



FINDING FAITH: Friends and Family Bible Study inspired by the movie "Freedom"

INTRODUCTION

Freedom tells two stories separated by a century, united by one family's search for deliverance. In 1856, Samuel Woodward escapes the Monroe Plantation in Virginia with his wife, mother, and son, guided by the Underground Railroad and pursued relentlessly by the slave hunter Plimpton. Embittered by suffering, Samuel struggles to sing songs of hope with his fellow travelers, until his mother reminds him that one day he will sing "Amazing Grace." A hundred years earlier, in 1748, slave ship captain John Newton carries Samuel's great-grandfather across the Atlantic. The voyage becomes the crucible of Newton's own conversion, and the hymn he later writes becomes a legacy of grace that reaches down through generations to Samuel himself. Two men, two centuries, one search for freedom found ultimately in Christ. Before you start, take a moment together to pray and ask God to open your hearts and minds as you talk.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE FREE?

- Samuel is physically enslaved, but the movie also shows another kind of captivity: anger, fear, and hopelessness that can trap a person on the inside, even when no one else can see it.

Read Romans 6:16-18 and John 8:34-36 together.

- What's the difference between being free on the outside and being free on the inside? Can you think of a time you felt "stuck" to a bad habit, a grudge, or a fear, even though nothing was physically holding you back? How does Jesus offer a different kind of freedom than just changing your circumstances?



2. NOBODY IS TOO FAR GONE

- Before his conversion, John Newton is involved in something truly evil, the slave trade, and the film doesn't hide how wrong that was. Yet his life is completely turned around by God.

Read Ephesians 2:1-5 and Jeremiah 17:9.

- Why do you think the Bible is so honest about how messed up our hearts can be? Does it surprise you that someone who did what Newton did could still be forgiven and changed by God? What does that tell us about the size of God's grace?



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

3. GRACE YOU CAN'T EARN



- Newton later writes "Amazing Grace," a song about grace he never deserved and could never have earned. That's actually what grace means: a gift, not a reward.

Read Ephesians 2:8-9 and Titus 3:4-5.

- Have you ever felt like you had to be "good enough" for God to love you? Why do you think it's hard for people to accept that grace is free? How does it feel to know God's love isn't something you have to earn?

4. CHOOSING FORGIVENESS OVER REVENGE

Samuel has every reason to want revenge on the people who hurt his family. His journey toward forgiveness instead reminds us that even people who do wrong are made in God's image and are worth loving.

Read Genesis 1:27, Matthew 6:14-15, and Romans 12:19.

Why do you think forgiveness is so hard, especially when someone has really hurt us? Is there a difference between forgiving someone and saying what they did was okay? Is there anyone in your own life you're finding it hard to forgive?



REFLECTION & APPLICATION

Talk together: Where have you experienced God's freedom or grace in your own life? Is there a relationship in your family or friend group where God might be inviting you to offer forgiveness? Like Newton, who wrote a song about his own story of grace, is there a way you could share your own story with someone else this week?



PRAYER

Close together in prayer. Thank God that His grace is a gift, not something we earn. Pray for anyone you know who feels "stuck," whether in fear, bad habits, or hard circumstances. Pray for people around the world who are still fighting for freedom today, including those affected by modern slavery and trafficking. Ask God for the courage to forgive others the way we've been forgiven.



CONCLUSION

Freedom reminds our family that true freedom isn't just about our circumstances, it's about what God has done in our hearts. No one is too far gone for His grace, and no trial is too big for Him to walk us through. Let's carry that truth with us this week, and look for ways to live it out together.

