

Breaking the Chains Leader Guide

Lighthouse Bible Studies

We're Stronger Together

This book was a group effort. I began writing about this topic in a blog series and invited six friends to join me. Later that year, I felt led by God to turn the blog series into a book and invited thirteen more writers to contribute to it. God has blessed me so much through this process as I have worked with these writers and benefited from their contributions. We're stronger when we work together. Now it's your group's turn to benefit from each other.

As you dive into how to break free from harassing emotions like fear and anger and how to cut the chains of hurtful practices like self-reliance and people pleasing, your group members will be encouraged to continue this spiritual fight by hearing from each other. Satan's strategy to make us think that we're the only ones dealing with something, will be defeated as your group discusses the book. There may be several times when someone says, "Yeah, me too!" We all struggle. Hearing about each other's spiritual battles and learning from each other how to handle them, helps us to find freedom faster.

It's our prayer that the Scripture verses, stories, and principles found in this compilation will equip your group members to break free from detrimental ways of thinking and acting, and usher them into freedom, peace, and relief. If they aren't struggling with a particular bondage, we hope that they will discover how to pray for others and encourage others to embrace God's strategies for victory.

A Flexible Study

Since this book is a series of articles and not chapters, the book can be adapted to fit any time frame you have allotted for a group study. Covering the whole book takes about ten weeks. If you don't have that long, you can decide which articles to cover in the number of weeks you have. If you have less than ten weeks, we suggest that you give your group members a survey to discover which topics they would like to discuss the most, and that survey is included at the end of this file.

The Ten-Week Plan

Use the following plan for a ten-week study. It divides the reading into five articles per week, except for the first and last weeks. The articles take about five to ten minutes each to read, and this leader guide furnishes the types of questions you can ask. Pick your questions based on how much time you have per session.

Week 1: Use this time to get to know each other, discuss the introductory questions provided in this guide, and give the first reading assignment.

Week 2: Read pages 3-24.

(Covers the Introduction and the articles on fear, guilt, anxiety, and hopelessness)

Week 3: Read pages 25-43.

(Covers loneliness, enslaving thoughts, pride, unforgiveness, and bad habits)

Week 4: Read pages 44-58.

(Covers legalism, anger, a critical spirit, and spiritual depression)

Week 5: Read pages 59-76.

(Covers indifference, a complaining spirit, prejudice, a rebellious spirit, and a low self-image)

Week 6: Read pages 77-96.

(Covers people pleasing, lust, worldliness, self-reliance, and emotionalism)

Week 7: Read pages 97-115.

(Covers two articles dealing with pain and idolatry, the introduction of the short story section, and two short stories that illustrate how to break free from specific forms of spiritual bondage)

Week 8: Read pages 116-138.

(Covers three short stories, and starts the final section that gives testimonies of breaking free and principles of staying free)

Week 9: Read pages 139-155.

(Covers five articles in the Breaking Free and Staying Free section)

Week 10: Read pages 156-160 and discuss the closing questions provided below.

(Covers the closing article and poem)

Discussion Questions for Week One and Week Ten

Since it's likely that you won't assign any reading before your study begins, use Week One to get to know each other better and to ask the following questions.

1. Have you noticed that one negative thought can turn into a pattern of thinking and then into a habit? What has to happen for a thought to become a habit?
2. Our new study is about overcoming spiritual bondage. What negative emotions and habits do you think Christians today struggle with the most?
3. When you were a teenager, what internal struggles did you often face? Was it with fear, anxiety, loneliness, or something else?
4. Are your struggles different now compared to back then?
5. Let's read Galatians 5:1. What does this verse show us about how we gain freedom?
6. What do you think our part is in breaking free from a yoke of bondage?
7. As we go through this book, we will discover Bible verses, principles, and strategies that will help us deal with the things that plague us. The book talks about twenty-five forms of spiritual bondage. You don't have to answer this one out loud, but if there were one particular form of spiritual bondage that you'd want to make a bulls eye and deal with it, what would it be?
8. Think about the goodness, strength, and love of God. What is it about God that helps us to be overcomers in our spiritual battles?

