
JESUS IS FREEDOM

SERIES: FREE

Join us throughout the month of May as we learn stories that show us that Jesus is our freedom. We will be going through the books of Matthew and Luke.

REMEMBER VERSE

JOHN 17:3—Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.

SCHEDULE

All Services

0:00—0:10	Welcome/Check-In
0:10—0:15	Transition to Large Group
0:15—0:30	Large Group (B Playground)
0:30—0:35	Transition to Small Group
0:35—1:05	Small Group (Lesson/Activity/Respond)
1:05—1:15	Dismiss

NOTES

LEADER RESOURCES

SERIES OVERVIEW

WEEK 1: God Is the Lord of the Sabbath

Sabbath

CURRENT WEEK: Jesus Is Freedom

Rich Fool

WEEK 3: The Father Is Love

Prodigal Son

WEEK 4: Remember & Celebrate

ZONK!

EQUIP

In Luke 12, a man questions Jesus about an inheritance. As He often does, Jesus sees through the question to the real issue simmering underneath the surface: worry. Jesus offers the man freedom—freedom from worry, the freedom of a life of peace.

This peace comes from faith. It comes from trust. It comes from the confidence that God is in control. When we truly trust God—when we have faith—we become free from worry. But definitions of faith can be elusive. We have the biblical definition of faith as "confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see" (Hebrews 11:1). Protestant leaders of the Reformation unpacked this biblical definition with the following three components. (And, being Reformers, they used a lot of Latin.)

The first component is *notitia*, which means "knowledge." This is essentially knowledge of the facts. This is the starting place for faith—the content that faith must have for it to be faith.

Next, we have *assensus*, which means "assent" or "agreement." This is acknowledging the facts to be true. Still, this isn't full-fledged faith. When James writes, "The demons believe and also shudder" (2:19), he clarifies that mere profession of faith without corresponding action is empty faith.

Finally, we have *fiducia*, which means "assurance," "confidence," or "trust." This is actually what the Bible refers to as trust. Another way of expressing it would be "putting your weight in" something. In essence, a person doesn't believe that the chair he's sitting in is actually a chair until he puts his weight in it.

When we put our weight in God, fully trusting Him, we have true faith. Trust essentially means leaving the matter in the hands of God—and if He is sovereign, truly in control, then there's no possible reason for us to be anxious. The price tag for peace is trust. Jesus offers us freedom from a life of worry and anxiousness, because He is freedom.

ENCOURAGE

"Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom." —2 Corinthians 3:17

Someone once said the more things you own, the more your things own you. That seems appropriate to the rich fool in Luke 12. Worry is a difficult and stubborn master, but Jesus wants you to know that your life is more than the sum of the things you own, the degrees you hold, and the people you know.

Spiritual disciplines are God's means of grace to us; they help us develop holy habits that let us live in the freedom He desires for us. The discipline of simplicity cultivates a freedom that leads to generosity—two things lacking in the rich man in today's part of The Big God Story.

Talk with God today about how to simplify your life so that you may experience more freedom. Is there material clutter in your home? What can you give away? What are you ready to release? How might God want you to share what you've been given to bless others?

WELCOME

Some fun ideas to welcome kids as they check-in to your room at the beginning of service.

Invite the kids to color on the provided coloring page or work on the provided activity page.

As kids arrive, feel free to ask them this week's Connect Question. Feel free to write the question on the board and encourage some fun dialogue before you start your lesson.

QUESTION: Where is your favorite place to go exploring?

RESPOND

A chance for kids to respond to what God is putting on their hearts through creative expression.

Jesus made it possible for us to be free from sin and worry. He loves us and doesn't want us to carry heavy burdens! We can be free we trust in God and believe He gives us everything we need. Jesus is freedom!

INSTRUCTIONS: Hand each child a Tree Branch Template. Have them color the branch and draw grass at the bottom. Then, have them draw a bird on the branch and flowers in the grass. Remind them that if God takes care of the birds and the flowers, we don't have to worry because we are worth more than birds or flowers, so we can trust He will take care of us.

SUPPLIES:

- Tree Branch Template
- Coloring supplies

REFLECT

A chance to reflect on what kids have just learned about The Big God Story.

Jesus told His disciples not to worry about what they would eat, drink, or wear. Instead, He asked them to think about the birds and the flowers. He meant that because God takes such good care of the birds and flowers, He will take care of His children even more!

- What was the rich man most concerned about? *Luke 12:19*
- Because God takes care of the plants and animals, what do we know about how He'll take care of us? *Luke 12:27-28*
- Why did God send His Son, Jesus? *John 3:16*
- How does Jesus set us free? *Romans 8:1*
- How can we choose freedom in Christ instead of worry or fear? *Philippians 4:6-7*
- What is the meaning of Jesus' story of the rich man? *Luke 12:20-21*
- In what ways do we try to fill our lives with things instead of God? *Romans 1:25*
- What is the one thing we need most in life? *Romans 6:22-23*
- What do you worry about?
- How does it make you feel to know God can set you free from worry?

BLESS

A powerful way to bless the kids and parents by sending them off with a benediction.

