

PRAXIS

A close-up photograph of a hand moving a wooden chess piece on a chessboard. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the hand and the piece against a dark background. The word "Frenemy" is overlaid in large white text.

Frenemy

HOW TO USE

This discussion guide is designed for you, leaders, to guide your group through this Praxis video series. This series is structured as a conversation based around engaging questions intended to promote thought-provoking discussion throughout each episode. When these questions pop up on the screen, hit pause and turn the question to the group. **Each episode includes the following:**

BIG IDEA

We highlight the big idea behind the episode, emphasizing key scriptures or quotes, to give you and your group an idea of what will be covered in the video. Feel free to share this before pressing play, or after to summarize what was taught into a concise thought.

SUPPORTING QUESTIONS

If the video question does not invite participation, use these questions to promote further interest. These questions are simply reworded to present the idea in a different way. We invite you to be creative and present the questions in a way that engages your group.

DISCUSS

The video questions are created to encourage conversation and to allow the formation of thoughts and ideas – inviting participants to wrestle with and begin sharing their beliefs and experiences. This is just the beginning. The discussion questions exist to go deeper and to invite more intimate and transformational conversation.

CONTEXT

IN A CHURCH OR LARGE GROUP SETTING

This guide is designed to be used by a leader, so begin by identifying those leaders and getting a guide into each of their hands. If you are watching the episodes with more than 20 people, we would advise identifying multiple leaders and having them focus on a section of the group. When the video questions arise, have them turn to their “small group” and discuss the questions openly. Time dependent, ask each smaller group to share with the larger group what was shared. This invites more people to share without the intimidation of a large group setting. Whether you keep these groups consistent from week to week, or you mix it up, remaining the same for the discussion portion of each episode will allow for greater depth and increased transparency.

IN A SMALL GROUP SETTING

Every leader in the room should have one of these guides prior to beginning the video. It can be helpful to identify one leader as the facilitator, and others as helpers. The facilitator can guide the video question time, with helpers stepping in as needed based on the direction of conversation. Come discussion time, gathering into small groups where one or two leaders oversee a small group can invite quieter participants to engage and allow for greater depth of conversation.

AS AN INDIVIDUAL

While this discussion guide is designed with group participation in mind, the content is something we believe is valuable for every individual. We advise watching these episodes with a pen in hand and paper before you. Have your Bible handy and get ready to pause the video. You get to take this at your pace! When Scripture is referenced, open your Bible and read along – when questions are asked, hit pause and write out your answer. If questions arise in your mind that you are unable to answer, write them down to ask later.

GET READY

Take a breath, the pressure is off. We are not asking you to teach, or to have the answer to every question. Your role is to guide, facilitate, but most importantly to **listen** and **invite**.

Invite questions. Invite conversation.

This discussion guide was created to provide direction for the conversation, but not to limit or harness the group. During the video, listen to what the participants say. Do not feel the need to answer the question yourself. Be comfortable with silence. Give it fifteen seconds before you use a supporting question. Let them think.

“When will I know when to press play again?” Trust me, you’ll know. Conversation will end, or you may even have to re-focus the group if they go down a rabbit trail. If a valuable question or topic is sparked during the video, write it down and say you will return as a group to it during the discussion time.

When it comes time for discussion, follow the pace of the group. Let them naturally guide the conversation around what content stuck out from the video, or what questions were sparked for them. You are not confined to the questions in this guide. Pick the ones that stand out to you or add your own. This time will look different for each group and that’s intentional.

Listen and Invite.

FRENEMY

THREE EPISODES | PRAXIS SERIES 14

BIG IDEA

In this series I want to introduce you to 3 emotions that we consider enemies that make it difficult to walk with Jesus. ***Guilt, Shame & Fear***. You and I both know what these age-old emotions can do to us. They increase our propensity to sin, cause us to hurt, to feel embarrassed, and can leave us feeling bankrupt, robbing us of any peace. And the truth is, *we want* freedom from these feelings, don't we?

If you're someone who believes in Jesus, these emotions are often the culprits that make you and I feel unsure of our salvation in Jesus, unsure of God's love for us, and at times these 3 emotions make it really difficult to trust and live in relationship with Jesus.

