

TRUTH AND FREEDOM

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John 8:31 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, **If ye continue in my word, *then* are ye my disciples indeed;**

John 8:32 **And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.**

John 8:33 They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?

John 8:34 Jesus answered them, **Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.**

John 8:35 **And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: *but* the Son abideth ever.**

John 8:36 **If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.**

Freedom is a prized possession among humans. It seems to almost be an instinctive aspiration of human beings to find and live in a place where freedom can be real.

An antithesis to this is the fact that among men there are always some who can't rest if the people have broad freedoms. They scheme and dream of ways to get control of a populace which enjoys too much self-rule, too much freedom of choice, too much opportunity for self-fulfillment and self-expression. Such men are not found just in our secular governments or sitting on thrones of monarchies, or seated in a dictator's seat, but historically some who would call themselves religious leaders have, in the past, feared for the people to have too many freedoms. They imagined the spiritual masses running amok and getting into all kinds of religious trouble if not held in check by a paternal iron hand which dictated how they should practice religion, how they should live and what they should do. And there was a seed of truth in their fears because religious people who are simply religious are noted for lapses in religious practices. The children of Israel were famous for wandering off into all kinds of trouble when they were not guarded and were found creating idols and worshiping them, fraternizing with heathens, railing against spiritual leaders, lusting after the things of the world, etc. during such times. By such things they brought themselves more problems and a kind of bondage they would never have had if they had steered clear of such things. It was just this kind of behavior that led to their enslavement by other nations for much of their ancient history that we read about.

A lot of people on earth today, if Jesus made the same statements to them, would

answer very similarly to these Jews..."we were never under bondage..."

But, bondage seems to be the tendency of human societies, while freedom appears to be the desiderata, the aspiration and longing of human spirits, and the pride of those who possess it. To this condition, the Savior speaks in our text. To this condition I want to speak.

(Free the Slaves (www.freetheslaves.net) is a modern anti-slavery organization located in Washington D.C. They focus on eradicating slavery and estimate that there are 40 million people enslaved worldwide, generating \$150 billion each year in illicit profits for traffickers..)

If, as it seems, human beings long for personal freedom, it follows that this human tendency and yearning should lead men to be very ready to recognize a route to freedom when it is revealed to them. But, in reality, there is a strange perversity in men that rejects the absolute route to freedom. So, while freedom is greatly desired, we have to confess that men want freedom on their own terms and they cannot recognize or appreciate absolute freedom when it is put before them. For the most part, human nature will not seek freedom through a spiritual process. As with all things spiritual, they will not and cannot receive it. Nevertheless, the offer from God which promises freedom indeed is genuine.

I. This could be a message to nations (there are lots of bible truths which if nations KNOW them and walk in them, they will be free)

❖ Proverbs 14:34 Righteousness exalteth a **nation**: but sin *is* a reproach to any people. *{to any...: Heb. to nations}*

❖ **JEREMIAH 5:26-29** (The Lord talks about how he will execute judgment on a nation based on the wickedness and evil activities of men in that nation) For among my people are found wicked *men*: they lay wait, as he that setteth snares; **they set a trap, they catch men.** *{they lay...: or, they pry as fowlers lie in wait. 27* As a cage is full of birds, so *are* their houses full of deceit: therefore they are become great, and waxen rich. *{cage: or, coop 28* They are waxen fat, they shine: yea, they overpass the deeds of the wicked: they judge not the cause, the cause of the fatherless, yet they prosper; and **the right of the needy do they not judge. 29** Shall I not **visit for these things**? saith the LORD: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?

❖ **JEREMIAH 18:7-10** *At what* instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy *it 8* If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the

evil that I thought to do unto them. **9** And *at what* instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant *it*; **10** If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them.