9. What can we pray for ourselves and for others who are fighting spiritual battles?
10. Let's close our time with Psalm 18:31-39. David is talking about how God helped him against his enemies. Today God helps us against our spiritual enemies. As the verses are read, look for the answers to this question: How does God help us to win our battles, and what's our part?

Whether you use the ten-week plan or create a shorter one, the following questions can help you to wrap up the study and further personalize what has been read and discussed. Number ten gives an idea for a group prayer.

1. Have you seen God work more freedom, relief, and peace into your heart as a result of this study? What's better now?
2. The closing article talked about Psalm 107 and four things that God does for those who cry out to Him for help. Look at the bottom paragraph of page 157 for those four things. Which one of these has God done for you recently?
3. Did any part of the poem on pages 159 and 160 resonate with you? If so, which one?
4. Based on what you've read in this book and what you've experienced with God, how can we stay free once God has helped us overcome a spiritual bondage?
5. What are some enticements for going back to what we were rescued from?
6. What are some motivations for saying no?
7. At the beginning of our study, I asked what you would pray for yourself and for others so that we can win our spiritual battles. Have you discovered something new to pray for through this study?
8. With God on our side, the Bible as our strategy book, and a desire to choose God's ways, what spiritual bondage can't we overcome? How does time and hard work affect breaking free and staying free?
9. How can we maintain a heart of dependence on God and desiring what He wants for us?
10. Let's have a group prayer in which every person prays a sentence or two about we've learned. If you prefer not to pray aloud, just touch the elbow of the person sitting next to you to keep the prayer going. Let's pray for grace, wisdom, and strength to walk in freedom. Thank you for being a part of this study.

Discussion Questions for Every Article

Pick from the following questions to use in your group sessions, or create your own. These questions focus on the cause of the spiritual bondage written about, how Scripture helps us to break free, and other principles for victory.

1. What are some of the causes of this spiritual bondage?
2. At what point do you think a few actions motivated by (the specific bondage) become a habit?
3. Why do you think this bondage is so easy to become chained to?
4. What strategies are given in the article for how to overcome it?
5. Which Scripture verses are our reinforcements for victory?
6. What would freedom from this bondage look like in everyday life?

We Want to Pray for You

If you use this book in a small group study, email us at lighthousebiblestudies@hotmail.com before your session begins.

If you are interested in using scrapbooked cards as an activity for your group, visit www.lighthousebiblestudies.com/scrapbooked-bible-study to see examples of the cards and instructions for how to make them.

Don't forget that the last page of this file has a survey for your group, in case you need to create a reading plan that is less than ten weeks long. Please print and copy that survey as many times as you need. God bless you as you seek to break chains and walk in freedom.

Grateful for our chain-breaking Savior,

Katy Kauffman and the Lighthouse team

Breaking the Chains Survey

Your input is needed! As we get ready to start a new study on overcoming spiritual bondage, we want to see which topics you would want to discuss the most. Using the scale below, rate each topic based on how interested you are in reading about its causes and hang ups and the strategies to break free from it.

The Scale:

- 3 – Very Interested**
- 2 – Interested**
- 1 – Somewhat Interested**
- 0 – Not Now**

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|--------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|
| _____ Fear | _____ Anger | _____ Worldliness |
| _____ Guilt | _____ Critical Spirit | _____ Self-Reliance |
| _____ Anxiety | _____ Spiritual Depression | _____ Emotionalism |
| _____ Hopelessness | _____ Indifference | _____ Pain |
| _____ Loneliness | _____ Complaining Spirit | _____ Idolatry |
| _____ Enslaving Thoughts | _____ Prejudice | |
| _____ Pride | _____ Rebellious Spirit | |
| _____ Unforgiveness | _____ Low Self-Image | |
| _____ Bad Habits | _____ People Pleasing | |
| _____ Legalism | _____ Lust | |