



# THE TRUTH SHALL SET YOU FREE

JOHN 8:31-47

## Icebreaker

This is a question meant to generate discussion among the group. Often, the introduction question can be “lighthearted” and help group members get to know one another.

**What is an idiosyncrasy or habit that you have? Do you think you will ever change it?** (For example, it drives me crazy when someone says “First annual” in describing the first time an event takes place. The word is “Inaugural.” It cannot be an annual event until the second one takes place. No, I will not change, and yes, I will correct people who say this wrong!)

**Why do you think it is hard to break long-held habits?**

## Context

In verse 30 of last week’s lesson, we are told that some people who heard Jesus speaking with the religious leaders believed in Him. Remember, the conversation between Jesus and the religious leaders was confrontational, and the leaders intended to find a way to stop or even harm Jesus through what He said.

The location of this discussion appears to be in the Temple area. While last week’s discussion was mostly directed towards the religious leaders, this week’s lesson appears to be focused on those who just recently believed. It is important to remember, it was most certainly a large crowd gathered around Jesus, so the listeners could have included disciples, Pharisees and other religious leaders, skeptics, and potential disciples.

## Passage

John 8:31-59

<sup>31</sup> So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, <sup>32</sup> and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” <sup>33</sup> They answered him, “We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, ‘You will become free’?”

<sup>34</sup> Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin. <sup>35</sup> The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever.

<sup>36</sup> So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. <sup>37</sup> I know that you are offspring of

Abraham; yet you seek to kill me because my word finds no place in you. <sup>38</sup> I speak of what I have seen with my Father, and you do what you have heard from your father."

<sup>39</sup> They answered him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would be doing the works Abraham did, <sup>40</sup> but now you seek to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. This is not what Abraham did. <sup>41</sup> You are doing the works your father did." They said to him, "We were not born of sexual immorality. We have one Father—even God." <sup>42</sup> Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and I am here. I came not of my own accord, but he sent me. <sup>43</sup> Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to hear my word. <sup>44</sup> You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies. <sup>45</sup> But because I tell the truth, you do not believe me. <sup>46</sup> Which one of you convicts me of sin? If I tell the truth, why do you not believe me? <sup>47</sup> Whoever is of God hears the words of God. The reason why you do not hear them is that you are not of God."

## **Sermon Notes**

### **2 Marks of a True Christian**

1. You learn and live by \_\_\_\_\_.  
*v. 31 - If you abide in my word, (then) you are truly my disciples.*
2. The truth of God's Word \_\_\_\_\_.  
*v. 32 – you will know the truth and the truth will set you free*

### **Understand 'Truth'**

1. There \_\_\_\_\_ truth.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ determines what is truth and what is not.  
*Isaiah 65:16; John 14:6; John 15:13*
3. God declares what is truth in \_\_\_\_\_.  
*Psalms 119:160; John 17:17*

### **Understand 'Know'**

1. Jesus' disciples are the ones who \_\_\_\_\_ the truth.
2. This means they have \_\_\_\_\_ in Him and His Words.

3. By faith (knowing Him as the truth), they are \_\_\_\_\_.  
*set free* = liberate, deliver from  
This is something done to them and for them.

### **Why does anyone need to be set free from sin?**

1. Sin \_\_\_\_\_ you.  
*Romans 3:9-12 – all...are under sin...None is righteous, no, not one;  
no one seeks for God...no one does good, not even one.*
2. Sin \_\_\_\_\_ you.  
*Romans 3:13-17 – in their paths are ruin and misery*
3. Sin \_\_\_\_\_ you.  
*Isaiah 64:6 – all our righteous acts are like filthy rags*
4. Sin will be your \_\_\_\_\_.  
*V. 21 – you will die in your sin; V. 24 – you would die in your sins*

### **What does it mean for Jesus to set you free from sin?**

Free from the \_\_\_\_\_ of sin (justification)  
*Romans 6:23*

Free from the \_\_\_\_\_ of sin (sanctification)  
*Romans 6:14*

Free from the \_\_\_\_\_ of sin (glorification)  
*Revelation 21:4*

### **3 Marks of the devil's disciples**

1. They live by their \_\_\_\_\_.  
*v. 44 - your will is to do your father's desires  
Galatians 5:19-24*

*The works of the flesh are evident:*

*sexual immortality  
impurity, sensuality  
idolatry  
sorcery*

*The fruit of the Spirit is:*

*love  
joy  
peace  
patience*



*"Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline, absolution without personal confession. Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate." Dietrich Bonhoeffer*

**Based on today's passage and Pastor Jim's message, is the grace Jesus offers "cheap" grace? Why do you think some churches will talk about the benefits of being Christian, but not talk about the cost (or commitment) of being a Christian?**

Read verses 31-33.

The hearers of Jesus' words were offended that He said they would be freed if they knew the truth. They considered themselves free already because they are God's special called people because of God's promises to Abraham.

**Do people intentionally get addicted to a substance, trapped in a toxic relationship, or enslaved to a harmful sin? If you have been in that situation with a family member or friend, how do they react when you pointed out the danger they are in? Why? What are some ways you can help a person see/know the danger they are in due to sin?**

Read verses 34-38.

**Do you think the people hearing Jesus liked being told they were a slave to sin? Why or why not?**

Being unaware of your own sinfulness puts you in danger. We must never forget that we are all sinners, but can be saved by grace through Jesus Christ if we will repent and believe.

1 John 1:8-10

**<sup>8</sup> If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. <sup>9</sup> If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. <sup>10</sup> If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.**

Verses 39-45

**Is there a character trait or physical trait in your family history that you see in yourself or your family today? Describe it.**

**Do you think people believe there is a literal devil (a real person who is the enemy of God) who seeks to cause people harm? Why or why not? Why is it important to know that there really is an Enemy that opposes God?**

## **Next Steps**

One application we must consider is evaluating what we understand it means to be a Christian. Ask yourself, do I really understand that being a Christian is a call to follow Jesus and obey Him, or do I just like the security of thinking my sins are forgiven?

Consider how you share the Gospel with others. Do you let people know there is a call to obedience that comes with the offer of forgiveness in Jesus?

Reflect on the actions you take and the words you speak. Consider these verses and ask whether or not the words you speak reflect the character of Jesus or the character of the devil.

### **Ephesians 5:4**

<sup>4</sup> Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving.

### **Colossians 3:8**

<sup>8</sup> But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth.