

IDENTITY IN CHRIST

LIFE



in this series

I AM A CHILD OF GOD

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I AM A FRIEND OF GOD

• •

I AM FORGIVEN IN JESUS

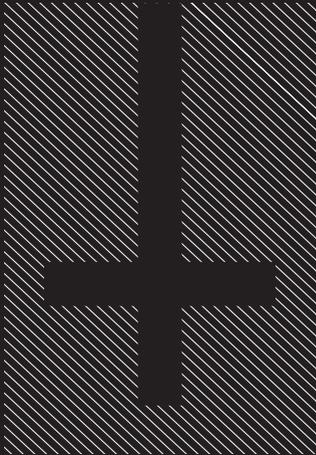
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I AM A CITIZEN OF HEAVEN

• •

**I AM VICTORIOUS
THROUGH CHRIST**

IDENTITY IN CHRIST



1/5

I AM A CHILD OF GOD



What is one of the aspects of a healthy relationship between a father and a child?

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

John 3:6 Romans 8:14-17
 1 John 3:1-2 Galatians 3:26-29

What is something you will do this week based on understanding you are a child of God?

2/5

I AM A FRIEND OF GOD



What is your top quality of a good friend?

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

Matthew 11:19
 John 15:12-15

From your list of "qualities I don't show to God" what is ONE friendship quality you will show to God more this week?



1/5

I AM A CHILD OF GOD



summary

You've probably heard the phrase 'born again Christian' but have you ever thought about what it means?

In the Bible we are promised that if we have been saved by Jesus - we are God's children!

Are you living like this is true?



you will need

- Enough newspapers and/or magazines for one between two
- Enough pairs of scissors and glue sticks for one between two
- One A4 piece of paper per two people
- A packet of textas for the group to share
- A copy of *appendix 1* for each group member
- (Optional) Background music for "Involve" activity

keep in mind

- Some of your group members might not be comfortable sharing openly about their own experience with father-figures. Use discernment and sensitivity and definitely don't pressure anyone to share unless they want to.
- This guide has questions for both new and established Christians. Pick the questions that are best suited for your group. It would be helpful to read through the questions beforehand.
- Life guides often have more questions or activities than can be completed. Pick the questions and activities that are most helpful for your group and don't feel the need to get through them all.



CONNECT



To help your group connect on a relaxed level, spend some time discussing the following:

- » If every super hero ever competed in a triathlon who do you think would win? Why?
- » If you could be any animal for a day which would you choose? Why?

INVOLVE



Use the magazines, newspapers and textas to create a page that depicts the perfect relationship between a father and his child.

When your group has had enough time, ask each pair to share with the group about what they included on their page and why.



Group members can write, draw, or create a collage.

You could play some reflective background music.

DISCUSS



- » Look at your collages again. How many people in this world do you think get to experience that kind of relationship with their father?
- » In what ways is the relationship in your collage the same/different to your relationship with your earthly father?



Not all group members will have been raised by the man who is their biological father. Be sensitive to this and allow them to answer about whichever earthly father-figure they want to.



read the bible

Give every group member a copy of *appendix 1*.

Ask group members to read through the verses independently, asking the Holy Spirit to reveal to them truths about God and themselves.



If your group will find independent reading difficult, feel free to read the verses together as a group, and spend time reflecting independently.

questions for new christians

- » Which line stood out to you as you read and prayed? Why that line?
- » God could have saved us without making us his children. Why do you think He decided to take this extra step? What does this tell you about what God is like?
- » Are you a child of God?
- » Look back at your collage from earlier. In what ways is the collage like your relationship with God? In what ways is the collage unlike your relationship with God?
- » If God is the perfect, loving father how can we approach Him when:
 - We are in pain?
 - We have done something wrong?
 - Something good has happened?
- » Is this how you approach God?
- » Do you think your relationship with your earthly dad impacts how you interact with God? In what way(s)?
- » Being a child of God means we can interact with him like a father-figure right now, but what do you think it means for our future?
(Some helpful verses to read are: See Romans 8:16-17;
Galatians 3:25-29; 1 John 3:1-2)

('Involve' continues on the next page)



questions for established christians

- » What big idea stood out to you as your read and prayed through the verses?
- » Do you think 'child of God' is just a cute nickname? What difference does it make that God makes us his children?
- » Do you find the idea of being a child of God easy or difficult to get your head around? Why do you think that is?
- » Look back at your collage from earlier. In what ways is the collage like your relationship with God? In what ways is the collage unlike your relationship with God?
- » What is one area in your life where you are not approaching God like a loving father-figure?

read the bible



Ask volunteers to re-read the following passages from *appendix 1*:

Galatians 3:29

1 John 3:3

Romans 8:17

- » What future promises are being referred to here?
- » In the time when these words were written 'being adopted' meant you became your adoptive father's child in every way. Any crimes or debts that you had were cancelled and you had the same rights as your father's biological children. What extra meaning does this add to the idea of us being God's children?
- » Look at the verses from *appendix 1*, specifically at the words that are in bold print. Based on these words, what do you think someone must do to become a child of God? Are you a child of God?
- » If God could say one thing to you about this topic today, what do you think it would be?