II. This could be a message to lost people:

- ❖ Hearing the truth leads men to Christ in the first place:
- ❖ If you are lost it is a TRUTH that you are under bondage...not free
 - **HEBREWS 5: 14** Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;
15 And deliver them who through fear of death were **all their lifetime subject to bondage**.
 - **ROMANS 6:20:** For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.
 - **Romans 6:16** Know ye not, that to **whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are** to whom ye obey; **whether of sin unto death**, or of obedience unto righteousness?
 - (Paul is writing to Galatian believers about the difference between then and now...when they were lost vs. after they were saved) **GAL 4: 3** Even so we, when we were children, were **in bondage under the elements of the world:**

III. This IS a message to believers of Christ: V.31: Then Jesus said to those Jews which believed on Him...

- ❖ It has **conditional promise: VV.31-32:** “**If ye continue in my word, *then* are ye my disciples indeed; 32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.**”
 - (There are over 500 “ifs” in the new testament, more than 1400 in the entire Bible)...many of them set conditions for God’s people or for mankind in general). Notable among these are:
 - **Genesis 4:7** If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door....”
 - **2 Chronicles 7:14** If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.
 - **Isiah 1:19** If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land:

- **Matthew 5:13** Ye are the salt of the earth: but **if** the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.
- **Matthew 6:14-15** For **if** ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: **15** But **if** ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.
- ❖ So, here in our text, the **condition** set (in our subject text) is **clear**: V.31: **IF ye continue** in my word (menw - *men'-o* -a root word; v: AV-abide 61, remain 16, dwell 15, continue 11, tarry 9, endure 3)
 - The **outcome of fulfilling the condition** is clear: “..ye **shall know the truth** and the **truth shall make you free.**”
- ❖ It is safe to say that most, if not all, believers living down here on earth are variably and intermittently free in the sense that Jesus was referring to here. To support this idea and to settle it in your minds as a sound doctrine, look at:
 - 1) **VV 31, 32 & 34,**
 - 2) (A threat of believers re-entering into a kind of slavery was viewed as possible by the apostle Paul) **GALATIANS 4: 9** But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to **be in bondage?**
 - 3) **ROMANS 7:23-25** But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me **into captivity** to the law of sin which is in my members. **24** O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? {the body...: or, this body of death} **25** I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.
 - 4) **GALATIANS 5:16-17** *This* I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. **17** For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye **cannot do the things that ye would.**

IV. FREEDOM FROM WHAT?

- ❖ (We can't cover all the “whats” that we have the opportunity to be free from through this pathway Jesus has proclaimed. But I want to review a few very significant ones.)
 - Freedom from **FEAR OF DEATH AND ALL OTHER NEEDLESS FEARS**
 - (we have pointed out that all men had to face death of the body, except

saved people who will be standing on earth when Christ returns - **Hebrews 9:27**: And as it is appointed unto men **once to die**, but after this the judgment:)

- **Romans 5:12** - Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so **death passed upon all men**, for that all have sinned:

➤ **This establishes the certainty of death.**

- However knowing the following truth drives away fear: **Romans 6:23**: For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* **eternal life** through Jesus Christ our Lord.

- Look at **2Timothy 1:10** - (Salvation by grace which was planned for us before the world began...) "...is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, **who hath abolished death**, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel:

- (Comment that people are still dying, so what is He talking about? It is that he has abolished eternal death for His people)

➤ **Knowing this empowers us to freedom From Constraint in Our Service to God (humans are subject to self-constraint in their service to God and this kind of conditional service can be an abomination). Notice the inspired testimony of Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist:**

- **Luke 1:67-74** And his (John's) father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying, **68** Blessed *be* the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, **69** And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; **70** As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began: **71** That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; **72** To perform the mercy *promised* to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; **73** The oath which he swore to our father Abraham, **74** **That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear,**

- How should we identify and recognize these enemies?

- A. **Insecurity** is an enemy (because it generates fear). (In that glorious discourse in **Luke 12** about our concerns about necessities and things of life Jesus seems to conclude His encouragement with a large period which in V. 32 reads:)

Luke 12: 32 **Fear not**, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to **give you the kingdom**.

