



Course 7, Session 6 Student Notes: Freemium, Give Real Value Before You Ask

Give a Genuine Taste, and Let the Goodness Do the Work

Big Idea: Giving genuine value freely builds trust and opens the door to a lasting paid relationship. The ultimate model for this is grace itself, come and taste before you buy.

How to use these notes. These are yours to study on your own, before or after the session. Read each section slowly. Under every principle there is a **Notes** space to write what stands out to you, and a **Reflect** question to answer honestly in writing. Keep your Bible nearby. Take about 30 minutes, and end in prayer. Bring your notes and questions to the group. This is the final session of Course 7, so also come ready to name the one biggest thing this whole course changed in how you see and serve the people God has given you.

Open in Prayer

Before you begin, pray this simple prayer, or your own: "Father, You are the God who gives first, who lets me taste Your goodness freely before I could ever earn it. Teach me to be generous the way You are generous, to give real value with open hands, and to trust that genuine goodness draws people better than any pressure ever could. Amen."

The Scripture for This Session

Read these slowly, out loud if you can:

- **Isaiah 55:1**, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price."
- **Psalms 34:8**, "O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him."

Reflect: When you hear the words "give your best work away for free," what fear rises up in you, and where does that fear come from?

The Big Picture

Picture a farmers market on a Saturday morning. At one stall a vendor holds out a tray of sliced peaches to everyone who walks by, saying, "Here, taste one." At the next stall the peaches sit behind a rope, under a sign that reads: buy first, taste later. Be honest, which vendor would you trust, and which one would you buy from? We all know the answer. The one who lets us taste is the one with nothing to hide, because his peaches are actually good, and once we taste, we want the whole basket.

Tonight we learn the oldest and most generous way to open a business relationship: give a real taste first. In the business world it has a name, freemium, or more broadly product led growth. And here is the wonder we will discover, its author is not a modern marketer. It is God Himself, who stands in the street of Isaiah 55 crying out to thirsty people with empty pockets, come, and taste My very best before you ever pay. Over the last five sessions we learned why recurring revenue matters, we learned the Bowtie, onboarding, expansion, and how to fight churn by keeping covenant. Now we go all the way back to the front door of the whole relationship, the open invitation that starts everything, and we find that grace got there first.

Principle 1: Freemium Means You Give a Real Taste First, and Let the Value Convince.

Here is the model, and it is simple. Instead of asking a stranger to trust you and pay before they have experienced anything, you give them a real, genuinely valuable taste for free. A free tier, a free trial, a free tool, a free resource, a free first session. You let them use it, benefit from it, feel the value in their own hands. And then, having actually tasted that your work is good, they choose to step into the paid relationship, because they already know it is worth it.

Notice what has happened. You are not persuading a skeptic with clever words, you are letting a satisfied person decide for themselves. The value does the convincing. That is a fundamentally more honest way to sell, and it works precisely because it is honest. For a Christian business owner this should feel like relief, because it means you never have to pressure, trick, or oversell. You simply give something genuinely good, let people experience it, and trust that a real taste of real value is the most persuasive thing in the world.

Reflect: What genuinely valuable thing could you let a brand new person taste for free, so they experience your value before they ever pay?

Notes:

Principle 2: The Free Taste Must Be Genuinely Good, Not a Crippled Tease.

This is where most people ruin it, so hear it carefully. The free taste must be genuinely valuable. It cannot be a crippled tease. There is a cynical version of this that gives you a free sample so useless, so deliberately frustrating, that its only purpose is to annoy you into paying. That is not generosity, it is bait, and people feel the manipulation even when they cannot name it.

A real taste is like the peach the vendor hands you, a true piece of the actual good thing. Your free offer should solve a real problem, teach a real skill, or deliver a real win, all by itself, with no strings attached. Here is the test that cuts through everything: if someone could take your free thing, never pay you a dime, and still be genuinely helped, then you have built honest generosity. And here is the surprise most owners miss, that honest generosity is exactly what earns trust, and trust is what opens the lasting, paying relationship. The tease closes doors. The real gift opens them.

Reflect: Is the free thing you already give away a genuine taste, or is it secretly a tease designed to frustrate people into paying? Be honest.

Notes:

Principle 3: Value Before Payment Is the Pattern of Grace.

Now let us lift this up to where it belongs, because this is not first a business tactic, it is the pattern of grace. Think about how God draws people to Himself. He does not stand at a distance and say, prove yourself, pay first, earn your way in, and then maybe I will show you My goodness. He does the exact opposite. In Isaiah 55 He cries out to people who have no money at all, come, buy without money and without price, come and eat, come and be satisfied. He gives first. He lets people taste. Psalm 34:8 says it in four words, taste and see that the Lord is good.

God's entire way of drawing us is to let us experience His genuine goodness freely, and to let that experience do the work of drawing our hearts. Grace means the gift comes before we could ever pay. That is the deepest logic behind everything in this session, and it means that when you give real value freely, you are not just running a smart model, you are imitating the generosity of God. The fear that says giving away your best will leave you empty is real, but it is not the truth, because the God we serve gave His very best to people who could never pay, and He was not diminished. He was glorified, and His generosity drew a world to Himself.

