

Discipleship Course Users Update



Additions to the users section of the website include:

- a customisable PowerPoint presentation designed to run along with your notices before services
- a prayer strategy to use leading up to the start of your course
- editable timetables for your Away Day
- hints and tips from other users

New poster

New A3 poster – many of you have asked for posters to publicise your course. These are now available at 95p (code" FC172).



Video testimonies on DVD

A number of video testimonies from individuals and church leaders are now available on a DVD. It's a useful resource for showing to people as a warm-up to the course or to use as an encouragement during the course. There is also a useful 5 minute clip showing how an Away Day works. It costs £9.99 (code: FC173). You can see some of the clips (in low resolution) on our website.



Comments from users of the course

The Discipleship Course has radically changed the dynamics of our church. Though the message has been preached for years it seems that this course has lifted the veil and truths have clicked into place, as people have discovered who they really are in Christ. People's lives have changed as they have progressed through the course before doing the Steps. The Steps then have brought further release and healing into their lives. In some people, lives have been transformed beyond words!

Many thanks for the best discipling material I have seen. Fills a great void in our church, which often appears defeated in these dark days. Overall experience is that the course is excellent. Main reason for this is that it disciples in the basics - things many, many Christians were never taught adequately after conversion.

Share your comments, hints and tips

There is a form at www.ficm.org.uk/discipleship/members/share.html that you can use to share your comments or experiences. We'd love to hear from you.

If you have not already registered as a user (free of charge) you will need to do so first.



Freedom in Christ News

Spring Newsletter 2006

www.ficm.org.uk



In FIC, we have recently felt that the Lord is asking us a question: "Are you prepared to go to the next level?" We have an idea what that involves, but we know we can't move into it unless we first count the cost. Our team met for a weekend to do that - the picture below shows individual responses written on Post-It notes.

God will fulfil His purposes with or without us. He always finishes what He starts. I am sure He wants to bring a new awakening to our land through the Church. The challenge for you and me is whether we will be the ones through whom He works.

I am struck by the differences between Saul and David in this respect. Both were plucked from relative obscurity and anointed king of Israel; both stepped out in faith; both made their share of mistakes (and David's sins of adultery and murder were, arguably, worse than Saul's). Yet Saul ended his days a raging demoniac who consulted mediums while David ended his in peace with a promise from God to establish his dynasty for ever.

There is no doubt that God's plan was for Saul to be successful in his ministry. Yet he completely missed it! God's purposes were nevertheless still fulfilled, but through David rather than Saul.

The difference between them came down to a heart attitude.



David was quick to obey and quick to repent when required. Saul was more concerned with what others thought and put the form of religion above genuine sacrifice.

When things go well, as they have for FIC with the Discipleship Course for example, we need to know the truth that we are simply "God's workmanship" - He is the one who does all the work and deserves all the credit. And when things go badly, as they seemed to for David in the decade or so between his anointing as king and when it actually happened, we need again to know the truth that it is God's work and we simply need to obey and wait.

One of my favourite verses is Psalm 127:1 which basically says, "unless the Lord builds the house, we're wasting our time". As I look at how the Lord has dealt with us in FIC, I see how true this is. It's all about Him. It's His story not ours.

Yes, we are ready to go the next level. We want to play our part in whatever God has next for His Bride in the UK. We hope you will join us in praying and waiting on the Lord.

Steve

Steve Goss, Executive Director

Philippines Visit

Craig Millward, a pastor in East Anglia and member of Freedom In Christ's teaching team, recently travelled to The Philippines to equip leaders from 13 churches in the Bulacan region. It went so well that pastors from 250 churches in the region have asked for a follow-up conference so they can equip themselves to use the FIC approach to disciple all the new Christians in their churches.



Discipleship Course Success

Publishers Monarch estimate that around 1,500 churches in the UK are now using the Freedom In Christ Discipleship Course - that is on average about three a day since it was launched. We continue to receive hugely encouraging reports from churches about its impact. There is a special information section for users of the course on the back page with details of new resources available.

