

Week 1 | Intro: 5 Phases of Freedom



Introduction

We are about to embark on a *40-Day Life-Changing Journey to Freedom* called *Forgiving Challenge*.

Before we begin our journey, take some time to go over the Group Promise together by reading it aloud. Make sure everyone understands the commitment.

Group Promise

I commit to these basic *Forgiving Challenge* Group Promises. This is my "ALL IN" pledge to live out Jesus' words, both in my own life and in helping my Group do so.

- I will be on time and show up with my whole heart.
- Especially due to the nature of the content in *Forgiving Challenge*, I understand that this Group is 100% confidential. Whatever is shared in the Group stays in the Group.
- I will respect other Group members by participating openly and speaking honestly, without dominating the discussions.
- I will not try to fix people, preach a sermon, or give unsolicited advice.
- When I share in the Group, I will share primarily about myself and not about others.
- I will trust God to work in all of us as we explore the forgiveness of Jesus together!

(Optional) Looking over the list of promises presented here, which promise resonates with you the most? Why?

Personal Connection

Nearly everyone has a scar somewhere on their body. Tell the story behind one of your scars, and why it may or may not be meaningful to you.

Video Clip & Reflections

Watch *Forgiving Challenge Small Group* video "[Intro: 5 phases of freedom](#)"

Video Debrief: What struck you from the video? Any new insights? Any new challenges? Anything that bears repeating?

Forgiving Challenge will explore the 5 Phases Leading to Freedom using the acronym SCARS:



11) Consider looking up each of these words to find their definitions to help you have greater understanding of where we are headed on the journey.

12) What do you hope happens in your life over the next 40 days?

Closing thoughts

The first step to total freedom is knowing that God Himself has truly forgiven you.

Isaiah 53:4-5 "4 Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. 5 But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed."

Challenge for the Week

Invite someone on this 40-Day journey with you.

Most of the greatest challenges that are conquered in life are not meant for individuals to tackle alone. Our hope is that you will do this Challenge with at least one other person, called your accountability partner. If you are joining in this Challenge with your small group or your church, it's still important that you have one person who can help to hold you accountable for the duration of this discipleship journey. Identify specifics with this person, such as how often you will check in with one another and what questions you will ask of one another at those check-ins.

Closing Prayer

Close by praying for your group as you all embark on the 40-Day Challenge together. Ask God for encouragement, strength, honesty, perseverance, and appropriate vulnerability to help you truly receive God's forgiveness and the freedom that He offers to you.

This Week's Reading

Don't forget to read this week the assigned readings from the book *Forgiving Challenge: A 40-Day Life-Changing Journey Leading to Freedom* read the Introduction, as well as Days 1-5.

Isaiah 59:2 But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear.

- 4) Based on this passage, what is the consequence of sin?

Forgiving Challenge will largely focus on the story of how Jesus forgives Peter. Peter is the only other fully developed character in the four Gospels outside of Jesus. By exploring how Jesus will forgive Peter, we will begin to better understand how Jesus forgives each one of us. In our small group study for today, we will examine parts of Peter's story and the events leading up to Peter's sin that he is most known for.

Read Luke 5:1-11 *Jesus Chooses Peter to be His Disciple* and answer the following questions:

- 5) Had Peter done anything up to this point to earn a front-row-seat to doing ministry with Jesus?

- 6) What was Peter's response to Jesus choosing him to be a disciple?

- 7) What can we learn from Peter and about Peter with this response?

Read Matthew 16:13-20 *Jesus Appoints Peter to Lead the Church*

- 8) Not only did Jesus call Peter to be one of His 12 disciples, but He entrusted to Peter the keys to the church to Peter's leadership. What made Jesus choose Peter for such a high honor?

Read Matthew 26:31-35 Jesus Predicts Peter's Denial

- 9) At the Last Supper, Jesus predicted all the disciples would deny Him. But Peter stood up and boldly professed that he would be faithful all the way until the end. In your faith journey, have you ever, even with good intentions, professed something that later you couldn't live up to? Explain.