APPLY



- » What is ONE thing you will do differently this week based on what we discussed?

Pray for each other about the things shared.



You could allow group members to pray as they feel led, or have everyone pray for the person on your left.

Make a mental note of what people share so that you can write it down after LIFE group and effectively follow up people in your group.

LEADER NOTES

Don't forget to include some fun/relaxation in every LIFE group gathering. Start with a game of Uno, Karaoke or Xbox or just put out some snacks and let people chat!

FOLLOW UP

About 3 days after your group has met, follow up all your group members and encourage them about what they learnt in LIFE group. You could ask them:

How have you been going this week relating to God as your father? Have there been any differences you've noticed?



APPENDIX 1

Page 1 of 2



John 3:6 (CEV)

Humans give life to their children. Yet only God's Spirit can change you into a child of God.

1 John 3:1-2 (CEV)

Think how much the Father loves us. He loves us so much that he lets us be called his children, as we truly are. But since the people of this world did not know who Christ is, they don't know who we are. ² My dear friends, we are already God's children, though what we will be hasn't yet been seen. But we do know that when Christ returns, we will be like him, because we will see him as he truly is.

Romans 8:14-17 (CEV)

Only those people who are led by God's Spirit are his children. ¹⁵ God's Spirit doesn't make us slaves who are afraid of him. Instead, we become his children and call him our Father. ¹⁶ God's Spirit makes us sure that we are his children. ¹⁷ His Spirit lets us know that together with Christ we will be given what God has promised. We will also share in the glory of Christ, because we have suffered with him.





Galatians 3:26-29 (NLT)

For you are all children of God **through faith in Christ Jesus.** ²⁷ And all who have been united with Christ in baptism have put on Christ, like putting on new clothes. ²⁸ There is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male and female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹ And now that you belong to Christ, you are the true children of Abraham. You are his heirs, and God's promise to Abraham belongs to you.

John 1:12-13 (CEV)

Yet some people accepted him and put their faith in him. So he gave them the right to be the children of God. ¹³ They were not God's children by nature or because of any human desires. God himself was the one who made them his children.



2/5

I AM A FRIEND OF GOD

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summary

For most of human history many people have perceived God as far away and distant.

And yet, in the New Testament we hear that God is our 'friend'.

If we have accepted Jesus as our Lord and Saviour He calls us 'friend'!

Are you living like this is true?



you will need

- 1 copy of *appendix 1* printed and cut out for each group member (you could put each set in an envelope or keep them together with paper clips)
- 1 copy of *appendix 2* printed for each member of your group

keep in mind

If your group is full of teenagers this can be a touchy period in their lives when they might not feel like they have true friends. Be aware and sensitive to this in your discussions.



CONNECT



To help your group connect on a relaxed level, spend some time discussing the following:

- » Which year of school do you think is the most fun? Why?
- » What is one thing most people don't know about you?
- » What is the best ice-cream (brand or flavour) you've ever tasted?

INVOLVE



Give each group member a copy of their set of cut out words from *appendix 1*. Have everyone put their traits in order of the ones they value most in a friend. Ask each person to share why they chose that particular order.



Have group members keep their traits with them. We will be coming back to them.

DISCUSS



- » What do you think is the best thing about having a friend?
- » Have you ever had a time when you didn't have any friends? How did it affect you?



Be aware that this could be now for some people in your group.

('Discuss' continues on the next page)



read the bible



Ask a volunteer to read:

Matthew 11:19

- » When Jesus was on earth He received the nickname 'Friend of Sinners'. If He had been given the name, 'Helper of Sinners' or 'Rescuer of Sinners' that would have been understandable. How do you think Jesus must have been acting to have been called their friend?
- » Does it surprise you that God wants to be your friend? Why/why not?
- » Look back at your order of friendship qualities. Take a couple of minutes on your own to sort them into 2 groups:
 - Qualities I show to God and
 - Qualities I don't show to God.
- » Which of your lists is longer? How do you think your relationship with God might change if you began to show Him all of these qualities?
- » What do you think stops you from showing God things from the second list?