FRENEMY

EPISODE 1 | GUILT

BIG IDEA

Whether we feel convicted by the Holy Spirit, or condemned by the enemy, guilt is often a natural human response to the mistakes in our life. Guilt thrives on pointing out our failures, reminding us of our faults, and causing us to give up. Guilt causes you and I to second guess who we are in Jesus and doubt the forgiveness that He freely offers, while forcing us to believe that we are not good enough. So how do we get out of this unhealthy cycle of guilt? How do we begin to see Guilt as something that can help us instead of throwing us into a world of doubt and pain? What would it look like if we brought our guilt to Jesus? Because the longer that we hide our sins from God, the longer we will remain living with guilt.

KEY TERMS & SCRIPTURE

Passages to Read or Reference:

John 8:6-11 // John 14-16 // Hebrews 13:15
Romans 3:20 // Romans 3:23-24 // Romans 7:12-13

Romans 8:33-34: Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.

Hebrews 10:22-24: let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds,

Key Quotes:

“When we come to Jesus with our guilt, His first response to you and I is always out of a place of compassion and His forgiving love - To free you of your sin, the very mistakes that brought upon your guilt”.

“With the help of the Holy Spirit, this process of guilt being our Frenemy is called conviction.”

SUPPORTING QUESTIONS

- **What are some other examples you have seen or have experienced that would describe the concept of frenemy?**
 - How would you define frenemy to someone?
 - How can guilt be our frenemy?
- **How have you seen guilt impact your relationship with Jesus, with others, and with yourself?**
 - How has guilt pushed you away from others?
 - How has guilt pushed you away from God?
 - How has guilt brought you closer to others?
 - How has guilt brought you closer to God?
 - How might the enemy use guilt to pull us further from Jesus?
- **Has there been a time here you've experience God using your guilt to guide you towards a healthy realization?**
 - How can God use guilt, which is intended to harm us, and actually use it for His good?
 - How does guilt ultimately lead to redemption?

DISCUSS

- **Why do we feel guilty?**
- **Is guilt always a bad thing? Why or why not?**
- **Do you think that guilt is conviction from the Holy Spirit or condemnation from Satan?**
- **Do you believe that God's grace is enough to take away the guilt that you feel? Why or why not?**
- **What can happen if we leave our guilt unchecked by God?**
- **What can you do about the guilt that you are feeling?**
- **What does it look like to bring your guilt to God? How do you think He may respond?**

NEXT STEPS

Imagine Jesus speaking to you like the condemned woman – “neither do I condemn you...” What do these words mean to you? How do you want to respond? It's appropriate to pray words of thanksgiving for forgiveness as we declare His promise. Be confident in His promises. Take a moment to thank Jesus for His grace and seek forgiveness. Allow your guilt to be a tool to help you better walk with Jesus.

FRENEMY

EPISODE 2 | SHAME

BIG IDEA

Shame enjoys adding salt to the wounds that guilt has created. Shame's kind of like that little brother that adds insult to injury – whispering to you and I the possibility of humiliation and embarrassment if you tell anyone about your sin. Shame is always inviting you to play its favorite game. It's a game you and I are very familiar with, except, instead of calling the game Hide n Seek; ***Shame would call it Hide and never be found.***

And you and I weren't created by God to be people who hide or avoid dealing with our sin, even if we might be embarrassed by it. God has created for you a safe place, a relationship with Jesus to lift and relieve the weight of shame... because you weren't meant to carry it.

KEY TERMS & SCRIPTURE

Passages to Read:

Proverbs 28:13 // Jeremiah 8:11-13, 16:17 // Luke 8:17

Colossians 3:1-10

Genesis 1-3 ***the first game of hide and seek***

Genesis 3:8-9: “Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, “Where are you?””

1 John 1:6-7: “God is light; in Him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with Him and yet walk in darkness [hiding] we lie and do not live out the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another and the blood of Jesus, His son, purifies us from all sin.”

Luke 8:42-48: ...As Jesus was on his way, the crowds almost crushed him. And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years * [she had spent all she had on doctors], but no one could heal her. She came up behind [Jesus] and touched the edge of his cloak, and immediately her bleeding stopped. ‘Who touched me?’ Jesus asked. When they all denied it, Peter said, ‘Master, the people are crowding and pressing against you. But Jesus said, ‘Someone touched me; I know that power has gone out from me. Then the woman, seeing that she could not go unnoticed [unfound], came trembling and fell at his feet. In the presence of all the people, she told why she had touched him and how she had instantly been healed. Then [Jesus] said to her, ‘Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace.’”

