

2025 FORGIVEN AND FREE

EXAMINER

**SMALL GROUP
LEADER'S GUIDE**

Top Tops for Open Discussion

Allow time - Silence is ok

It takes time to listen to a question, process it, consider an answer and then pluck up the courage to share it with a group. Allow space and time once you have asked a question, and don't be tempted to fill up silence.

Rephrase questions if needed

If there's no response, try rephrasing the question. A fresh angle can spark engagement.

Ask open questions

Invite deeper thinking by avoiding yes/no answer questions. For example, instead of "Do you believe in God?", you might try "What do you think about the idea of a spiritual side to life?".

Don't answer the questions

The discussion is not a space for us to share our own thoughts, but rather a place for us to facilitate a conversation between the young people about *their* thoughts. If a question arises, try to refrain from answering, instead throw it back to the group - you could say "*That's a really interesting question! What does everybody else think?*".

Be encouraging

Show each young person that you are grateful for their contributions, you have listened to them, and you value their thoughts - even if you don't necessarily agree with them.

1. **BE REAL:** Be yourself, allows others come as they are, and present the real gospel.

2. **BE RELATIONAL:** Prioritise connection and friendship. We want each venue to be a safe and friendly place, where young people can feel valued and experience trust, honesty and openness.

3. **BE RELIANT ON THE HOLY SPIRIT:** Lean on our greatest friend and helper for wisdom and guidance. Be praying for your young people and be attentive to what God is doing.



Explore

Friday PM

God created a perfect world, but people chose to disobey Him. Not just Adam and Eve... all of us! But God had a rescue plan, to bring us back to Him.

- What do you think a perfect world would look like?
- Why do you think Adam and Eve chose to disobey God?
- Have you ever tried to do something your own way instead of listening to help or advice? What happened?
- What do you think it means that God had a “rescue plan”?
- How does it feel to know God wants us back even when we mess up?

Read it: Genesis 1:1-5 and Genesis 3:1-13

Saturday AM

Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead and told him to take off his grave clothes. Just like Lazarus, we can be set free from things that hold us back like fear, guilt and bad habits. The Holy Spirit helps us live in real freedom.

- Have you ever felt stuck or like something was holding you back?
- What do you think it means to be free?
- If someone could help you feel brave or peaceful, would you want that?
- Why do you think Jesus helped Lazarus?
- What would you want Jesus to help you with?

Read it: John 11:33-44

Explore

Saturday PM

Jesus died and came back to life so that we could be forgiven. All of us have done things that separate us from God, but Jesus took the punishment instead of us. That means we are completely forgiven.

- What do you think it means to be forgiven?
- Has anyone ever said sorry to you and made things right? How did it feel?
- Have you ever felt bad about something you did?
- What would it mean if someone took a punishment for you?
- Would you want Jesus to forgive you?

Read it: Matthew 27:45-56

Sunday AM

Jesus didn't just forgive us, He gave us the Holy Spirit so we can be free. Free from fear, worry and needing to control everything. True freedom is living God's way every day.

- Do you ever feel like you have to do it all on your own?
- What would it feel like to know someone powerful was helping you?
- How do you think prayer or worship might help someone feel close to God? Have you experienced that this weekend?
- If God wants to help us live without fear or worry, what would that be like?

Read it: Acts 1:3-5 and Romans 6:6-7

Rooted

Friday PM - Crowning



Truth: I AM LOVED BY FATHER GOD: I am a chosen child of the King

Ephesians 1:5 NCV – Because of his love, God had already decided to make us his own children through Jesus Christ. That was what he wanted and what pleased him.

Resources: a gem for each child, a crown

- Encourage your group to sit in a circle. **Read** out the truth and bible verse.
- **Show** the children the crown.
- **ASK:** What did we learn about the crown? How does God see us? Invite answers.
- Take it in turns to **crown each child**. Give them a gem as you place the crown on them. Encourage them to imagine they are sitting on their throne in heaven with Jesus.
- Take the lead to **speak truths** over each child, such as: ***You are God's child. You are chosen. You are his prince/princess! You are a royal explorer...***
- Invite the other children to join in. **Make sure that everyone who wants to is crowned.**
- **ASK:** I wonder how this truth helps you or how does it changes things for you? I wonder what you are seeing, hearing or feeling?
- **Be thankful** that you are a chosen child of the King of kings! The children can keep their gem to remind them that they are precious and chosen.