Read John 18:15-18, 25-27 Peter Denies Jesus Three Times

- 10) Even though Jesus had not only called Peter as one of the 12, but also entrusted to him the keys to the church, Peter badly failed Jesus. How do you think Peter felt after hearing the rooster crow knowing that he had denied Jesus three times?

- 11) How do you feel, especially knowing how much God has done for you, when you fail to live up to God's will?

- 12) Zach says, "Sin is strong, but Jesus's grace is stronger."

a. Do you really believe this? Why or why not?

b. If so, are you willing to let the grace of Jesus cover your sin(s)? Why or why not?

Closing Thoughts

Failure is typically the end of someone's story in this world. But in God's story, any failure is an opportunity to fall into the grace and forgiveness of Jesus.

Romans 3:23-24 ²³For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus."

Challenge for the Week

There are two types of sin.

A) Sins of commission are things we do, say, or think that we ought not.

B) Sins of omission are things that we have been called to do, say, or think that we leave undone.

Use the attached handout to take the following omission and commission sin tests. These tests are highly confidential. You can either use them as a resource for personal reflection or after taking these sin tests you could share the results with your accountability partner as a way of being vulnerable and honest with yourself and others. After all, too often we "cover" our sin, putting up a mask with others, pretending that we're just "fine" and everything is "ok."

Closing Prayer

Spend time praying and asking God to reveal the sin in your life that you want to be freed from. Spend time also thanking God that His grace is big enough to cover all the sin in the group.

This Week's Reading

For a deeper, daily experience to go alongside the weekly small group experience, read days 6-12 of *Forgiving Challenge: A 40-Day Journey Leading to Freedom*.

Handout: **The Sin Test** (Week 2)

Take the following sin test. Mark "Yes" or "No" next to each questions.

- 1) Have you ever lusted after something or someone that wasn't yours?
- 2) Do you have anything in your life that you regret?
- 3) Do you have anything in your life that you are constantly ashamed of?
- 4) Have you ever cut yourself or intentionally harmed yourself?
- 5) Have you ever physically, verbally, or sexually abused someone else?
- 6) Have you ever abused drugs or alcohol?
- 7) Have you ever thought about or attempted suicide?
- 8) Have you ever had a sexual relationship outside of marriage?
- 9) Do you have any secrets that you've never shared with anyone?
- 10) Do you have anything in your life that you haven't been able to quit doing?
- 11) Have you purposefully and willingly viewed pornography?
- 12) Have you ever lied to someone in your effort to hide your actions?

**Adapted from one created by Flatirons Community Church in Denver, Colorado.*

"The Ten Commandments act as a mirror, showing us where we have sinned in our various places of life. How have you failed to fear, love, or trust in God and love your neighbor?"

~ Small Catechism Explanation p. 311 (2017)

"Consider your place in life according to the Ten Commandments: Are you a father, mother, son, daughter, husband, wife, or worker Have you been disobedient, unfaithful, or lazy? Have you been hot-tempered, rude, or quarrelsome? Have you hurt someone by your words or deeds? Have you stolen, been negligent, wasted anything, or done any harm?"

~ Martin Luther (Small Catechism)



Handout: **The Omission Test** (Week 2)

Take the following omission test. Below are ten things God has commanded us to do. Mark “Yes” or “No” if you’ve been actively involved in these over the past month.

- 1) Take care of the widow. (James 1:27, Isaiah 1:17)
- 2) Take care of the orphan. (James 1:27)
- 3) Feed the hungry. (Matthew 25:35)
- 4) Invite/befriend a stranger. (Matthew 25:35)
- 5) Clothe the naked. (Matthew 25:36)
- 6) Visit the sick. (Matthew 25:36)
- 7) Visit the imprisoned. (Matthew 25:36)
- 8) Defend the rights of the defenseless. (Proverbs 31:8-9)
- 9) Pray for those who mistreat you. (Matthew 5:44)
- 10) Go and make disciples. (Matthew 28:18-20)



Week 3 | Confession



Introduction & Personal Connections

Take some time to discuss the previous week's readings and/or Challenges. Here are some things to discuss:

- Celebrate a "win" that you had in *Forgiving Challenge* over the past week.
- Share a struggle.
- What did God reveal to you during the readings and/or Challenges this past week?