Ask a volunteer to read:

John 15:12-15

- » Jesus is saying that we can be His friends because he has sacrificed His life to wash us clean from our sins. These were drastic lengths to go to so we could be friends with Jesus. How do Jesus' actions make you feel?
- » Because of Jesus' sacrifice, our relationship with Him is now one of openness and sharing. Can you think of a time when Jesus shared or showed something to you?
- » What do you think stops us from hearing more from Him?
- » What practical things can we do to obey Jesus and show that we are friends with Him?
- » If Jesus is our friend do you think that our obedience should be begrudgingly or done with joy? How can we help to grow in our lives an attitude of joyful obedience to Jesus?



APPLY



- » This week, set aside time to interact with God like He is your friend. Choose one of the activities from *appendix 2* and spend time doing it this week. Be prepared to share with people next week about how you went.

LEADER NOTES

- Keep in mind that whilst Jesus is our friend we need to still treat Him with respect and the awe that He deserves as the Ruler of everything.
- In the Gospels Jesus is often referred to as "The Son of Man". This is a reference from the Old Testament, specifically from some of Daniel's visions.

FOLLOW UP

About 3 days after your group has met, follow up all your group members and encourage them about what they learnt in LIFE group.

You could ask them:

How are you going at spending time with Jesus this week?



APPENDIX 1



Makes time for you

Laughs with you

Listens well

Accepts you as you are

Takes an interest in the things you care about

Isn't just there when they need something from you

Says nice things about you when they aren't with you

Shares openly and truthfully with you

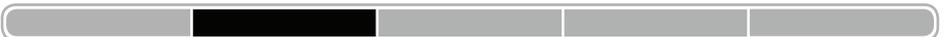
Serves you in practical ways

Tells you what they like about you

Says sorry when they've hurt you

Celebrates with you when life is going well and is sad with you when life isn't going so well

Is dependable



APPENDIX 2



Choose one of the following to try out this week.
Be prepared to report back about what you did next week.

1. The Empty Chair

Place a chair in the room opposite you. Imagine Jesus sitting in that chair. Talk out loud to Him. Talk like you would if your best friend were opposite you. Share the joys and struggles of what is going on at the moment in your life. Take time to listen for His responses.

2. The Breathing prayer

Be still and for 10 minutes - breathe out and breathe in.

Breathe out: Jesus, I'm scared about...

Breathe in: Jesus thank you for...

Breathe out: Jesus I'm stressed over...

Breathe in: Jesus I'm so glad you...

Breathe out: Jesus I'm overwhelmed by...

Breathe in: Jesus I take comfort in the knowledge that you...

3. The Inbox Message

Draft a text or personal Facebook message to God.
Write to Him like He's your closest friend.

4. Walking with God

Go for a walk with God. Talk to Him as you walk.
Thank Him for the beautiful things you walk past.
Talk to him about your life. Ask Him questions.



3/5

I AM FORGIVEN IN CHRIST



summary

Have you ever had someone tell you they forgive you and then bring up what you did wrong later on?

God doesn't do this.

When we accept Jesus as our Lord and Saviour He promises that we are completely, 100% forgiven. And He treats us as like this.

Are you living like this is true?



you will need

- A pen for each person
- About 20 sheets of paper per group member (the cheapest way to do this is probably to buy a legal note pad)
- (Optional) Enough print outs of *appendix 1* for all to look on (otherwise group members can use their Bible)
- A shredding machine or small (and safe!) fire

keep in mind

This guide has questions that are split up for new Christians and mature or established Christians. Use the questions that will be most beneficial for the people in your group. It would be helpful for you as the leader to have read both sets of questions beforehand.



CONNECT



To help your group connect on a relaxed level, spend some time discussing the following:

- » Describe yourself in a word that starts with the first letter of your name (e.g. Claire = cautious, Alex = athletic).
- » What is your favourite Disney movie? What do you like about it?
- » Would you rather never be able to watch sport on TV again or never be able to watch anything other than sport on TV?

recap

Share with your group how you went at spending time with Jesus last week.

DISCUSS



'Discuss' is divided into two sections; questions for new Christians, and questions for established Christians. Each section has its own page. Choose a set of questions that best fits where your group is up to. If your group has a mixture of new and established Christians, you can use questions from both sets as appropriate.

