**The Gospel of John:**

**You will know the Truth**

**and the Truth will set you Free**

*John 8:31-36*

**Context**

People have always sought to know the truth; they want to know what is right and wrong and to understand life’s purpose. In most cases, the pursuit has proven to be elusive. People will come to their own truths and functionally believe whatever they determine to be true. As such, we absolutely need an eternal outside source to give us THE truth. Without it, we will forever get it wrong. Sinners want to do evil and feel no guilt, so the lack of absolutes accommodates the desperately wicked human heart (**Jeremiah 17:9**).[[1]](#footnote-1)

In our study, we’ve seen that most people were hostile to the message of Jesus. There were some however, that “believed in Him” (John 7:31, et al). This belief was a first step toward genuine saving faith. These verses today help point them (and us) in the right direction—faith that would set them free from sin, death, Satan, and ultimately hell. How does one rightly understand the truth and the freedom that Christ offers?

And, as true followers of Christ, we are to:

* Worship God in truth (**Jn 4:23-24**)
* Commit to truth (**Pro 23:23**)
* Obey the truth (**1 Pet 1:22**)
* Love the truth (**2 The 2:10**)
* Speak the truth in love (**Eph 4:15**)
* Walk in the truth (**Ps 26:3; 2 Jn 4:3**)
* Be the pillar and support of the truth (**1 Tim 3:15**)
* Guard and treasure the truth (**1 Tim 6:20; 2 Tim 1:14**)

**John 8:31-36**—*So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, “If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine;****32****and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.”****33****They answered Him, “We are Abraham’s descendants and have never yet been enslaved to anyone; how is it that You say, ‘You will become free’?”* ***34****Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin.****35****The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son does remain forever.****36****So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.*

3 distinctives of freedom

1. **The direction to true freedom, vv31-32**

**John 8:31-32***—So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, “If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine;****32****and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.”*

1. Believing in Christ  
   1. The starting point
   2. But not all faith is saving faith
   3. Some Jews here would be identified as slaves of sin (**v34**)
   4. Children of the devil (**vv 38, 41, 44**)

**John 2:23-25**—*Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name, observing His signs which He was doing.****24****But Jesus, on His part, was not entrusting Himself to them, for He knew all men,****25****and because He did not need anyone to testify concerning man, for He Himself knew what was in man.*

**John 6:66**—*As a result of this many of His disciples withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore.*

**2 Corinthians 13:5**—*Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you—unless indeed you fail the test?*

* 1. Involves **knowledge, assent** and **trust** (Latin: notitia, assensus, fiducia)  
       
     **Hebrews 11:1-3**—*Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for* [assent], *the conviction of things not seen* [trust]. ***2****For by it the men of old gained approval.* ***3****By faith we understand* [knowledge] *that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible.* [additions mine]

1. Continue in His word  
     
   **Matthew 12:50**—*For whoever does the will of My Father who is in heaven, he is My brother and sister and mother.”*

**John 14:15**—*If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.*

**John 14:21, 23, 24**—*He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him.” …Jesus answered and said to him, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him.****24****He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father’s who sent Me.*

**John 15:10**—*If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love.*

**1 John 5:3**—*For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.*   
  
**Disciples** (**mathétés**)—student, learner, pupil, one who adheres to the teaching of a spiritual leader

1. You will know the truth  
   1. The truth is found in Jesus  
        
      **John 1:17**—*For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ.*

**John 14:6**—*Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.*

**Ephesians 4:21b**—…*just as truth is in Jesus*

* 1. The truth is found in Scripture  
       
     **John 17:17**—*Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.*

**Ps 119:142**—*Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, And Your law is truth.*

**2 Timothy 3:16-17**—*All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;****17****so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.*

* 1. The truth is taught by the Holy Spirit

**John 14:17**—that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you.

**John 15:26**—*When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me*

**1 John 5:6**—*This is the One who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ; not with the water only, but with the water and with the blood. It is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth.*

1. The truth will make you free

* Free from the **bondage of deception** (Jn 17:15)
* Free from **lies of the evil one** (2 Cor 4:4; I Jn 5:18)
* Free from **condemnation** (Rom 8:1)
* Free from **judgment** (Jn 3:18; 5:24)
* Free from **spiritual ignorance** (Jn 8:12)
* Free from **sin** (v34; Rom 6:18, 22)
* Free from **spiritual death** (Jn 8:51)

1. **The deception of false freedom, vv33-34**

**John 8:33-34***—They answered Him, “We are Abraham’s descendants and have never yet been enslaved to anyone; how is it that You say, ‘You will become free’?”* ***34****Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin.*

1. We Abraham’s descendants and never been enslaved  
   1. Revisionist history? They have been enslaved to Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Syria, and Rome.
   2. They must have been referring to spiritual bondage as “sons of Abraham”  
        
      **Romans 2:28-29**—*For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh.****29****But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God.*
2. Those committed to sin are slaves of sin  
   1. *Truly, truly* (**amén, amén**)—said as an indication of the importance of understanding
   2. *Commits*—as a life principle, pattern of living, not simply an individual act
   3. *Slave*—totally under the control of another and unable to free themselves

**2 Peter 2:19**—*promising them freedom while they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by what a man is overcome, by this he is enslaved.*

**Titus 3:3**—*For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another.* 

1. **The guarantee of genuine freedom, vv35-36**

**John 8:35-36***—The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son does remain forever.****36****So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.*

1. The slave doesn’t remain  
     
   **Matthew 8:11-12**—*I say to you that many will come from east and west, and recline at the table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven;****12****but the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”*
2. The son does remain

**1 John 3:1-2**—*See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.****2****Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.*

1. The Son makes you free indeed  
     
   **Hebrews 3:6**—*but Christ was faithful as a Son over His house—whose house we are, if we hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope firm until the end.*

**Romans 8:2**—*For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death.*

1. Adoption

**John 1:12**—*But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name*

**Romans 8:15**—*For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, “Abba! Father!”*

**Galatians 4:5**—*so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.* 

**Ephesians 1:5**—*He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will*

1. Taking us from slavery to sonship

**Romans 8:17**—*and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him.*

1. The MacArthur NT Commentary, John MacArthur, John 1-11, p. 352. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)