What is a sport, activity, or hobby that you enjoy? Who in that particular sport, activity, or hobby would you argue is the G.O.A.T. (Greatest of All Time)? Defend your position.

Video Clip & Reflections

Watch *Forgiving Challenge Small Group* video "Week 3 – Confession"

Video Debrief: What struck you from the video? Any new insights? Any new challenges? Anything that bears repeating?

Discussion

- 1) Everyone sins. It's what happens after you sin that determines whether you experience freedom or not. Any pursuit of freedom outside of Jesus will always lead to more bondage. Agree or disagree. Explain.

- 2) Is it okay to experience guilt for your sin? Explain.

2 Corinthians 7:10 "Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death."

- 3) Describe the difference between guilt and shame.

- 4) Zach says, "The devil wants to take your natural feeling of guilt and turn it into shame. But Jesus wants to remove your guilt by His grace." Do you spend more time listening to the shame language of the devil or to the grace language of Jesus? Why?

On Day 13 of *Forgiving Challenge*, Zach mentions that the way we typically try to fight sin on our own is through any of these means:

- A. Blaming Others
- B. Trying Harder
- C. Denying Your Sin
- D. Minimizing Your Sin

- 5) Which of these four do you tend to fall towards most often? Why do you think that is?

- 6) Where do you see these trends in the world, or culture, today?

Worldly sorrow tries to fight sin on our own. Godly sorrow allows Jesus to fight our sin for us. The apostle John invites us, after our sin, to confess our sins to God.

1 John 1:8-10 ⁸ If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. ⁹ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰ If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us."

While acknowledgment of our sin is an important part of the process, it is never the end goal. The purpose of confession is not to dwell on our brokenness, but rather, to receive God's kindness.

Romans 2:4 "Do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, forbearance, and patience, not realizing that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?"

- 7) When you confess your sins, do you tend to focus more on your sin or God's kindness? Explain.

Closing Thoughts

The admission price to freedom begins with an admission of sin. No matter what you've done, Jesus is ready today to hear your confession. More than your perfectly scripted words, Jesus knows your heart. Simply come to Him, however you are, come to Him.

Hebrews 4:16 "Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need."

Challenge for the Week

Commit to memory **1 John 1:8-9** (previous page). In addition, spend time with your accountability partner confessing your sin. If you need help with what to say, or how to confess, use the confession on Day 17 of *Forgiving Challenge* to guide you.

Closing Prayer

Spend time in prayer confessing your sins to God. Depending on the size, maturity, comfortability, and relationships in the group, this could be done out loud or silently as individuals. Spend time thanking God for His forgiveness of all our sins.

This Week's Reading

For a deeper, daily experience to go alongside the weekly small group experience, read days 13-19 of *Forgiving Challenge: A 40-Day Journey Leading to Freedom*.

Bonus Resource - Reminder of God's Forgiveness

Confession is meant to lead us deeper into God's forgiveness, not to wallow in self-pity or worse to beat ourselves up. Where do you need to remember the grace that is yours in Jesus?

Remember Whose You Are

God's Little Lamb - "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep" (John 10:11).

God's Own Child - "See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are" (1 John 3:1).

God's Beloved - "...Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might make her holy, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself ... without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish" (Ephesians 5:25b-27).

Remember What Jesus Has Done

"For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Corinthians 5:21).

"He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed" (1 Peter 2:24).

"For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:38-39).

Remember the Certainty of God's Promises

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 Jn 1:9).

"There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1)

"...whoever comes to me I will never cast out" (6:37).

"For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us" (Psalm 103:11-12).

Week 4 | Absolution

Introduction & Personal Connections



Take some time to discuss the previous week's readings and/or Challenges. Here are some things to discuss:

- Celebrate a "win" that you had in *Forgiving Challenge* over the past week.
- Share a struggle.
- What did God reveal to you during the readings and/or Challenges this past week?