('Discuss' continues on the next page)



questions for new christians

- » Can you think of a time when you felt really guilty? (You don't have to say what you did wrong). What were you thinking or feeling about what you did?
- » Do you think people are ever defined or limited by the things they've done wrong? Can you think of an example?
- » Do you ever let the things you've done wrong in the past define or limit you? In what way?
- » Do you ever feel guilty for things that you've already said a genuine sorry for? Why do you think this is?

read the bible



Ask volunteers to read the following verses from *appendix 1* or their Bible:

Psalms 103:8-12

2 Corinthians 5:17-19

Isaiah 1:18

Ephesians 1:7-10

- » How would you describe God based on these verses?
- » Are the descriptions in these verses how you usually think of God?
- » Which line or idea from these verses means the most to you today? Why?
- » Why do you think God shows His people such extreme forgiveness?
- » Has there even been a lie about your sin(s) that you've found the Devil trying to tell you? What was it?
- » Why do you think the Devil tries to convince us of these lies?
- » What do you think we can do to make sure we are hearing and believing God's voice about our forgiveness?



questions for established christians

- » Describe a time when you felt really guilty.
- » Do you think people ever get defined or limited by the things they've done wrong? Can you think of an example? Why do you think this happens? Have you ever been tempted to write somebody off because of the things they did wrong in the past?
- » Do you ever let the things you've done wrong in the past define or limit you? Can you think of an example?

read the bible



Ask volunteers to read the following verses from *appendix 1* or their Bible:

Psalm 103:8-12

2 Corinthians 5:17-19

Isaiah 1:18

Ephesians 1:7-10

- » Which line or idea from these verses means the most to you today? Why?
- » How would you describe the way God treats His people when they repent? Do you think it is reasonable for Him to act this way? Why/why not?
- » How can God be the 'God of Justice' if He will forgive sins like this? How is it fair?
- » If "I am a new creation, completely set free from my past" does that mean that I am set free from all consequences of my sin? Why/why not?
- » What sorts of lies does the Devil try to tell people about their sin? Has there even been a lie about your sin(s) that you've found him trying to tell you? What was it?
- » Why do you think the Devil tries to convince us of these lies?
- » What do you think we can do to make sure we are hearing and believing God's voice about our forgiveness above and beyond any other voices?



INVOLVE



Have everyone write or draw the things they've done in their life that did not honour God.

They should write or draw each sin on a separate piece of paper.

Gather around a shredder or small (and safe!) fire.

Invite people to pray the following prayer or something like it.

"Lord, I'm sorry that I Today, through the power of the Holy Spirit, I choose to leave that old way of living behind. I thank you for your gift of forgiveness. Thank you that because of Jesus I am a new creation"

Once they've prayed the prayer they should throw the corresponding paper into the fire/shredder, symbolically destroying it.



You could play a song about Jesus forgiving our sins or making us new (there are suggestions in the Leader Notes).



These are not magic words! The important thing is that group members express their remorse and genuinely choose to live differently with God's help, this is repentance.



If neither a shredder or fire are available then they can shred the paper by hand.

APPLY



- » What is ONE thing you will do differently this week based on what we discussed?

OR

- » Thank God each morning that He has forgiven you. Continue to bring your sins before Him, asking Him for forgiveness and thanking Him that He washes us clean of sin.



LEADER NOTES

Ideas for songs about God's forgiveness/washing us clean:

- Come to the Cross – Michael W. Smith
- Amazing Grace – original version or new version by Chris Tomlin
- You Never Are – Francesca Batistelli
- Who Am I? – Casting Crowns
- Forgiven – Sanctus Real

FOLLOW UP

About 3 days after your group has met, follow up all your group members and encourage them about what they learnt in LIFE group. You could ask them:

Have you been comforted in knowing that Jesus has forgiven you? Is there anything specific I can be praying for you?



APPENDIX 1



Psalm 103:8-12 (CEV)

The LORD is merciful! He is kind and patient, and his love never fails. The LORD won't always be angry and point out our sins; he doesn't punish us as our sins deserve. How great is God's love for all who worship him? Greater than the distance between heaven and earth! How far has the LORD taken our sins from us? Farther than the distance from east to west!

Isaiah 1:18 (NIV)

Come now, let us settle the matter," says the LORD. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.

2 Corinthians 5:17-19 (NIV)

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

Ephesians 1:7-10 (NIV)

In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and understanding, he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.



4/5

I AM A CITIZEN OF HEAVEN



summary

We live on earth, but if we are saved our citizenship is in heaven!