Saturday AM - Creative Crosses



Truth: I AM FORGIVEN AND FREE: I am a friend of Jesus so I am forgiven, by the power of the Spirit

Romans 8:1-2 NCV So now, those who are in Christ Jesus are not judged guilty. Through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit that brings life made you free from the law that brings sin and death.

Resources: long and short strips of card, pens, stickers, glue, example, 'What's Next' booklets

- **Encourage** your group to sit in a circle. **Read** out the truth and bible verses.
- **Remind** everyone that Jesus has died for us and forgiven us - we are free!
- **ASK:** Would anyone like to share what happened when we prayed?
- **ASK:** Has anyone said YES to being forever friends with Jesus for the first time? Celebrate and give a 'What's Next' booklet to these children.
- **Choose** two strips of card to make a cross. Stick together. See example.
- **Decorate** crosses with the love and freedom of Jesus.
- **EXTRA QUESTIONS:** I wonder if you have chosen to be friends with Jesus and received his forgiveness. I wonder what gets in the way. I wonder how you feel now you are forgiven...
- **Speak freedom** over the children and be ready to pray for anyone who needs that.
- **FEEDBACK** to a Core Leader any testimonies of salvation.

Saturday PM – My Heart is a Home for Jesus!



Truth: I CAN BE FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT: My heart is Jesus' home so I can be empowered and equipped

John 14:16-17 NCV – Jesus said, “I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper to be with you forever- the Spirit of truth... he lives with you and he will be in you.”

Resources: variety of small wooden craft hearts, pens, stickers, glue sticks, example

- Encourage your group to sit in a circle. **Read** out the truth and bible verses.
- **ASK:** I wonder what happened when we prayed for the Holy Spirit to fill our heart homes... I wonder what you saw, heard or felt... Our hearts are so precious to him!
- **Remind** the children that the Holy Spirit is with us and wants to fill our hearts to overflowing! We don't need to do things in our own strength.
- **Decorate** hearts to celebrate what the Holy Spirit has been filling us with. There are three sizes of hearts. They can be stuck onto each other. Let the children decide.
- **EXTRA QUESTIONS:** What do you want in your heart? I wonder what the Holy Spirit is giving you to equip you? I wonder what you want to ask him for...
- **Let's be thankful for the Holy Spirit.** Pray for anyone as needed.

Sunday AM – Prophecy Games!



Truth: I CAN LIVE FOR JESUS EVERYDAY: I can see, hear, feel the Holy Spirit

1 Corinthians 14:3 NCV – those who prophesy are speaking to people to give them strength, encouragement, and comfort

Resources: paper, pens, objects, pictures on the screen

- Encourage your group to get into a circle. **Read** the truth and bible verse and talk about the gift of prophecy. This will be on the screen.
- **Prayer:** Holy Spirit, our hearts are open to you, please show us your loving messages for each other. **Be aware of the first thing that comes into your mind.**

IDEAS FOR INSPIRATION Use in any of the games: Bible dudes, colours, a bible verse, a movie character, something in the tent... A range of objects. The pictures on the screen

WAYS TO PLAY: Keep it light and fun.

- **In pairs.** Look at the objects or the pictures on the screen: choose one for your partner. What is the Holy Spirit showing you about the object/picture for the other person?
- **In a circle.** Each child writes their name at the top of the paper and folds it over. Put in the circle and choose a different one. Ask the Holy Spirit for a message: write/draw it on, fold over. Pass to the next child in the circle. Repeat a few times. Give back to the named child.
- **If the children need help** try an encouragement game: choose someone to encourage: 'I like the way you do...', 'you are special because...', 'when I look at you I see...'

Create

Friday PM

God is good. God is forgiving. And through Jesus we are made new. This year at Spree we are exploring the theme of being forgiven and free.

- What are you looking forward to most at Spree this year?
- Share how you have experienced kindness today?
- If you could erase one mistake from your past what would it be?
- If you were to meet God face to face what do you think he would be like?
- How does it feel knowing that God forgives us?
- Do you have any questions about how God forgives us?