B. **Feeling Victimized** by powerlessness and circumstance is an enemy. The apostle Paul's admonition in **2Timothy 1:7** addresses

this: “For God hath not given us the spirit of **fear**; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.”

C. **Imperfect Love for Christ** is an enemy (because it generates fear): One of the most profound statements in the bible holds the alpha and omega of truth which can make us free from this and every fear: **1John 4:18**: There is no fear (Gr. Fobos = alarm or fright), in love; but **perfect love casteth out fear**: because fear hath torment (Gr. Kolasis = torment as penal infliction or punishment). He that feareth is not made perfect in love.”

▪ Now notice the divinely ordained circle for attaining to that level of love: **I Jn. 2:5** - But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.

▪ Freedom from the **FORCED SERVITUDE** to sin

- In our text (**JN 8:34**) Jesus says “...whosoever committeth sin **is the servant of sin.**”
- **This establishes the servitude**
- This is the state of men who do not have the freedom Jesus describes in our text. They are captive slaves who cannot escape from that bondage without intervention by someone else.
- But it is not true with true disciples of Jesus... knowing the truth can make us free **I Cor. 10:13** : There hath no **temptation taken you** but such as is common to man: but God *is* faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear *it*. (Think about “temptation taken you”).
- We may have often thought that this verse was to be a comfort for us when some temptation suddenly presented itself, we would resist the temptation and flee from it without ever becoming entangled by it. But let’s look at the mechanics of temptation:
 - ◆ James 1:14-15: But every man is **tempted**, when he is **drawn away** of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, **bringeth forth death**. (*yanatov* thanatos *than’-at-os: 1*) the death of the body; 2) in the widest sense, death comprising all the miseries arising from sin
 - ◆ What can make us free from forced servitude is knowing that The Lord has **prepared a way for us to escape the most gripping of**

temptations. When we discover through continuing in His Word that way, we get free from the attempted enslavement.

- ◆ He has further made a way for us to get right when such an experience happens to us: **1 John 1:9** If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
- Freedom from the **INHERENT BLINDNESS TO SPIRITUAL THINGS** which comes with the flesh
 - The blindness described: **1 Corinthians 2:14** But the **natural man receiveth not** the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: **neither can he know *them***, because **they are spiritually discerned**. (This is the “Chicken or the egg first” question answered regarding folks being born again...have you been wondering whether lost people walking around here can receive the Lord Jesus Christ in the state they are in being offspring of Adam?)
 - Just as belief in Christ does not occur for the unregenerate, **other truths are not received** by the natural man, nor can he know them
 - But we can know the doctrine of Christ. We can know what he means by a thing He has said. We can know the interpretation of scripture. **1 Corinthians 2:16** For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But **we have the mind of Christ**.
- Did you know that **you are responsible for your own doctrinal soundness?** (We shy away from words like orthodoxy, doctrine, etc, but that is exactly what Jesus is talking about in our text...”ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free” means by being a true disciple, you will know what is truth and what is falsehood (false doctrine), and you will be freed from the spiritual blindness that comes with the Adamic nature.
- How much do you really know about:
 - The doctrines that the bible sets forth about the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ?
 - The doctrines that the bible sets forth about the Lord’s baptism?
 - of the sovereignty of God?
 - of the eternal counsel and plan of God for mankind...for you?
 - of the security of the believer?
 - Of eternal judgment?

- How long has it been since you have deliberately sat down with the bible and prayer to find an answer to some doctrine that there was controversy about?
- How long has it been since you set down to study to find an answer to something you were right at the point of doing in your life, or something you were already doing, which you had questions about?
- Do you know from your bible knowledge that things you are doing to worship God and to serve God are scriptural?
 - Look At: **John 16:13**: Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.
 - (Read V. 36 of our text: “If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.”)

V. **CONCLUSION:** We have a promise from Christ that we may **find freedom truly**. The path for finding and having it is clear. To be there, we must be disciples indeed. To do that we must continue in His word. His word is truth. The truth is His word. The Spirit is here on earth to guide us into all this truth.

Walking in the Spirit gives us instant access to that truth.