



JOY

Y²AM

Ministry Plan

2019-20

Finding Christ
Through Freedom (February 2020)



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LEARNING SESSION ONE

FEBRUARY 2020

Finding Christ Through Freedom

MONTH:

February 2020

GOAL:

To learn about freedom

OBJECTIVE:

To identify freedom in their life

ESTIMATED DURATION:

45 minutes

LEARNING SESSION:
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SUPPLIES NEEDED:

1. blank paper for each participant
2. pen for each participant

OPENING PRAYER

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Lord, allow us “to offer ourselves as a living sacrifice,” one that is, “holy and acceptable to God for this is Your true and proper worship.” Allow us “not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewal of our minds.” So that we may be able to “test and prove what is God’s will, His good, pleasing and perfect will.”

Amen.

(a passage from Romans 12:1-2)

LEARNING SESSION:
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ICEBREAKER:

10 minutes

Tell us your name, and the best thing you've ever received for free.

Remember:

It's always helpful to start with an activity to help participants relax and allow community to build. Early in the session, focus primarily on getting participants to open their hearts and connect with what's happening in the group. This is an opportunity to encourage participants to share their honest opinions and thoughts, as well as listen to those of others. Take this time to connect with what's important to them, and to understand what they've connected with.

ACTIVITY 1: SPIRITUAL POSTURE

10 minutes

Ask for three volunteers from the group. Have them stand in front of the group. Ask them to perform these simple movements, first bending forward (in front of themselves) and then backwards (in back of themselves).

1. Touch their toes
2. Give a hug
3. Sit in a chair

When they have completed these tasks, ask them to sit back in the group.

Debrief:

- Which way felt more natural? Why?
- Which way did your body want to move freely?
- Did you expect this activity to be difficult? Why or why not?
- Can our choices impact our physical, emotional, and spiritual health in a negative way? How or how not?

ACTIVITY 2: DISCUSSION

10 minutes

Pass out a piece of paper and a pen to each participant. Ask participants the following questions. This can be done as a whole-group discussion or in small break-out group discussions, depending on how many Youth Workers are present to facilitate.

Debrief:

- What is your definition of freedom?
- How might you misuse your freedom?
- How do you use your freedom well?
- What would be the impact of that freedom? (No sleep, homework, healthy foods)
- What enriches your life so much that you cannot give it up?

ACTIVITY 3: SCRIPTURE

10 minutes

Matthew 26:36-46

“36 Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, “Sit here, while I go yonder and pray.” 37 And taking with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, he began to be sorrowful and troubled. 38 Then he said to them, “My soul is very sorrowful, even to death; remain here, and watch with me.” 39 And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, “My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.” 40 And he came to the disciples and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, “So, could you not watch with me one hour? 41 Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” 42 Again, for the second time, he went away and prayed, “My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, thy will be done.” 43 And again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. 44 So, leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words. 45 Then he came to the disciples and said to them, “Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. 46 Rise, let us be going; see, my betrayer is at hand.”

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Debrief:

- Who are the characters in this passage, and what are their roles?
- How does Jesus choose to use His freedom even though it leads to death?
- How can we be like Jesus and put our faith in God when things are terrible?
- How can we choose to use our freedom by giving our freedom to God?

CONCLUSION: WRAP-UP

5 minutes

Go around the circle and ask each individual to name one new idea they learned during the session.

CLOSING PRAYER

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

*“Thank You, Lord, for Your strength and guidance in my work. You are the fulfillment of all good things. Fill also my soul with joy and gladness, that I may praise You always.”
Amen.*

LEARNING SESSION TWO

FEBRUARY 2020

Finding Christ Through Freedom

MONTH:

February 2020

GOAL:

To learn about freedom

OBJECTIVE:

To identify how to freely choose to serve God

ESTIMATED DURATION:

45 minutes

SUPPLIES NEEDED:

1. Divine Liturgy books
2. blank paper for each participant
3. pen for each participant
4. a few copies of the Saint story below
5. a few copies of the debrief questions

OPENING PRAYER

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

“Christ our Lord, You gave sight to the blind man and wisdom to simple fishermen. Give to our minds the grace of the Holy Spirit. We ask for understanding to learn and choose to do good works to glorify You.”

