

Seven P's of Introducing Freedom in Christ Ministries to your Church

Matt Coffman

When I prayed about what to share with you during this time, I was led to share some practical advice for starting a Freedom in Christ Ministry at your church. I asked myself, “what would have proven beneficial to me two years ago when I was sitting in the seat that you now may be sitting?”

From that came the **Seven P's of introducing Freedom in Christ Ministries to your Church.**

The first P is **Personal Witness**. God has used Neil Anderson and Freedom in Christ Ministries to change my life. And what God has taught me through this ministry is what I desire to share with others. If that's true for you, you can't help but want to share what God is teaching you — this is the concept of discipleship — learning and growing from God and giving what you learned to others. We all have a “why we're here” attending a practicum and working through these materials.

- Ask yourself, “How has God used this ministry to change my life?” And “Do you want me to share this with others?”

The second P is **Prayer**. Speaking with God. Listening to what he says. Praying without ceasing. It's an everyday walk, not just how we spend the first minutes of the day. In prayer, I felt God also gave me a clear mission and vision, a picture of why this ministry is so important. It was from Luke 4:18-19 when Jesus began his public ministry.

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor” Luke 4:18-19 (Isaiah 61).

It is my belief that Jesus wasn't just talking about people who didn't know him but also prophesizing about people in the church who are still captive to the enemy's lies, blind to their inheritance and position in Christ, and oppressed by the enemy's lies.

The third P stands for **Presentation**. It is important to remember that pastors and shepherds are busy people. If the Lord is asking you to start or present a new ministry to your leadership, be sure to be clear and to the point. Don't focus on the **what**, but the **why**. Share your testimony and share your heart. While a nice brochure looks good, your personal testimony is key.

The fourth P is for **Pilot**. As I have been part of a ministry team for five years, I see that Pastors and Shepherds can be weary of introducing a new ministry or program to their congregation. Offering a pilot program allows you both to “get your feet” wet and try it out.

A Pilot program is a small-scale, short-term experiment that helps organizations evaluate the potential effectiveness of new initiatives before full-scale implementation.

Successful pilot programs allow for Inside-out transformation. Class participant testimonies should be the catalyst for ministry growth. A few characteristics of the pilot program we initiated included:

- Invite only, not announced to the congregation.

- Invite staff and Elders for oversight.
- Pray specifically about who to invite.
- Conduct surveys throughout the pilot to course-correct along the way.

Expect to learn a LOT from a pilot group study.

After the pilot, have a recap with the pastoral staff. Share testimonies from surveys. Discuss why this ministry supports the church's vision. Provide a vision for the next steps. That leads to our next P.

Patience is the next P. It is important to remember that this is not your ministry. You can present the information, submit it to the authority of the church, but then you leave the outcome to God. If God wants it there, He will open the doors. Personally, I kept a list of things the Lord provided all along the way and would read through them when I was discouraged.

Anytime you present a new ministry to a church, you can anticipate opposition. At the time of my last practicum, there was a deliverance ministry in our church with a name similar to Freedom in Christ Ministries, which was later renounced from the pulpit. During the beginning of the pilot, many of those in our church thought the two ministries were the same. I relied on Godly wisdom from the FICM team, lots of prayer, and a reliance on the Lord to navigate the rough waters and challenges. In short, there is a real opportunity for personal spiritual growth through the challenges. Looking back, it was actually the additional scrutiny of Freedom in Christ that gave me additional confidence in the FICM materials.

Planning is the sixth P. During the practicum, there will be many opportunities to hear of various ways to integrate FICM into your church or ministry group. The leaders at the book table, Ken and Jan, are great resources to answer your questions. I won't go into depth on this, but I will say there is so much support here with the Freedom in Christ family. Look around — there are so many resources and knowledgeable individuals available at FICM from which to glean. Prayer teams, regional/national leadership involvement, ongoing training, etc. are all part of the support.

The final P is **Perseverance**. While going through my training, Rich Miller would always share this verse: "And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up" (Galatians 6:9). This verse gave me great encouragement to continue to put one foot in front of the other and make progress.

My wife and I are now in this part of the process, where we are still learning and growing. Now, we are applying the things we're learning to make each class better. And you will notice that this diagram is in a circle; anytime we want to add something new to this program, we go through the similar steps.

I want to provide you with one closing thought. This was really big for me.

God changed my heart to see FICM as a discipleship ministry as opposed to a deliverance ministry. Why? Because people must live with themselves after they go through *The Steps to Freedom in Christ*. No one can take your thoughts captive for you. No one can repent on your behalf. No one can walk in the light for someone else. Children of God must know who they are in Christ to stand their ground.

If you have any questions about this process, feel free to email me at ficmhawaii@gmail.com.
Thank you very much!