Video Clips On Website

There is a new multimedia section on our website which has video testimonies from leaders and individuals such as Michael (pictured) who tells how his church used the FIC approach to help him deal with intrusive thoughts that were plaguing him. You can also see a testimony from Cheryl who was helped by her church to resolve the effects of childhood abuse, prostitution and drug addiction. Cheryl has also told her story to the BBC for the Easter Day edition of Songs Of Praise. The video testimonies are now available on DVD to use in your church.



Paul Travis To Visit

Paul Travis, author with Neil Anderson of Breaking The Bonds Of Legalism, is to visit the UK in May 2006 to conduct two conferences entitled "When Trying Harder Isn't Enough". They are designed to help us get rid of any last vestiges of legalistic thinking and help others to do the same. See inside for Paul's personal story and further details.

New French Office

Tim and Monique Baynes Clarke, members of Freedom In Christ's teaching team, have accepted a call to open a Freedom In Christ office in France. We are praying for a property that can be used as a retreat/conference centre. If you are interested in giving to this project, making a loan or investing in the property by taking a share in it, please look at the details at www.ficm.org.uk/france or get in touch with us.

Over 30,000 people have now used the Freedom In Christ Discipleship Course in the UK. This section contains hints, tips and news for those leading courses.

Have you registered?



It's free and it gives you access to a special section of our website with all kinds of resources.

For Church Leaders only - come for yourself AND take it back to your church **Setting Your Marriage Free** 17-19 October 2006 Oxfordshire

This special event is an opportunity for church leaders and spouses to fine-tune their marriage and (if desired) to be equipped to run a similar retreat in their own church. Compassionate instruction and direction will help you make sure that Christ is right at the centre of your relationship. You will be given the opportunity to renew your marriage vows and go through the Steps To Setting Your Marriage Free, a process that will help you deal with footholds of the enemy that may have held your marriage back. There will be time and space for each couple to work privately and confidentially, prompted by the Holy Spirit. It's a life-changing experience!

Topics covered include:

- Establishing God's priority for marriage
- Balancing rights and responsibilities
- Releasing old hurts
- Breaking cycles of abuse
- Breaking sexual bondage
- Unmasking Satan's deception
- Taking it back to your church

This conference is only for main church leaders:

- Couples who are committed to making a good marriage even better
- Couples who repeatedly struggle with the same troublesome issues
- Couples who want to learn how to encourage other married couples and take the principles back to run in their own church

Please note: It will be assumed that participants have already experienced the Steps to Freedom individually.

Comments from people who have attended previous retreats:

...A breakthrough for our marriage. We have been married as singles for 23 years. Today we have Christ in our marriage and great hope for the future...

...The conference is excellent. It addresses issues that destroy our marriages and then challenges us to deal honestly with each one...

...We had tried all kinds of counselling but this process dealt directly with the source of our conflict and brought a life-changing transformation...

...Yes, it was difficult. Through honest and vulnerable discussion, the Lord led us through problems, anguish, hurts, fears, all the way to forgiveness, resolution, love and commitment...

...This broke the strongholds in our marriage and allowed us to continue...

...This was my last resort. But this real, honest, heartfelt, truthful, godly way softened my heart, gave me back my hope, and a desire to truly love my husband...



The Story Of A Lapsed Legalist



Many have been deeply impacted by "Breaking The Bonds Of Legalism", the book Neil Anderson wrote with Paul Travis. Paul is visiting the UK for the first time in May to conduct two conferences entitled "When Trying Harder Isn't Enough". This is part of his story:

I was born to parents who were very devout Christians; and lived in a home where the Bible was read out loud daily, with each of us learning to pray. My father was very strict and instilled in me much fear of not measuring up to his standards, which I took to be God's standards. Though I knew my parents loved me, there was not much affection shown in our home. We attended every service at church, often earning perfect attendance awards. I never resented all this, because I thought it was the only way to please God. I was never allowed to go to a movie or a dance, even though my school teachers advised my parents to let me.