INSTRUCTIONS: Invite the parents into your room at the end of the service to say one last prayer together with the whole family. Instruct them to find their child and sit/stand by their side. Explain what their child learned today and read the verse below. Pray together and then dismiss.

MATTHEW 6:26-27 – "Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?"

BLESSING: May you know that the Father loves you and will always take care of you. May you know that Jesus is freedom. May you trust Him to give you everything you need, and may you rest in Him and be free from worry.

NOTES

This script serves as an outline of what your storytelling might sound like. Items written in italics are cues for the storyteller and are not meant to be read out loud. You are fully encouraged to make it your own and add a personal touch.

The script serves as an example, however if you would like to teach based on the script and are in need of any supplies mentioned, we would be happy to supply those for you! Storytelling images mentioned will always be provided in your basket each week, but if you need any other supplies for your lesson, contact a Grove KIDS Staff member beforehand so we can supply it for you! You are also welcome to bring in your own props if you would like!

RESOURCES PROVIDED

- None

STORYTELLING

Jesus taught in many stories or parables while He was on earth. It was a great way to help people understand all of the important things He wanted them to know. Today we're going to read a story from The Big God Story about a man who was worried about having enough stuff. Jesus teaches that He gives freedom from worry. But before we look at what Jesus said, let's pray and invite God into our time in His Word. *Lead the children in a Prayer of Release to pause, be still, and ask the Holy Spirit to quiet their hearts and minds.*

Encourage kids to turn to Luke 12 and follow along with today's storytelling. One day, Jesus came across a man who wanted his brother to divide his inheritance with him. What's an inheritance? *Invite answers.* Good thoughts. An inheritance is usually money or property someone gets when a relative dies. This brother wanted a big amount of money. But Jesus said that it wasn't His responsibility to decide about their money between the brothers. And then He gave the brother a warning. *Invite a volunteer to read Luke 12:15 aloud.* What does it mean to be greedy? *Invite responses.* Good thoughts. When we're greedy, we want more than we need. We can become worried about having plenty of things—money, games, clothes, and more. Jesus wanted people to know they don't need to worry because He will take care of them. He is freedom! So He told a parable.

Ask a volunteer to read Luke 12:16 aloud. The man in the parable had a huge crop! He had so much that he didn't even have enough space to store it. The man in the parable decided to tear down his barns and build new, bigger ones to store all of his crops. *Ask a volunteer to read Luke 12:19 aloud.* The man in the parable thought that if he built bigger barns, he wouldn't have to worry about stuff. The man in the parable thought that he could handle everything himself. He believed that having all of his things and making sure they would stay safe and dry would bring him peace and happiness. He didn't understand that his freedom from worry comes from Jesus, not from having a lot of things.

Jesus continued His parable. *Read Luke 12:20-21 aloud.* God said the man in the parable would die that night. All he had stored up wouldn't matter anymore. Instead of sharing with God and others, the man had wasted time worrying about all of his things. We don't know what will happen tomorrow, but we do know that God loves us and is in control. Because of this, we don't

have to worry about the future; we can serve God and know He'll take care of what we need on this earth and then take us to live with Him forever. But the man in the parable didn't see this. He didn't realize that God offered him freedom from sin and worry.

After Jesus told His parable, He continued so that everyone would understand what He was saying. *Ask a volunteer to read Luke 12:22 aloud.* Jesus reminded everyone that they didn't need to worry about what to eat or wear. He offers freedom from worry. We can trust God to care for us, and we know that life is about more than food and clothes. Life is about knowing our good God! *Ask a volunteer to read Luke 12:24 aloud.* Jesus pointed out that birds don't worry about things like people do, and God takes care of them! And because people are made in God's image, we're even more valuable than birds.

Ask a volunteer to read Luke 12:27-28 aloud. What's your favorite flower? *Invite responses.* Just picture that flower! Flowers are beautiful, and they grow because God cares for them through His creation. Flowers don't worry about clothes, but they're gorgeous. Jesus was saying that we don't have to worry about everything in life. He takes care of us. He forgives our sins so we can live forever with Him. We can always trust Him. That's freedom!

Because Jesus is freedom, there's something we can spend our time doing. *Ask a volunteer to read Luke 12:31 aloud.* What does it mean to seek God's kingdom? *Invite responses.* Great thoughts. When we seek God's kingdom, we make Him the most important thing. We live our lives according to what He says is important. We put His desires above our desires. We try to live in God's way through the help of the Holy Spirit. We follow the way of Jesus because it's the best way! Jesus reminded us that we should seek God's kingdom instead of worrying. When we do that, we can trust that He will provide.

Jesus encouraged His listeners to seek God. There's no point in worrying about stuff. We can trust God to provide, and we know that He always loves us, no matter how much we have. Jesus offers us so much! He died for our sins on the cross, and He offers us a whole new life with Him. He is freedom from worry and sin. When we accept Jesus' gift of salvation, we receive the Holy Spirit. God's Spirit helps us to live for Him and reminds us that we don't need to be stressed about anything because Jesus is freedom.