In your opinion, what is the most important meal of the day? Explain.

Video Clip & Reflections

Watch *Forgiving Challenge Small Group video* "Week 4 – Absolution"

Video Debrief: What struck you from the video? Any new insights? Any new challenges? Anything that bears repeating?

Discussion

- 1) Do you tend to replay your worst moments over and over and over again? Yes or no. Explain.

The two common definitions of the word forgive are: A) To cancel a debt. B) To stop feeling angry or resentful toward someone for an offense, flaw, or mistake.

- 2) Which of these is harder for you, and why?

3) What is the significance of the charcoal fire in John 21:9 (aka “Chapter 89,” the last chapter of the gospels)?

4) Why do you think that Jesus would recreate Peter’s worst moment?

5) Describe what you feel like the emotions and feelings of Peter must have been like as he approached Jesus on the shore by the charcoal fire.

Read the conversation by the charcoal fire that Jesus had with Peter from **John 21:15-17**:

“¹⁵ When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?' 'Yes, Lord,' he said, 'you know that I love you.' Jesus said, 'Feed my lambs.' ¹⁶ Again Jesus said, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' He answered, 'Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.' Jesus said, 'Take care of my sheep.' ¹⁷ The third time he said to him, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, 'Do you love me?' He said, 'Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you.' Jesus said, 'Feed my sheep.'”

6) The definition of absolution is the declaration that you have been forgiven. It is the announcement that your sins have been paid in full, that the debt has been cancelled. How does the amount of times that Jesus asked Peter “Do you love me?” declare to Peter that the consequence of his denials have been paid for?

7) Zach says on Day 21 of *Forgiving Challenge*: “Freedom is a painful process, and part of that process is entering into our pain to ultimately bring healing. He recreates the charcoal fire, not because He is a cruel God, but because He is a caring God.” Agree or disagree. Explain.

- 8) Peter was Jesus's right-hand man. Jesus had chosen him, believed in him, and entrusted so much to him, but in Jesus's darkest hour, Peter miserably failed Jesus. If God can forgive someone like Peter, do you believe God can forgive someone like you? Why or why not?
- 9) To whom or to where do you turn for reassurance and support when you are feeling unforgiveable or unlovable? To whom or to where do you turn to that you know that you can hear the declaration of God's forgiveness?
- 10) What gift has God given to the church to exercise on His behalf? See John 20:19-23. (Follow-up: How is the timing of this gift to Peter and the other disciples significant for Peter and the others?)

Bonus Resource - Proclaiming God's Forgiveness

When someone confesses his or her sins, whether against God, us, or others, Christians have the privilege of proclaiming God's forgiveness. Here is an easy format for proclaiming this good news into the lives of others.

After hearing a person's confession, a fellow Christian may announce God's forgiveness, using the following words:

God promises you in His Word that He loves you, assuring you that He will be merciful to you and He will strengthen your faith. Do you believe that God's promises of forgiveness are for all God's children, including you? (Yes.)

Then hear and believe what God's Word promises you. (*Pick one or more of the following.*)

In 1 John 1:9 God promises: "If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."

In Romans 8:1, the Lord declares: "There is therefore no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."

In 1 Peter 2:24, God assures us: "[Christ] himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed."

Therefore, [Name], believe this Good News: For Jesus' sake, God forgives you all your sins. Amen.

**Adapted from Ambassadors for Reconciliation an LCMS Recognized Service Organization*

Closing Thoughts

Before we fully move forward, God's forgiveness assures us that our past mistakes will not hold us back any longer. God doesn't want us to relive our worst moments, but to relieve us from them.

Colossians 2:13-14 (JB Phillips Translation) "He has forgiven you all your sins: Christ has utterly wiped out the damning evidence of broken laws and commandments which always hung over our heads, and has completely annulled it by nailing it over his own head on the cross."