We didn't buy on Sunday, and only participated in church activities. I continued to be very diligent, winning most of the prizes and awards for extra Christian achievement. I went the extra mile in performing to please, thinking that the more I did for God, the more He would accept me... At the age of sixteen, I started speaking to our church youth group and being a counsellor at summer camp.

Many weekends I worked Friday and Saturday preparing the camp for summer activities and the auditorium for conferences. All this activity became my life. One time a leader from my church took me to twenty-eight churches in two months to play my trumpet and give my testimony before he showed a film.

I became a pastor. But I was a legalist, a spiritual performer, driven to work hard for God. I had to do right, look right, be right – only then did I believe I would be all right.

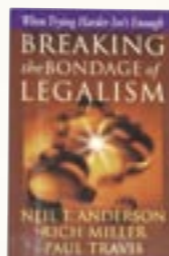
This all took a drastic change when my wife died suddenly with a massive heart attack, just before I was to preach one Sunday morning. As unbelievable as it may sound, I felt that I needed to preach the Word to those who came over to console me and held a Bible study with them!

My wife's death was just part of God's powerful and painful process of lovingly moving me from self-satisfied legalism into the joy of freedom in Christ. It served as a wake-up call to show me that I needed to allow God's truth to touch my heart and not just fill my mind. I needed to know that Paul Travis's neatly controlled world could fall to pieces in a moment's time. I needed to know that my efforts to keep my life in order were totally futile. Only then would I be set free from life as a performer and legalist.

Legalism is thinking that we can attain and maintain favour with God by things that we do. I had spent my life doing it; and getting free didn't happen overnight. However, God got my attention, and said, "Paul, I don't need your help. I can do anything and everything. I want you to surrender completely to me, so I can accomplish My will in you and through you."

Breaking The Bonds Of Legalism is available from Freedom In Christ priced £8.99 plus postage.

Paul Travis will be leading "When Trying Harder Isn't Enough" in Northern Ireland (5-6 May) and Berkshire (12-13 May) – the event will help you uncover the vestiges of legalism in your own life and understand how to help others.



Frequently Asked Questions



How does FIC help those with deeper issues?

FIC has a small team called "Walking With The Wounded" who regularly see those with deeper issues resolve completely the negative effects of the past (not just learn to cope with them) and become fruitful disciples. However, one of FIC's core values is that the work of ministry is done in the local church so our team does not work directly with wounded people. Instead it makes itself available to leaders and church teams who are helping wounded people take hold of their freedom in Christ. Here are some of the principles the team pass on:

- However good we may be in counselling, teaching or praying for a hurting person, it is not our responsibility to rescue or to "fix" those with deeper issues. Christ alone has the power to resolve their problems. Our responsibility is simply to offer tools, support and encouragement and to connect them to Christ who is The Wonderful Counsellor.

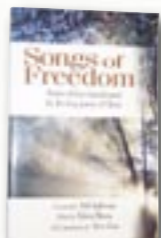
- Assuming they are Christians, no matter how deeply wounded they are, they already have everything they need to live godly and fulfilled lives (2 Peter 1:3, Ephesians 1:3). It's simply a matter of helping them connect with that truth.

- The responsibility for freedom lies firmly with the person concerned. We are to allow them the freedom and honour to make right choices by providing support and instruction and then to allow each person to "carry his own load".

You may be tempted to think, "This is far too big for my church. We don't have the resources or knowledge to be able to help." In our experience, seeing a wounded person come through to freedom and fruitfulness has nothing to do with resources but everything to do with taking God at His word and implementing some straightforward Biblical principles. It can happen in any church – and our team is on hand to help with advice, support and training.



If you're interested in finding out more about helping those with deeper issues, we recommend our two day Walking With The Wounded Workshop. Attend in Liverpool, 19-20 May, or in Winchester, 13-14 October.



You may also enjoy two faith-building books. "Am I A Good Girl Yet?" is by Carolyn Bramhall, the leader of our "Walking With The Wounded" team, and tells of her journey to wholeness helped by a small UK church; and "Songs Of Freedom" contains testimonies from many who have been helped by the FIC approach in churches up and down the UK to walk free of addictions, anorexia, depression and other deep issues.

