLIDE #1 Jan Small’s painting

Do you believe Jesus expresses His love for YOU this way?

Then there is the Jesus who is always reaching out to me when I feel like I’m underwater and drowning:

- drowning in sorrow,
- drowning in the consequences of my own sin,
- drowning in the troubling circumstances of my life,
- drowning in the difficulty of personal relationships,
- drowning in the present-day consequences of my past
- or anything else that has me “under water” so to speak.

SHOW SLIDE #2 Jesus under water

An important realization occurred for me the first time I read Psalm 40:1-3

“I waited patiently for the Lord, he turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the **slimy pit**, out of the mud **and mire**. He set my feet on a rock and gave me **a firm place to stand**. He put a new song in my mouth a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see and fear and put their trust in the Lord.”

This Psalm moved me to understand how much junk Jesus had removed from my life. How awful my life had been without Him. How new my life was because of Him.

- Can you relate to either of these depictions of Jesus?
- Has He delivered you from any kind of drowning?
- Have you experienced the joy He has in loving you?

- If so, would you like to share that now?

OPEN THE FLOOR FOR SHARING (if there is time)

As you become equipped to offer others the opportunity to find freedom IN CHRIST through your ministry, I want to encourage you to spend time with Jesus:

- abide in Him
- stay close to Him
- constantly remember what he has done for you
- remember from what he has set you free
- praise, give thanks, and worship him

Psalm 63:1

You, God, are my God,
earnestly I seek you;
I thirst for you,
my whole being longs for you,
in a dry and parched land
where there is no water.

Commit yourself to being one who is seeking a deeper intimacy with Jesus.

I'll close with the words of John Ortberg:

“Arrange your day so that you are experiencing deep contentment, joy and confidence in your everyday life with God.”