



FINDING FAITH: Small Group Bible Study inspired by the movie "Freedom"

INTRODUCTION

In *Freedom*, the parallel stories of two men separated by a century highlight an enduring journey toward liberty and redemption. In 1856, slave Samuel Woodward and his family make a daring escape from a Virginia plantation, and pursued relentlessly by the notorious slave-hunter Plimpton. As they're aided by a hidden network of ordinary, God-fearing folk known as the Underground Network, Samuel draws strength from a hidden history. One hundred years earlier, his great-grandfather's life lay in the hands of John Newton, a slave ship captain whose own treacherous voyage and radical spiritual transformation inspired a legacy of true liberation. Based on a true story, the film explores the profound themes of breaking physical and spiritual chains, the power of community, and how an encounter with God's amazing grace can alter the course of generations.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. THE LONGING FOR LIBERATION

- How does Samuel's physical escape from slavery serve as a reminder to the human soul's deep longing for spiritual liberation?
- Read Luke 4:16-21. How does Jesus define His divine mission to bring liberty to the oppressed and captive? In what ways does Christ offer an eternal freedom that breaks internal, spiritual chains, and how should that reality shape our daily lives?



2. A LEGACY OF TRANSFORMATION

- A century before Samuel's journey, Captain John Newton's life is radically transformed, shifting his life from a participant in oppression to a pioneer of liberation, leaving behind a legacy of amazing grace and freedom.
- How does John Newton's radical change of heart demonstrate that no person is beyond the reach of God's redeeming love?
- Read 2 Corinthians 5:17. What does it mean to become a "new creation" in Christ? How can God take a dark, broken past and repurpose it to love and reach others?



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

3. STEWARDS OF JUSTICE AND MERCY



- During their flight, Samuel and his family are guided by the Underground Railroad.
- What does the selflessness of the Underground Railroad reveal about what it means to live out an active, courageous faith?
- Read Hebrews 13:3. What does it mean to remember those in chains or experiencing mistreatment "as if you yourselves were suffering"? How can modern Christians act as a unified network of justice, protection, and mercy for the vulnerable in our communities today?

4. PERSEVERANCE AND HOPE

- Samuel and his family face terrifying near-misses and the unyielding pursuit of Plimpton, yet they persevere. What does the film suggest about trusting God's providence when the path ahead is completely uncertain?
- Read Romans 15:13. How can believers anchor themselves in the "God of hope" when enduring trials? How does a multi-generational view of God's faithfulness comfort believers in difficult times, and embolden them to persevere?



REFLECTION & APPLICATION

Consider the ordinary individuals who made up the Underground Railroad, risking their own lives and comfort for the sake of others. In your own life, what keeps you from stepping out in active compassion toward those who are marginalized or in deep need? Consider how God has called you to fight against slavery in our modern world - physical or spiritual.



PRAYER

Close the Bible study with a time of prayer, thanking God for the spiritual freedom won for us at the cross.

Pray for those around the world who are currently facing physical, emotional, or spiritual oppression, asking God to deliver them and grant them strength. Pray for the courage to stand against injustice and love the vulnerable in our own lives.



CONCLUSION

Samuel's journey toward freedom and John Newton's transformation reminds us that God's grace knows no bounds. Even in the midst of severe trial, hope in Christ anchors the soul. The film encourages us to walk boldly in spiritual freedom, stand with the oppressed, and live out a transformative faith, resting in the grand Sovereignty of our loving God.