Reflect: Where in your own life are you still trying to earn what God is holding out to you freely? How might that change the way you give to others?

Notes:

Principle 4: Free Is a Doorway, Not the Destination.

Here is the last thing, so you do not swing too far. Free is a doorway, not the destination. God's free invitation in Isaiah 55 is real and it is free, but read on and you find it is an invitation into a lasting covenant relationship,

not a one time handout and goodbye. Come unto me, hear, and your soul shall live, He says, and He makes an everlasting covenant. The free taste is meant to open a door, not to become the whole house.

So give generously and give genuinely, but remember you are opening a relationship, not just running a giveaway. This keeps free from becoming foolish. A genuine free on ramp is a defined taste, not the entire house handed away endlessly. Generosity and stewardship are partners, not enemies. The lasting paid covenant, the ongoing relationship where you serve and are supported in return, is the destination the free door leads to. Give the real taste, let the goodness draw them, and then walk with them into the lasting relationship that funds the mission. That is freemium run through the filter of grace, generous, honest, and ordered toward covenant.

Reflect: Where is the line, for you, between honest generosity that opens a door and giving away so much that you cannot sustain the mission?

Notes:

The Story: Come, Buy Without Money (Isaiah 55:1)

Read the passage slowly. “Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.” Hear how strange and beautiful this invitation is. It is God Himself, standing like a vendor in the marketplace, calling out to the whole crowd, and His offer breaks every ordinary rule of commerce. Come and buy, He says, but without money, without price.

Notice three things. First, notice who God calls. He calls the thirsty, and He calls those who have no money. He does not put His goodness behind a paywall that only the qualified can cross. He goes straight to the ones with empty hands and deep need. That is the heart of an honest free on ramp: you do not hold your best value back for the people who have already proven they will pay, you open a genuine taste to the thirsty first. Second, notice that the invitation is lavish, not crippled. God offers wine and milk, the good stuff, the rich fare, not thin water and stale crusts. That is the exact standard for your free offer, give something genuinely good, something that would truly satisfy even if the person never paid you a cent. Third, notice where the invitation leads. The free water opens into an everlasting covenant. God gives freely, and the free gift opens the door to a lasting bond. Free is the doorway. Covenant is the house. God shows us both in a single invitation.

A modern echo makes it concrete. Spotify built one of the largest subscription businesses in the world on this exact model, a genuinely useful free tier that lets anyone stream real music at no cost, alongside a paid Premium tier that removes ads and adds features. It works because the free tier is not a crippled tease, it is genuinely valuable, and that real experience of value is what draws a large share of free listeners to eventually pay. Strip away the technology and what remains is Isaiah 55: give a genuine taste of something good with no money required, let the goodness do the convincing, and let that honest experience open the door to a lasting relationship. You do not need Spotify’s scale to live this. A genuinely helpful free resource, tool, or first session does the very same work.

Reflect: God opened His lavish best to people who had proven nothing. Where are you holding your best value back until people prove they will pay, and what would it look like to open a genuine taste to the thirsty first?

Notes:

Put It Into Practice

1. Name your free on ramp. Write down one specific, genuinely valuable free thing you could give away, a free resource, tool, trial, sample, guide, or first session, that lets a brand new person actually experience your value. Be concrete. Not a vague idea of “being helpful,” but one real deliverable a stranger could receive this week.

2. The honesty test. Answer this hard question in writing: if someone took this free thing, never paid me a cent, and walked away, would they still be genuinely helped? If the honest answer is no, it is a tease. Revise it until the answer is yes. A real taste helps even the person who never buys.

3. Name the doorway. Write the lasting, paying relationship this free on ramp naturally opens a door into. Free is the doorway, not the destination, so name the ongoing service the person could step into once they have tasted and come to trust you.

4. This week's assignment. Give your free on ramp to five specific people this week, with no strings and no pressure. Do not attach a sales pitch, do not make them earn it, simply hand over the genuine taste the way the vendor holds out the peach, and pay attention to what happens. Notice who comes back, who asks for more, who begins to trust you because you gave first. Then write one sentence about what you observed.

The five people I will give this to:

What I observed:

Go Deeper (Optional)

- **Read:** *Freemium* by Dave Boyce (Winning by Design). Boyce has spent his career studying product led growth, and his central lesson lines up almost exactly with this session, freemium only works when the free offering delivers real, standalone value, and it collapses the moment the free tier becomes a cynical, crippled tease.
 - **Listen:** *Lenny's Podcast*, the episodes on product led growth.
 - **Study:** Isaiah 55:1 to 3; Psalm 34:8; Matthew 10:8 (freely ye have received, freely give); Romans 5:8 (God's love shown before we could earn it).
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Close in Prayer

"Father, thank You for the generosity that is the very heart of who You are, the God who stood in the street and called the thirsty and the broke to come and taste Your best without money and without price. Thank You that You gave first, that You let me taste that You are good before I could ever earn it. Take the fear that makes me clutch and withhold, and replace it with the confident open handedness of someone who knows his Provider. Let my free gifts be real and lavish, let them open doors into lasting relationships, and let my business become a small echo of Your invitation to come and taste and see that You are good. In Jesus' name, Amen."

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Isaiah 55:1*