So why are we still here?

And how do we live as a citizen of heaven despite being a resident of earth?



you will need

- Enough printed handouts of the Bible verses (*appendix 1*) for all to look on
- Enough passport outlines printed out for each member (*appendix 2*)
- A pack of textas for the group to share
- A pack of coloured pencils for the group to share
- A pen for each group member

If you choose option 1 in "Connect":

- Internet access during LIFE group for group members to Google images of passports

If you choose option 2 in "Connect":

- Images of different passports from different nationalities (as a leader, google search "inside of passports" and "passports from around the world" to find different images)

keep in mind

Being a citizen of heaven is a difficult concept to visualise as we haven't been to heaven. It can be even trickier for those who have never visited another place or gotten a passport. The 'Connect' and 'Involve' activities are specifically written to make the concept of being a "citizen of heaven" as tangible and understandable as possible.



CONNECT



option 1 (if you have internet access):

As a group look up images of passports from different nationalities on Google. Then discuss the questions below.

OR

option 2 (if you don't have internet access):

Have different passports printed out for people to look at (images of both the inside and outside of the passport). Then discuss the questions below.

questions

Discuss the following questions:

- » What are some of the defining differences of the passports? (For example; colour, images and languages).
- » What things on the passport alert you to what country a person holding this passport belongs to?
- » If an Australian citizen has their passport stamped with a "entered Hawaii" or "entered Singapore" stamp does this mean they are a citizen of that country? Why or why not?



DISCUSS



- » If you were travelling overseas and met people from 5 different countries do you think you could pick out the Australian citizen? What sorts of things would give their citizenship away?

read the bible



Hand out *appendix 1* with the Bible verses and ask a volunteer to read:

Colossians 1:12-13

Philippians 3:20-21

- » Do you think you can you be a citizen of somewhere you've never been before? What do you think the writer (Paul) means when he says we are 'citizens of heaven'?
- » What do you think would be the defining characteristics of a citizen of heaven?
- » Every year thousands of people become an Australian citizen for the first time. What reasons would they have to be excited about this?
 Allowed to stay without fear of being deported, get great privileges like Medicare and Centrelink benefits, sense of belonging.
- » How does it make you feel to be a citizen of heaven? What benefits do you think we get as a result of that citizenship?
- » We originally were citizens of Satan's realm – "the dominion of darkness". When we become Christians, God rescues us and makes us citizens of heaven. But sometimes we stumble. Share with the group one way that you are living like you are still a citizen of the dominion of darkness rather than a citizen of heaven?
- » Why do you think this happens?

('Discuss' continues on the next page)



read the bible



Ask a volunteer to read:

Colossians 3:1-2

Matthew 6:19-21

- » What do you think these verses are saying?
- » Do you sometimes find yourself living as if life on this earth is the most important? Why do you think this happens?
- » What do you think it would look like to set your mind on heavenly things and to store up heavenly treasures rather than earthly things?



Ask a volunteer to read:

2 Corinthians 5:20

- » What is the job of an international ambassador? How is this similar to us being Christ's ambassadors?
- » If we are Christ's ambassadors on earth, what do you think is the most important thing we can be doing whilst we 'reside' on earth?
- » What do you find most encouraging about being a citizen of heaven?
- » What do you find most challenging about being a citizen of heaven?



INVOLVE



making citizen of heaven passports

Give each person in your group a print out of the passport outline from *appendix 2*.

Encourage them to make a passport that represents them and their citizenship in heaven. They can draw images or write words that symbolise this. They might want to put a "visiting earth" stamp somewhere.



You might want to play chilled out music in the background whilst people work on their passports.

Have people show and share their passport designs and explain why they chose to put certain elements on their passport.

APPLY



- » What will you do differently based on what we've discussed this week?

OR

- » What is one "citizen of heaven" attribute that you would like to live out more this week?

Pray for each other regarding the things you find most challenging about being a citizen of heaven.



LEADER NOTES

- A citizen is someone who legally belongs to a country and has the rights and protection of that country. Citizens adopt the culture and practices of the nation to which they belong.
- We are all born as citizens of the 'dominion of darkness' and consequently grow up adopting the culture, practices and values of this dominion. It is a huge saving work of Jesus to bring us into the Kingdom of Light.

FOLLOW UP

About 3 days after your group has met, follow up all your group members and encourage them about what they learnt in LIFE group.
You could ask them:

How have you been living as a citizen of heaven this week?



APPENDIX 1



Colossians 1:12-13 (NIV)

"And giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light. For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves."