Challenge for the Week

Knowing that God has forgiven you, say these words of forgiveness over yourself every day this week:

Jesus forgives me. Jesus paid the price for *all* sins of *all* people for *all* time, including my past, present, and future sins. Jesus gives me a free gift called grace. I cannot earn it, and I never will deserve it. He just gives it to me. Because of this gift of grace, I choose to forgive myself. I choose to let go of my past sins that have kept me in bondage so that I can walk forward in freedom. I will not continue to pay a price that God does not ask me to pay. I will let the blood of Jesus cover my sins. I will let His declaration of forgiveness for the entire world include me in it. If God has forgiven me, then I forgive me too.

Closing Prayer

Spend time in prayer today thanking God that He is willing to enter into our worst moments with us to relieve us from them. As the small group leader, close the prayer by saying these powerful words of absolution: "You have been forgiven in the name of the Father, through the blood of Jesus, and by the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen."

This Week's Reading

For a deeper, daily experience to go alongside the weekly small group experience, read days 20-26 of *Forgiving Challenge: A 40-Day Journey Leading to Freedom*.

Week 5 | Restoration

Introduction & Personal Connections



Take some time to discuss the previous week's readings and/or Challenges. Here are some things to discuss:

- Celebrate a "win" that you had in *Forgiving Challenge* over the past week.
- Share a struggle.
- What did God reveal to you during the readings and/or Challenges this past week?

Describe your favorite item that you own that has been restored, either by you or someone else? What makes it your favorite?

Video Clip & Reflections

Watch *Forgiving Challenge Small Group video "Week 5 – Restoration"*

Video Debrief: What struck you from the video? Any new insights? Any new challenges? Anything that bears repeating?

Discussion

- 1) Do you believe that God thinks you are valuable? Why or why not?

- 2) Last week we looked at the two common definitions of the word forgive: A) To cancel a debt. B) To stop feeling angry or resentful toward someone for an offense, flaw, or mistake. Do you tend to wrestle more with the idea of God paying for your sins at the cross or the fact that God isn't angry with you, that He loves you, and even enjoys you?

3) What is the difference between absolution and restoration?

4) Read the conversation by the charcoal fire once more (**John 21:15-17**):

¹⁵ When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, '**Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?**'

'Yes, Lord,' he said, 'you know that I love you.' Jesus said, '**Feed my lambs.**'

¹⁶ Again Jesus said, '**Simon son of John, do you love me?**'

He answered, 'Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.' Jesus said, '**Take care of my sheep.**'

¹⁷ The third time he said to him, '**Simon son of John, do you love me?**'

Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, '**Do you love me?**'

He said, 'Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you.' Jesus said, '**Feed my sheep.**'"

What were the 3 responses that Jesus had to Peter's answers? In which direction is Jesus trying to point Peter? Backward or forward?

5) What do the references of "Feeding lambs and taking care of sheep" mean for Peter's story?

6) Just like Jesus restored Peter back to his earthly position, do you feel like there is something God has laid on your heart to do in the past that He still wants you to do in the future? If so, explain.

7) Zach says on Day 33: "**The freedom that God gives you is not only freedom from sin, but freedom to a life of purpose.** Walking without Jesus leads to a lack of direction, confusion, purposelessness, and unfulfilled lives. Walking with Jesus leads to meaning, purpose, joy, and fulfillment." Agree or disagree.

8) Part of being restored is knowing who we are. The One who has naming rights over you is the One who created you! Based on your personal experience, who does God say that you are?

9) Who does God say that you are in the following Bible verses? God says that I am:

- a. Genesis 1:27
- b. Isaiah 43:1
- c. John 15:15
- d. Romans 8:17
- e. 1 Corinthians 3:9
- f. 2 Corinthians 5:17
- g. Galatians 2:20
- h. Ephesians 2:10
- i. Ephesians 2:19
- j. Colossians 3:12
- k. 1 Peter 2:9
- l. 1 John 3:1

10) After reading through the verses, share with the group which of those names means the most to you today, and why?

