

PATHWAY TO FREEDOM

Ice Breaker _____

Game/activity _____

Q What do you think are our greatest needs as people?

Our greatest needs are to be accepted (loved) and have worth (value). The motivation behind the things we say and do lies in the fact that we all want to feel valuable to someone. This is part of God's design for us that we might find out completeness in Him and through the community that He places us in.

As we grow up, we open a kind of bank account of messages (whether accurate or not), that help shape how we think or feel about ourselves. This forms our personal opinions of ourselves and also how we think we should behave for acceptance.

Some Questions...

- Q What are some of the messages we receive from our families as we grow up?
- Q What about from school teachers and youth leaders?
- Q What about the messages from friends, and other students?

So we start to create a sense of personal identity. It can be based upon truth or lies, but is usually distorted in some way; often referred to as a false sense of identity. The devil loves to come in and twist the truth to make us believe in his lies instead of the truth that God offers.

Q What are some of the lies that the devil uses to trap young people?

The next thing we see is that this sense of identity shapes our thinking, decisions and behaviour. We then begin to try to meet our needs for acceptance and worth the best way that we can – in our own strength, independent of God. We can still be going to church but not be dependent upon God as our source of security.

As a result we develop ways of responding to people and coping with stuff, and usually we find we are constantly trying to be everything that others want us to be, and living independently of God.

More Questions...

- Q How would we know if we are living independently of God?
- Q Do you think taking drugs or getting drunk, being driven to succeed or gambling is living independent of God?

Date you did this study _____

Leaders' Notes

Q Do you think that a person who needs everything to be perfect all the time is living independent of God? (this usually comes out of those tendencies where our worth is based upon our ability to do 100% all the time; which is impossible. Perfection driven people are often the eldest in the family, and can operate out of a sense of frustration at not being good enough.)

As long as a person believes lies about themselves, they will never get free, no matter what they do. Many times we try to change our behaviour but don't change the lies that establish that behaviour. Christians often try to change it through praying, fasting and Bible reading etc. but all that does is change the outside and often produces guilt at not being able to get it right. And then we end up living in what the Bible refers to as the "flesh".

Read these scriptures about "our flesh":

Galatians 2:16

Galatians 3:3

Galatians 5:13

Galatians 5:16-24

Galatians 6:8

Matthew 26:41

John 3:6

John 6:63

Romans 8:1

Q What do these scriptures mean when they talk about the flesh?

Q Read Romans 8:5 & 13. What does it mean by death?

The answer to living in freedom lies in realising how Christ sees us and persistently **training** the way we think, according to Jesus' words of life. Eventually, these truths will set us free.

Activity:

Give each person a piece of paper to write down all the things that they think about themselves and their life. Then get them to mark a big line through the ones that they recognise as lies according to the Word of God.

True freedom comes as we learn to live by faith in who God says we are and not by our feelings.

John 8:32, 36

Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

Galatians 5:1

It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.

1 John 3:1

How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God.

John 8:36

*Therefore if the Son shall make you **free**, you shall be **free** indeed.*

Personal Application:

This week, why not simply rest from trying so hard to get things right and ask God to show you His love

