



I LOVE MY CONNECT

STUDY 14

My Forgiveness, My Freedom

**Romans 8:1-4, 31-39; Luke 18:10-14; Deuteronomy 25:1-2;
John 8:9-11; Acts 3:19**

There is no condemnation in Jesus. All of us have made mistakes and have weaknesses. There is nothing we can do in our own efforts to clear ourselves of the condemnation of sin. It is just and right that the guilty are condemned and the innocent are justified. The good news is: Jesus condemned condemnation so that we could live in freedom with him. When we cry out to God, alone before Jesus, every accusation that rules us must leave. Alone with Jesus, we see his love, accept his grace, and we are forgiven. We turn away from our sin and we walk the rest of our life through the power of his Spirit.

We are justified by Christ – just as if we had never sinned. We stop walking according to accusations, condemnation of the enemy, or our own failed attempts to be righteous. Instead, we walk in his Spirit, attentive to his truth and convictions which bring life, change and transformation. With the Holy Spirit we recognise the lies of condemnation, see his grace overcome condemnation in our lives, and we stand victorious with Jesus.

Jesus breaks the power of condemnation over us. We are free! No longer do we live under a cloud of condemnation, self-loathing, neglect, hatred, defeat, powerlessness, deserving to be punished, feeling disqualified. We live each day in his freedom, accepting God's forgiveness and understanding our position in Christ. We live in his grace and his Spirit bring us times of refreshing.

God is for us. In sending Jesus, God put everything on the line for us. He gladly and freely gives to us. He chose us, gives us his presence and when we are justified by Christ there is no one who can bring a charge against us, there are no accusers left. Nothing and no one can separate us from his love. Let us always walk refreshed in his presence, as his people, who live free in the forgiveness of Christ.

CONNECTION AND ACTION Use these questions to promote conversation and connection.

ICEBREAKER: Share a time when you were young where you were "let off the hook" for something (i.e. at school, by your parents, traffic ticket)? What was it like to get caught, what was the outcome, and how did it feel to not be punished?

- Q:** What does it look like to live a life believing: "If God is for us, who can be against us?"
- Q:** Describe and share "times of refreshing" you have experienced through Jesus.
- Q:** What shape does condemnation take in our lives and culture today? What can we do to see the grace and love of Jesus overcome these?
- Q:** Share examples of how Jesus has set you free.
- Q:** What life change or transformation has come from walking in the freedom of God's presence?
- Q:** Share areas of condemnation in your life or world you believe to be broken by Jesus. Spend time praying for each other and praising God for freedom.

HIGHLIGHTS COMING UP

- City Care "Love One" Campaign

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BIBLE AND BELIEF Use these questions and scriptures to help believers develop a biblical worldview.

Read: Romans 8:1-4, 9-11, 15-16

Q: Identify the characteristics of a life in the Spirit found in Romans 8.

Q: Share how the Holy Spirit has outworked or demonstrated these principles in your life?

Read: Romans 8:31-39

Q: Identify the rhetorical questions Paul asks in the verses. What is his answer? (*leaders tip: v. 39*)

Q: What declarations does Paul make about our position in Christ and his love for us?

Q: How does knowing God is for us and nothing can separate us from his love change our lives?

GROWING LEADERSHIP Use these questions to help people in your group grow as leaders.

Q: Consider and compare the affect and characteristics a "cloud of condemnation" verses the Spirit of freedom has within a team.

Q: As leaders, what can we do to encourage a stature of freedom in our teams?

Q: "If God is for us, who can be against us? How does this statement empower our teams, our leadership, our church?"

Q: Discuss the tension between grace and condemnation in leading people. How can we move people forward in grace to see change and transformation?

Q: How does a leaders daily commitment to walk in forgiveness and freedom of Christ impact the spiritual health of our teams?

PRAY TOGETHER

- Decisions for Jesus in our Services
- Pastors Brian & Bobbie Houston

PASTORAL CARE

- We have a pastoral care team at church to walk alongside people in your group who may be going through a tough time
- Please contact the church office Sydney 02 8853 5353, Melbourne 03 9720 2099, Brisbane 07 3422 8500 or Newcastle 02 4927 1888 to let us know of anybody in your group (with their permission) who have sickness, death of a loved one, marriage challenges, surgeries.

NATION BUILDERS – ON MISSION

One of the best ways we can make a difference as a connect is to regularly PRAY for the Nation Builders causes we support, and regularly inspire your group to receive your Nation Builders offering. Your giving makes a massive difference in helping us 'reach and influencing the world'.

Nation Builders Update: Asia

Steve Dixon and Sam DiMauro hosted three training events in three different Asian nations to equip hundreds of Senior Pastors and then with our College Band held city-wide Night Rallies for thousands of believers. These nights witnessed breakthrough praise and worship, many salvations and healings. These events were held in Bangkok (Thailand), Manila (Philippines) and Kota Kinabulu (Malaysia) but included pastors and believers from surrounding nations, some of which are non-access countries where Christians face persecution because of their faith. Your Nation Builders giving made these events possible and helps us fulfill our Senior pastors passion to 'Champion the Cause of the Local Church everywhere'. Thank you.