Extra time- play two truths and a lie but on mistakes that you have made in the past.

Saturday AM

Did you know that you are free! In life we can make mistakes and get things wrong. We can hold onto so much guilt and shame but with Jesus we are free from that.

- Share a story of your most embarrassing moment?
- How do you move on from those moments?
- What does freedom look like to you?
- Do you think everyone is free?
- What things hold people back from being free?
- Is there a difference between feeling free and being free?
- Is there anything that you struggle to forgive yourself for?
- If you could remove any insecurity or fear from your life what would it be?

Extra time- play charades - act out movies, actions or anything that comes to mind and get the rest of the group to guess. Have fun with this.

Create

Saturday PM

It can be really hard to forgive someone. Sometimes it can even be really hard to say sorry. As we talk about freedom and forgiveness we need to let go of the pain and hurt that holds us back.

- What does letting go look like to you?
- Think of a time where you have done something wrong- How quick were you to apologise?
- Is it hard to say sorry for some things?
- Do you think it's easier to forgive a stranger or someone close to you? Why?
- Is there a difference between forgiving and pretending nothing happened?
- What is the hardest part about letting go of pain caused by others?

Extra time- Pass the ball- one person sits in the middle of the circle and everyone needs to try and pass a small object around the group. The person in the middle needs to guess who has the object while everyone pretends that they have it too.

Sunday AM

Does living for Jesus really mean being free? Is the way Jesus wants me to live really the better way? Jesus has the best plan and purpose for our lives. How can we live our lives fully for him?

- What have you loved most about Spree this year?
- What do you think it means to be forgiven?
- What does it mean to be free?
- What has God spoken to you about this weekend?
- What are you going to change when you go home?
- Do you agree that God has great plans for your life?
- How can you stand strong when the world tells you to live differently?

Extra time- Play a game of ninja - Players stand in a circle in ninja poses. Taking turns clockwise, each player gets one quick, single move to try to tap another player's hand. The person being attacked can make one quick move to dodge. After any move (attack or dodge), you must freeze in that new position. If your hand gets hit, it's out; if both hands are out, you're eliminated. The last player with a hand remaining wins. No moving out of turn, and no hard hits — just light taps!

Deeper

Friday PM

Forgiven. Today there will be a chance to return to God with all your heart. This is a daring and powerful thing to do.

- What is one thing you hope for this weekend?
- Do you think it is harder to forgive or be forgiven? Why?
- Discuss this: Do we only need to receive God's forgiveness for our sin once or do we need to be re-forgiven each time we sin?

Invite the Holy Spirit to show each person if there is something they have kept from God. Ask them to consider God's character and whether they believe God can be trusted even with those things.

Saturday AM

Free. Jesus broke the power of darkness on the cross so that we don't have to be stuck with guilt, shame, addiction, insecurity or fear. We are free to choose another way.

- For fun: What is one rule in life you would get rid of, if you were in charge?
- Can you think of 5 reasons people might do things they don't *really* want to do which they later regret?
- What is one thing you are happy to share that you would like God to set you free from?

It's through faith in Jesus that we find freedom. Why not each pray for the person on your left, asking the Holy Spirit to give them the supernatural gift of faith!

Saturday PM

Forgiving. We can't truly grow as Christians without learning how to forgive others.

- Hedgehogs and rhinos. When you get hurt, are you more likely to curl up in a ball and get prickly (like a hedgehog) or pick a fight and 'charge' at someone (like a rhino)?
- What *is* forgiveness? Can each person in the group come up with their own answer.
- Is forgiveness fair? Why / why not?

We face a big challenge for our hearts tonight. Pray for courage (to be able to forgive) and peace (to help us deal with our pain and begin to heal).

Sunday AM

Stand firm. Galatians 5:1 (NLT) says "So Christ has truly set us free. Now make sure that you stay free..."

- What is one thing you feel able to share, that makes it harder for you to follow Jesus when you're not at SPREE?
- Make a list of things we could do to help us follow Jesus at home. Ask each person if there is one they feel particularly challenged to commit to.
- Come up with an idea to help each other stay close to Jesus. Is there a way to do this together when you're back at home?