Depending On God

Martin Luther once said that he was so busy that he had to get up a couple of hours earlier than usual in order to pray. How does that make you feel? Guilty probably!



As an organisation, we've come to realise that that's the wrong reaction. When guilt is the motivator, eventually we'll simply give up. The reason that Luther got up earlier was not to assuage a sense of guilt but because he really knew the truth that apart from Christ he could do not just a few things – apart from Christ he could do absolutely nothing.

Although all of us would agree with that on one level, it may be that the way we live our lives tells a different story. The key, as with so much of what we call "the FIC approach", is to renew our minds so that we genuinely know the truth that "unless the Lord builds the house, the workers labour in vain" (Ps.

127:1) and don't fall back into old habit patterns of busyness, escapism or whatever.

Steve Goss, Executive Director of FIC, says, "If I live my life without thinking too hard, I am simply an adrenaline junkie, careering from one deadline to the next, the underlying belief being that the outcome depends on me. The truth, of course, is that it depends on God. We've found that it takes a lot of the stress out of life when we simply ask God to set the direction, do anything He tells us to do and then simply wait on Him. The doors that He has opened have been amazing. We are absolutely determined to keep coming back to prayer and waiting. It's hard because it goes against our natural urge to 'do'. We sense that the Lord has some great things in store for the Church in the UK and that FIC has a role to play. We're determined to keep praying and waiting until He brings it in."

To that end, much of FIC's focus is on prayer. We have a small, tenacious team of intercessors headed up by Director of Intercession, Sue Lindsay (pictured left with Jude Graham, one of our intercessors). That team includes Steve and Zoë Goss and, despite geographical challenges, meets together every 6 to 8 weeks. We also have 100 or so people who receive our regular monthly prayer letter and who pray for us day by day. Once a year our teaching team gets together for a weekend, much of which is spent in prayer.

Now we are hoping that many of those who have used the FIC approach in local churches will join us once a quarter for prayer evenings around the country where we will share with you what the Lord is doing and pray together for more of it.

But don't come out of guilt! Come because you want to see the Bride of Christ in this country making herself ready for Christ's return and because, like us, you are working on making real connections with the truth that your prayers will make a difference.

How you can be involved

- Could your church host a FIC regional prayer evening? We'll supply everything you need to run it.
- Would you like to receive our regular monthly prayer letter?
- Come to our quarterly prayer and news evenings (see details below).

Contact prayer@ficm.org.uk for more information.

Prayer and news evenings

The next evenings will be on 5th June and 11th October in London, Berkshire, Staffordshire and Northern Ireland. Please check the website as more venues may be added. They are open to all and you would be very welcome indeed.

Helping Others Find Freedom training - all you need to know about the Steps



Many have asked for additional training on taking people through The Steps To Freedom In Christ in individual "freedom appointments".

Our Helping Others Find Freedom one-day events will give you everything you need to know to go back to your church and use The Steps To Freedom with confidence.

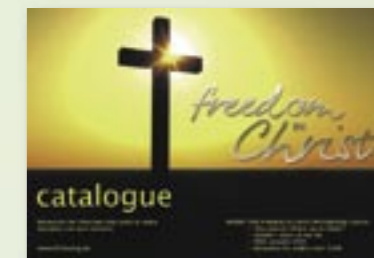
Crammed with hints, tips and practical experience, this workshop will equip you with Biblical principles, explain The Steps To Freedom In Christ and cover:

- setting up and running a "freedom ministry"
- a detailed look at taking people through each of the Steps
- "stronghold busting"
- dealing with fears and anxiety

The day runs from 9:30am to 5:00pm and costs £20.

12 October 2006 Winchester
27 October 2006 Bradford

For full details and booking information see www.ficm.org.uk or call 0845 230 2677 during office hours.



New Catalogue

Our new catalogue contains details of the full range of resources available.

Here are two of the new publications it contains. Extreme Church Makeover is an updated version of Setting Your Church Free and costs £17.99. Overcoming Depression costs £6.99.