Philippians 3:20-21 (CEV)

But we are citizens of heaven and are eagerly waiting for our Saviour to come from there. Our Lord Jesus Christ has power over everything, and he will make these poor bodies of ours like his own glorious body

Colossians 3:1-2 (CEV)

You have been raised to life with Christ. Now set your heart on what is in heaven, where Christ rules at God's right side. Think about what is up there, not about what is here on earth

Matthew 6:19-21 (CEV)

Don't store up treasures on earth! Moths and rust can destroy them, and thieves can break in and steal them. Instead, store up your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy them, and thieves cannot break in and steal them. Your heart will always be where your treasure is.

2 Corinthians 5:20 (NIV)

We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God



5/5

I AM VICTORIOUS THROUGH CHRIST



summary

Jesus promises that He has won the victory!

If this is true, why do we still sin? Why do we still suffer?

What impact should Jesus' victory have on our lives today?



CONNECT



Have all group members compete in arm wrestles in pairs until you are able to declare one group member the winner.

OR

Have 'no blink' competitions in pairs until you are able to declare one group member the winner.



Group members look into each other's eyes. The first person to blink loses.

DISCUSS



This week we are going to look at the idea of 'victory'.

- » (Ask the winner of the arm wrestle/'no blink' competition) How did it feel to be declared the winner?
- » Can anyone think of a different time when they won something? What did you win? How did it feel?
- » The word for 'victory' that is used in the Bible means "to conquer" or "to overcome." Have you ever overcome something in your life? (E.g. an addiction, a bad habit, a character trait, a difficult circumstance) What was it? How did you overcome it? How did it feel to break free of the thing that had been holding you back?

In the Bible, Jesus promises us that if we are His disciples, we automatically share in victory with Him!

('Discuss' continues on the next page)



read the bible



Ask a volunteer to read aloud:

Romans 8:37-39

- » How would you feel if every time you failed to meet God's standard you were at risk of eternal separation from God?
- » How does it impact your life to know that God is and always will be with you and this isn't based on your 'performance' as a Christian?
- » Some people think that 'victory in Christ' means that we will get everything we want and will have an easy life. Do you think this is right? Why/why not.



Ask a volunteer to read aloud:

John 16:33

1 Corinthians 15:55-57

1 John 5:18

- » What do you think Jesus is saying here?
- » Do you think "victory" in the Kingdom of God is the same thing as how the world views "victory"?
- » What victory do you think Jesus has secured for us?
- » If Jesus has been victorious over sin, defeating its hold on our lives why do you think we aren't we perfect yet?

(There are extra questions for established Christians on the next page if you feel these are helpful/appropriate for your group)



extra questions for established christians

- » Ultimately, we know that Jesus has won the battle against the evil one. The winner has already been declared. So why is Satan still at work?
- » The New Testament Christians were going through tough times. Christians were persecuted and even killed. But their language is often upbeat and positive. Paul writes frequently of having joy and being thankful (Ephesians 1:16, 3:20, Philippians 1:3-5, 1 Thessalonians 2:18-20). Why do you think Paul was so positive even in his terrible circumstances?
- » Do you think it matters whether we as Christians talk like victims or victors? Why/why not?
- » How do you think we as people who are victorious in Christ should speak when we face trials today? How do you 'keep it real' whilst also claiming victory?

INVOLVE



Choose ONE of the following activities to do with your group

activity 1

Share with the group one area of your life where you are battling against sin by yourself – thinking that you have to fix yourself. Once people have shared, pray for them and ask that the individual would allow Jesus to help them.

('Involve' continues on the next page)



activity 2

If your group shared that they often have a "defeatist" attitude spend some time memorising these verses that speak about our victory in Christ.

Encourage them to 'preach' these gospel truths to themselves in times of struggle.

-  But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. – 1 Corinthians 15:57 (NIV)
-  No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. – Romans 8:37 (NIV)
-  Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. – Romans 8:1 (NIV)

APPLY



- » What is one thing that you would like to do differently this week based on what we have discussed?

OR

- » Pray every morning thanking God for Jesus' victory over sin and death and asking Him to help you live trusting in this.



LEADER NOTES

Jesus does not promise a life free from pain or adversity. But even in our struggles we can rest safely in the ultimate victory that Jesus has won on the cross – victory over sin and death.

FOLLOW UP

About 3 days after your group has met, follow up all your group members and encourage them about what they learnt in LIFE group.
You could ask them:

How are you going at giving Jesus praise for His victory and trusting that He brings the ultimate victory?





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