SUPPORTING QUESTIONS

- **When playing the game of hide n seek, what makes a great hiding spot and where were your best hiding spots?**
 - Got any incredible hide n seek stories to share?
 - What's the thrill of the game hide n seek all about anyway?
- **Where do you think people often hide themselves when encountering deep shame or embarrassment? Why do you think we have a hard time wanting to be found by God?**
 - Imagine you're Adam or Eve and you've just eaten the fruit? How do you think you'd have reacted? Why do you think they hid?
 - Why does shame tell us to hide? What sorts of things do we hide behind?
- **Is there any shame you still have today? Take the next moment in silence to reach out and share with Jesus the things that have caused you deep pain. After, ask for His free gift of forgiveness and peace.**

DISCUSS

- **Why do we feel shame?**
- **How have you witnessed shame's impact on those around you and the world? What messages, other than HIDE, does shame send?**
- **How has shame influenced you and your story?**
- **Where are you currently hiding? Who or what are you hiding behind?**
- **What does it mean for us to hide in Jesus? How can we do this? (Colossians 3:1-10)**
- **What relief comes with being found? Have you ever been found by God amidst shame, how did it feel?**

NEXT STEPS

Share with someone what you prayed about during the final reflection time. Sharing speaks authority of the lie of shame that tells you to hide.

Next time you feel shame and immediately want to hide, stop! Remember that God wants you to be found, forgiven, and hidden in Him.

FRENEMY

EPISODE 3 | FEAR

BIG IDEA

Fears game is to intimidate you. It's this intimidation that causes us to feel unable to move, making us feel less confident and unsure of the outcomes that may or may not happen in certain areas of our lives. Fear creates its best intimidation by whispering the **'What if'** scenarios in your mind. In order to create mistrust and a lack of confidence in God, so that you lose the battle before it even begins.

God intends to use our fear, to exercise our faith and confidence to trust in Him more. There is no quicker way that I can think of, to build confident trust in someone, until you witness them show up in the scary moments of your life.

KEY TERMS & SCRIPTURE

Matthew 14:27-33: “But Jesus immediately said to them: ‘Take courage! It is I. Don’t be afraid.’ ‘Lord, if it's you,’ Peter replied, ‘tell me to come to you on the water.’ ‘Come,’ He said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. But when [Peter] saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, ‘Lord, save me!’ Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. ‘You of little faith,’ He said. ‘Why did you doubt?’

What fear can create for us, is an opportunity to step into an actual experience with Jesus. Rather than just hearing about what He can do. Fear can either grow our faith, or fear will grow our doubts by using the what if's of our past, using past guilt and shame to keep us distant from Jesus.

Daniel 3:15-18: “...if you do not worship [the statue], you will be thrown immediately into a blazing furnace. Then what god will be able to rescue you from my hand? Shadrach, Meshack and Abednego replied to him, ‘King Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to deliver us from it, and he will deliver us from your majesty’s hand. But even if [God] does not [save us], we want you to know, Your majesty, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up.”

Our ‘even ifs’ is a posture of trust that allows you and I to walk with Jesus and be surprised by the unexpected experiences with Him.

SUPPORTING QUESTIONS

- **How have you experienced the “what if” question that brings fear into your life?**
 - Have you ever asked or thought “what if?”? Share.
 - What types of scenarios invite this question, “what if” ?
 - Are you a worst case scenario thinker? Or more of an optimist?
- **Partner up with someone beside you and practice with each other a trust fall. When do you find it most difficult to trust God through fearful moments?**
 - How’d you feel when you read the words “trust fall” on the screen?
 - How’d you feel doing the trust fall? Where does the root of your feelings come from?
 - Do you find it difficult to trust God when you’re afraid? Why or why not?
- **How have you experienced your faith grow through moments of fear? Where do you think God is asking you to trust Him?**
 - As you reflect on your life, can you think of a time fear brought you closer to God or strengthened your faith? Share.
 - Where do you struggle to trust God? What areas of your life are harder to hand over control?

DISCUSS

- **Read Matthew 14:27-33.**
 - **How would you feel if you were the disciples?**
 - **How would you feel seeing a figure walking towards you?**
 - **Would you accept Jesus’ invitation to step out of the boat?**
 - **What do we learn about Jesus from this story?**
 - **What storm in your life are you currently caught in that is causing you fear? What could your next step of faith be closer to Jesus?**
-

NEXT STEPS

Take time to pray together as a group over areas where fear is reigning – in our world, your nation, your town/city, and your school or homes. Pray for any specific fears anyone in your group brought forward. Declare, as Jesus does: “Do not be afraid” over them!