Closing Thoughts

Close your eyes and think about these words that Pastor Timothy Keller writes: *“Jesus’ salvation is not only like receiving a pardon and release from death row and prison. Then we’d be free, but on our own, left to make our own way in the world, thrown back on our own efforts if we’re to make anything of ourselves. But in the Gospel, we discover that Jesus has taken us off death row and then has hung around our neck the Congressional Medal of Honor. We are received and welcomed as heroes, as if we had accomplished extraordinary deeds.”*

Psalm 139:13-16

¹³ For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb.

¹⁴ I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well.

¹⁵ My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth.

¹⁶ Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.

Challenge for the Week

Talk to your accountability partner about what a fully restored version of you would look like 100 days from now, one year from now, and five years from now. What’s one step you could take today that reflects the fully restored version of yourself that God will one day make of you.

Take that step this week.

Closing Prayer

Spend time praying that each person in the group would truly experience God’s love for them. Ask the Holy Spirit to reignite old dreams that may have died and also to reveal new direction for each and every person in the group to faithfully follow Jesus.

This Week’s Reading

For a deeper, daily experience to go alongside the weekly small group experience, read days 27-33 of *Forgiving Challenge: A 40-Day Journey Leading to Freedom*.

Week 6 | Sanctification

Introduction & Personal Connections



Take some time to discuss the previous week's readings and/or Challenges. Here are some things to discuss:

- Celebrate a "win" that you had in *Forgiving Challenge* over the past week.
- Share a struggle.
- What did God reveal to you during the readings and/or Challenges this past week?

We are taking the final step towards freedom today. Would you describe yourself as a starter, a maintainer, or a finisher? Why?

Video Clip & Reflections

Watch *Forgiving Challenge Small Group video* "Week 6 – Sanctification"

Video Debrief: What struck you from the video? Any new insights? Any new challenges? Anything that bears repeating?

Discussion

- 1) The definition of sanctification is the process of being freed from sin. Why is sanctification such a vulnerable, and seemingly, dangerous final step in our journey to become free?

- 2) Zach said that truly experiencing freedom doesn't happen until you step into and live out the life that God invites you into. Agree or disagree, and why?

8) Zach says on Day 39 of *Forgiving Challenge*: “**The only way we know about the blunders of Peter is because Peter told others about them.** What kind of man would let the world see his foolishness? What kind of man would so freely talk about his big blunders? Only the "Big Boulder". Only someone who has become completely and totally content with the freedom that comes through Jesus Christ. Only someone who has turned away from his wicked ways and is walking with Jesus. Can you be any freer than this? **Peter told these stories of him at his worst so you could see the best in Jesus.**” Agree or disagree with Zach’s conclusion to Peter’s story.

9) Is there a way in which God can use the sins of your past to help bring freedom to others? Explain.

10) Just as scars leave marks, so too, can we leave a mark with our lives. What mark do you want to leave in the world, and why?

Revelation 12:11 *They triumphed over him [Satan] by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony. We will defeat the enemy when we tell our stories of how God has forgiven and freed us through the blood that Jesus shed.*

11) Zach says on Day 40 of *Forgiving Challenge*: “Self-forgiveness as the end goal to becoming free is a dead-end.” Why does he make this conclusion?

12) Now that you have been freed through the forgiveness of Jesus, what is one key takeaway that you have learned about the forgiveness of Jesus that you can use in your pursuit to forgive others?

Closing Thoughts

John 8:36 “So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed!”

God rescued you so that you could help rescue others!

Challenge for the Week

Continue the journey of forgiveness. Now that you have been forgiven by God, go now, and forgive others! Not sure how?

- Get your FREE copy of *Forgiving Others Challenge: A 10-Day Challenge to Help You Forgive Others* by going to www.forgivingotherschallenge.com
- Enter the code “**IAMFREE**” at checkout to receive this ebook for FREE!

Closing Prayer

Spend time praying that God would give you the strength to continue to follow Him, no matter what cost may come. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal your next steps and to give you the courage to take those steps. Lastly, pray for others to receive this same forgiveness that Jesus has offered to you.

This Week’s Reading

For a deeper, daily experience to go alongside the weekly small group experience, read days 34-40 and the final challenge (p. 262-265) of *Forgiving Challenge: A 40-Day Journey Leading to Freedom*.