Amen.

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ICEBREAKER:

10 minutes

Tell us your name, and why you chose to come here today.

Remember:

It's always helpful to start with an activity to help participants relax and allow community to build. Early in the session, focus primarily on getting participants to open their hearts and connect with what's happening in the group. This is an opportunity to encourage participants to share their honest opinions and thoughts, as well as listen to those of others. Take this time to connect with what's important to them, and to understand what they've connected with.

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ACTIVITY 1: SAINT STORY

10 minutes

Break up the large group into three small groups based on their answer to the icebreaker question. Give each group a copy of the story of Saint Panteleimon and the debrief questions.

<https://www.goarch.org/-/feast-of-the-great-martyr-and-healer-saint-panteleimon>

Instruct groups to read the story and work together to answer the questions. After a few minutes, have the groups come back together into one and have each group share their answers.

Saint Panteleimon

Story adapted below for JOY age readers:

This Saint, who had Nicomedia as his homeland, was the son of Eustorgius and Eubula. His father was an idolater, but his mother was a Christian from her ancestors. It was through her that he was instructed in piety, and still later, he was catechized in the Faith of Christ by Saint Hermolaus (see July 26) and baptized by him. Being proficient in the physician's vocation, he practiced it in a philanthropic manner, healing every illness more by the grace of Christ than by medicines. Thus, although his parents had named

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him Pantoleon ("in all things a lion"), because of the compassion he showed for the souls and bodies of all, he was worthily renamed Panteleimon, meaning "all-merciful."

On one occasion, when he restored the sight of a certain blind man by calling on the Divine Name, he enlightened also the eyes of this man's soul to the knowledge of the truth. This also became the cause for the martyrdom of him who had been blind, since when he was asked by whom and in what manner his eyes had been opened, in imitation of that blind man of the Gospel he confessed with boldness both who the physician was and the manner of his healing. For this he was put to death immediately. Panteleimon was arrested also, and having endured many wounds, he was finally beheaded in the year 305, during the reign of Maximian.

Saint Panteleimon is one of the Holy Unmercenaries, and is held in special honor among them, even as Saint George is among the Martyrs.

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Debrief:

- How does this story relate to the theme of freedom?
- What choice did the young doctor make to help him grow closer to Christ?
- What is the connection between freedom and choice?
- How can we follow the example set by St. Panteleimon and practice freedom in our busy daily lives?
- What lesson did you learn from this story?

ACTIVITY 2: DIVINE LITURGY

10 minutes

Read the following lines from the Divine Liturgy and then ask participants the questions below and facilitate a discussion:

“And grant us, Master, with boldness and without condemnation, to dare call You, the heavenly God, Father, and to say:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against

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us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.”

Debrief:

- Why do you think the priest asks God to give us boldness before we pray the Lord’s prayer?
- What does it mean to be bold?
- Do we truly want “Thy will to be done”? If we do, what happens to our freedom?
- What makes it hard to give up our will to the Lord?

ACTIVITY 3: PRACTICE

10 minutes

Pass out paper and a pen to each participant.

Ask participants to think about a big decision they recently made that was difficult to make, and write it down on their paper.

Ask the following questions and allow time in between for participants to write down their thoughts.

Debrief:

- How did you make that choice?
- What were/are your feelings and emotions around the choice you made?
- How do you make choices in your life?
- How could God be working in that situation?

CONCLUSION: WRAP-UP & COMMITMENT

5 minutes

Go around the circle and ask each individual to name one new idea they learned during the session.

CLOSING PRAYER

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

“O Lord, You who steadied the hand of Peter as he began to sink on the stormy sea, if you are with me, no one is against me. Grant to me the shield of faith and the mighty armor of the Holy Spirit to protect me and guide me to do Your will. The future I put into Your hands, O Lord, and I follow You to a life in Christ.”

Amen.