

## FREEDOM

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John 8:31-38

1. When Jesus spoke these words, He and everyone listening to Him, were under the thumb of the Roman Empire.
2. Rome allowed the Jews a level of self-government, but they were not a free people.
3. Even today every follower of Jesus Christ lives under some form of human government that, to some degree, controls certain aspect of our lives.
4. Yet, every genuine follower of Jesus Christ enjoys a form of freedom this world cannot offer.
5. Jesus was speaking of that freedom when He said, "So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed." John 8:36
6. John 8:31-32 contains one of the six definitive statements Jesus made related to being a true disciple.

So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in (abide in) My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; 32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."

7. The others are listed here.
  - a. Luke 14:26 declares that a true disciple will love Jesus supremely.  
"If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple."
  - b. Luke 14:27 declares that a true disciple will follow Christ faithfully.  
"Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple."
  - c. Luke 14:33 declares that a true disciple will trust Christ totally.  
"So then, none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions."
  - d. John 13:34-35 declares that a true disciples will love His brothers and sisters sacrificially.  
"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. 35 "By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

John 15:8 declares that a true disciple will demonstrate true discipleship.

"My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples."

8. The passage we are looking at today is part of a longer passage extending from John 8:31 to John 8:59
  9. According to verse 30, based on Jesus teaching up to this point, many came to believe in Him to some degree.
  10. What we sometimes miss is the fact that their identification with Jesus was only superficial, and that as He continued to teach about what really constituted discipleship, and what their spiritual condition actually was, they became angry to the point of picking up stones to throw at Him. 59
  11. Jesus made it clear that many will identify with Him for reasons other than true conversion.
- NOTE: See John 6:2, 26, 66

### **I. True disciples are, "free indeed." (There is a difference between thinking we are free and being free indeed).**

A. A true disciple's profession of faith is based on a genuine encounter with the Lord Jesus Christ.

- B. The Holy Spirit has convicted them of sin, righteousness, and judgment. John 16:7-11  
 "But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. 8 "And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment; 9 concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me; 10 and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father and you no longer see Me; 11 and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged."
- C. Jesus has, "granted them repentance." Acts 5:29-32  
 But Peter and the apostles answered (the Jewish Council), "We must obey God rather than men. 30 "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you had put to death by hanging Him on a cross. 31 **"He is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a Prince and a Savior, to grant repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.** 32 "And we are witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him."
- D. They have genuinely repented and embraced the Gospel as Jesus commanded. Mark 1:14-15  
 Now after John had been taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, 15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."
- E. They are recipients of God's mercy and grace. Ephesians 2:8-9  
 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; 9 not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.
- F. What God did for Paul and the Colossians He has done for them. Colossians 1:13-14  
 For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

## II. True disciples are no longer the slaves of sin.

- A. Jesus' so-called disciples were offended by His comments recorded in verses 31-32.
- B. They responded by declaring that they had never been enslaved to anyone.  
 (Referring to the fact that even though they had been physically in bondage from time to time, they had never been subdued to the degree that they had lost their culture, religion and identity.)
- C. Jesus pointed out that those who commit (continue in) sin are the slaves of sin.
- D. In Romans 6 Paul pointed out that apart from Christ all are slaves to and slaves of sin.
- E. In verse 37, 42-44 Jesus accused His listeners of wanting to kill Him because they were of their father the devil and were acting accordingly.
- F. It is important for us to understand that in Jesus Christ we are no longer the slaves of sin.  
 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, 13 and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. 14 For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace. 15 What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? May it never be! 16 Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness? 17 But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, 18 and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. Romans 6:12-18

### **III. True disciples abide in the Word and live lives that are characterized by a growing understanding of our freedom in Christ.**

- A. Christianity is more than an outward identification with Christ characterized by emotionalism and admiration.
- B. True Christianity will be characterized by constant abiding in Christ and His Word.
- C. This abiding will result in a growing knowledge of the truth leading to freedom, maturity, and victory in and through Christ.
- D. As we abide in the Word we grow in faith, and as we grow in faith we are enabled by God's grace to apply and appropriate God's Word.
- E. Paul referred to this process in Ephesians 4:11-16.

And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. 14 As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; 15 but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

### **APPLICATION**

1. Our freedom in Christ was purchased at great cost. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20  
Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? 20 For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.
2. We are to exercise our freedom responsibly and for the glory of God.
  - a. Galatians 5:13  
For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.
  - b. 1 Peter 2:16-17  
Act as free men, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil, but use it as bondslaves of God. 17 Honor all people, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king.
3. May God help us to experience what it means to be free indeed.