Invite the group to pray for the person to their right that by this time next year their faith will be stronger and deeper than now.

Space

Friday PM - Jesus is...?

PAUSE 1:

- If you were famous, what would you want to be known for?
- Have you ever met a celebrity in person?
- If you could meet any celebrity, who would it be and why?

PAUSE 2:

- How do you know if something is true?
- Do you think you should believe everything you see on social media?
- Can you think of some really weird but true facts?

PAUSE 3:

- Why do you think Jesus is so famous?
- What is Jesus most known for?
- What stands out most to you about Jesus?
- Have you learnt anything new about Jesus today?

Saturday AM - What does real love look like?

PAUSE 1:

- What makes you feel loved?
- How do you express your love to others?

PAUSE 2:

- Where do you see evil in the world?
- Where do you see evil in your school, your city or your country?
- Do you think there are big sins and small sins?

PAUSE 3:

- What does forgiveness mean to you?
- Why do you think the Bible tells us to forgive other people?
- How easy is it for you to forgive someone when they hurt you?
- How has it made you feel when you forgive?
- How has it made you feel when you don't forgive?

Saturday PM – Why Would I Want a Relationship With God?

PAUSE 1

- What do you think good friendship looks like?
- Why do we need friends?
- What do you feel when you hear that Jesus calls you friend?

PAUSE 2

- What do you think about the idea of having a relationship with God?
- How would a relationship with God be different from a relationship with someone else?
- How might a relationship with God impact our actions?

PAUSE 3

- What's the most meaningful gift someone has given you?
- Do you think God loves you? Why do you think so?
- How do you feel about God's invitation to begin a relationship with him?

Sunday AM – What does a relationship with God look like?

PAUSE 1:

- If you could spend time with anyone in the world, who would it be?
- Why would you spend time with them?
- What would you say to them?

PAUSE 2:

- If God exists and you could have a conversation with him, what would it be about?
- Have you ever tried to talk to God before? How?
- Does God care about everything in your life?

PAUSE 3:

- What do you think about the Bible?
- Do you think the ideas in the Bible are old-fashioned or outdated?
- Have you ever tried reading the Bible? How did it go?

Encounter

Friday PM

We'll kick off by exploring God's Forgiveness – not just for those who pray regularly or go to church every month, but it's an invitation to ALL.

- If you were a vegetable, which one would you be? Why?
- How can we be sure that God really forgives us, no matter what?
- Is there anything about God's forgiveness might shock or surprise some people and why?
- How do you think your life would be different if you believed that you were forgiven?

When you've had some time to discuss the theme, invite your group to pray for each other: Maybe you could encourage them to accept God's invitation for forgiveness today?

Saturday AM

Because we are living in God's forgiveness, we are challenged to forgive those around us and ourselves.

- What's a food you could never forgive someone for hating?
- Can you remember a time where you choose to forgive someone? What made you decide to do that?
- What do you find more difficult: Forgiving others or forgiving yourself? Why?
- How can Jesus help us in forgiving others or ourselves, especially when its hard?

Spend some time in prayer, listening to God's voice:

Is God challenging you to forgive someone in your life today?

How could you do that practically?

Encounter

Saturday PM

We are freed FROM all sorts of things: We are free from our mistakes, shame, anxiety, condemnation and so much more.

- What victory dance are you doing to celebrate Jesus forgiving all your sins?
- Which characters of the Bible experienced forgiveness? What were they freed from?
- What has God's forgiveness helped you let go of or feel free from?

Spend some time in prayer, listening to God's voice: What does God want to set you free from tonight?

Youth Leaders: Check in with your youth after this session, especially if they felt God challenging them to be set free from something.

Sunday AM

We are also freed FOR all sorts of things: Our purpose is to live the life God calls us to, being part of his mission to free others.

- You're building a "Kingdom Squad" — which three fictional characters do you invite to help you live out Jesus' mission?
- What would people notice about your life and how you've changed if you lived "forgiven and free"?
- What can you do to keep living in God's forgiveness daily?
- God is encouraging you to GO and take part in his mission: If you had to pick one place or person to start with, where would you go?

Pray and encourage each other to go out into the world as forgiven and free disciples of Jesus.

2025
EXAMPLE

