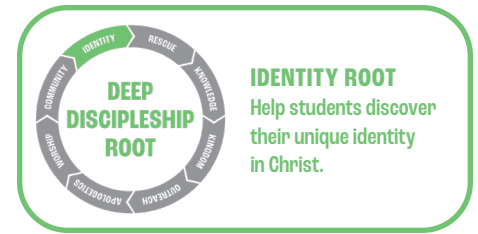


MARK OF A DISCIPLE

Disciples of Christ aren't controlled by guilt and shame because there is no condemnation in Jesus.

SCRIPTURE

ROMANS 8:1–11



OPENING

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

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GAME or ICE BREAKER

Based on your group's size, choose a **Game** from the **Game Library** OR use the **Ice Breaker** prompt.

- **Game**—choose a screen game from the **Game Library**
- **Ice Breaker**—When you daydream, what is it usually about?

WORSHIP

Craft a time of worship with a live band or sing along to a playlist (e.g., YouTube, Spotify, etc.).

- Check out our curated Spotify list. We understand that every church has a different theological view of worship. These songs are suggestions, please pick what works best for your church.
- <https://open.spotify.com/playlist/2xmeIKGUjkEE7bJYSCbRwe?si=d254ec715a4749e5>

TRANSITION TO MESSAGE

MEDIA AS STUDENTS ARRIVE

1. Play background music (optional)
2. Display **SERIES Title Slide** and announcement slides in a loop or customize the provided **PowerPoint**.
3. Play a 5-minute Countdown Timer 5:00 minutes before you start.

GAME LIBRARY

Look in the **Intentional Programming** folder included in your download. View the game in advance in case you need supplies or slides.

SLIDES (optional)

Use **SERIES Background & Blank Slides** or **PowerPoint** to create lyric slides.

VIDEO

Show **SERIES Bumper Video** or **SERIES Intro Video** after the last worship song. This will give the students something to focus on while the band leaves the stage and you step onto it.

MESSAGE

Use the following teaching points and suggested illustrations as a starting point to build your message.

POINT 1: Christ brings freedom

Read or have someone in your group read Romans 8:1–2

To have a relationship with God, we must be perfect. Holy (Lev. 19:2). That's the standard. But we messed that up in the very beginning. We are born sinful (Ps. 51:5). It's in our nature (Eph. 2:3). This means from our first breath, we were slaves to sin (John 8:34), unable to save ourselves. We were too weak (Rom. 5:6). So God stepped in and did what we could not. Through his death and resurrection, Jesus set us free from sin and all the guilt and shame that comes with it. We have freedom in Christ!

SLIDES (optional)

Use the **SERIES PowerPoint** OR the **Background & Blank Slides** to create these slides to support your message:

- Romans 8:1–2
- Point 1

FACILITATOR NOTE: There are a lot of Scripture references in this first point. Consider pulling students aside before the message to ask if they would be okay reading in front of the group. Then assign the different Scripture references to the different students who don't mind reading out loud. This is an easy way to have students involved in an element of the service and develop student leaders.

POINT 2: Christ brings righteousness

Read or have someone in your group read Romans 8:3–4

Christ not only sets us free from sin, but he also makes us righteous. When we become a Christ-follower, God sends us a helper, the Spirit. The Holy Spirit, God living in us, will teach us how to do what is right and pleasing to the Lord (John 14:26).

ILLUSTRATION: Tell a **personal story** about a time you needed help learning how to do the right thing. (Examples: I kept messing up the play until the assistant coach showed me a new technique. Or, my cake never tasted as good as my grandmother's until she walked me through her own recipe.)

Similar to how we need help from others (coaches, teachers, instructors) to learn the right way to do something, God himself shows us the right way to live through the Holy Spirit and the example of Jesus.

SLIDES (optional)

- Romans 8:3–4
- Point 2

POINT 3: Christ brings a new mindset

Read or have someone in your group read Romans 8:5–8

We are not our thoughts, but we do tend to act out the things we spend a lot of time thinking about. If you spend significant time thinking about music, there is a good chance you'll find your way into a band or choir. How we think about things, life included, shapes how we interact with them.

ILLUSTRATION: Share a **personal story** about something you think is scary and how those thoughts shape how you act toward it. (Example: I never swim in the ocean because I'm terrified of sharks.) Or choose an **object lesson** from the Identity Root.

SLIDES (optional)

- Romans 8:5–8
- Point 3

OBJECT LESSON LIBRARY

Look for the **Object Lessons** in the **Transformational Discipleship** folder included in your download.



To see and interact with our lives differently, we have to begin thinking about it differently (Rom. 12:2). To help us with this, God gives us a new mindset.

POINT 4: Christ brings life

Read or have someone in your group read Romans 8:9–11

Jesus came to earth “in the likeness” of us. He died as all humans will do. But then the Father brought him back to life. Through Jesus, we too have hope of resurrection. We have faith that God will bring us, his adopted children, the same life he brought the Son.

SLIDES (optional)

- Romans 8:9–11
- Point 4

CLOSING

MARK OF A DISCIPLE

Disciples of Christ aren't controlled by guilt and shame because there is no condemnation in Jesus.

SLIDES (optional)

- Mark of a Disciple

FACILITATOR NOTE: DO YOU HAVE SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION RIGHT AWAY?

- If YES, then **STOP HERE**, divide into groups, and provide your Small Group Leaders with a copy of the **Small Group Break-out Questions** on the next page.
- If NO, then end your gathering with the **Reflect & Respond** questions and **Prayer** prompt below.

REFLECT & RESPOND

Give the students time to silently think through what they have heard and contemplate these questions:

- How does it feel to know Christ has set you free from sin's control?
- How can this freedom change the way you live? Talk? Think? Treat others?

SLIDES (optional)

Use the **SERIES PowerPoint** OR the **Background & Blank Slides** to display the **Reflect & Respond** questions.

FACILITATOR NOTE: Don't rush this part. Give the students a few minutes to really consider all the ways God transforms us into who he created us to be..

PRAYER

Close by praying or invite someone to pray for your group.



SMALL GROUP BREAKOUT (OPTIONAL)

Pick a few questions from each section to discuss. Close with prayer.

BREAKOUT QUESTIONS**Build Meaningful Relationships**

- When was the last time you let your emotions and feelings impact your actions?
- When your parents catch you doing something you shouldn't do, how do you feel?
- What are some past mistakes that instantly brought feelings of deep guilt and shame?

Share Personal Stories & Ask Intentional Questions

- How does having no condemnation change how we respond to our sin?
- In what ways do you think guilt and shame try to control us?
- What circumstances can cause us to feel guilt and shame regarding our relationship with God?
- When have you ever felt unfit for God or beyond his repair? What do you do with those feelings?

Make Life Application & Hold Students Accountable

- How could embracing the freedom you have in Christ impact or change your feelings of guilt and shame?
- What can you do to practice relying on the Holy Spirit more than your feelings?

PRAYER

Take time to let your students pray for each other's applications in the upcoming weeks.
Use this space to keep track of any prayer requests.

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