

Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

Turn your bibles with me to John 8

We are continuing our verse by verse study through the Gospel of John

And I believe that it is important that John, being inspired by the Holy Spirit, wrote this entire book with one purpose in mind.

And that purpose is that we would believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God and that by believing in Him, we may have life by the power of His name.

And so far in our studies, John has done by recording some of the signs that Jesus did as well as the amazing announcements that He has made.

And the response to these signs and announcements – has been one of great division among them people.

Jesus came to divide

Because the truth brings division

So therefore some people responded by hating Him, by wanting to kill Him, by trying to disparage Him.

And some people responded by believing that Jesus is truly the promised Messiah that the Jews had been expecting for generations.

So in our text this morning – Jesus is going to make another announcement – and this announcement is regarding a topic that we tend to hear about in the world today.

Freedom

Right now, as we speak, the people of Ukraine are fighting for their lives to retain their freedom.

Last week, we had the truckers up in Canada that were protesting because they were seeking freedom from the government mandates.

However, the announcement that Jesus is going to make in our text – it is not about a physical freedom.

It is not about freedom from oppression from a tyrant or freedom from oppression from a law or a mandate.

It is about a freedom that only He could give.

Let's pray...

[Jhn 8:31-59 NKJV] 31 Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed."

In our study last week, Jesus made the announcement that He is the Light of the world.

And He did this as He stood in the woman's courtyard – where they had these 75 foot candelabras that were supposed to commemorate God's presence among the Children of Israel as the wandered the wilderness.

And we saw the response of the religious rulers – they responded by making accusations against Jesus – they said He was only tooting His own horn – they resorted to name calling – asking Him where was His dad.

However, we also saw that not everyone responded the same way – verse 30 says that many of the Jews who heard Jesus spoke believed.

Here in verse 31, Jesus is addressing these Jews.

And Jesus is making the distinction between those who simply believe – (the word that is used here for believe is the word for: to think to be true, to be persuaded of, to place confidence in.) and those who are true followers of Him / those who are His disciples.

They believed, which was good, so Jesus begins instructing them how to truly become His disciples.

He says that the mark of His disciple is one who “abides in His word.”

Now, the word abides means to remain, to continue to be present, to not depart.

So what does it mean to abide in Jesus' word?

Turn with me to John 15 –

Because Jesus gives us clarity on what it means to abide in His word.

[Jhn 15:1-8 NKJV] 1 "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. 2

"Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every [branch] that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. 3 "You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. 4 "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. 5 "I am the vine, you [are] the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. 6 "If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw [them] into the fire, and they are burned. 7 "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. 8 "By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.

So here in John 15, Jesus uses the analogy of a vine to explain to us what it means to abide in Him.

And the first thing we see from the analogy is that abiding in Him means that He is our lifeline.

He is our sustainer

I am pretty sure we have been the giver or the recipient of flowers.

The first day, they look pretty sitting in the vase

But after a few days, what happens to the flowers?

They begin to wilt, they begin to fade, they begin to die out

If we are abiding in Christ and filling our lives with his words, then we will grow and flourish.

But, the spiritual life of anyone not abiding in Christ will quickly dry up like a dead flower that has been cut and thrown out.

Abiding in Christ means that we also walk in obedience.

That means, we will love the things Jesus loves and hate the things Jesus hates.

We will walk in righteousness and flee from sin.

We will begin to act like Jesus, talk like Jesus, love like Jesus, attract the poor and needy like Jesus, extend grace like Jesus, and ultimately become like Jesus.

And to those who abide in Jesus – Jesus says you are my disciple indeed.

The word indeed – means truly – it is the adverb of the word truth

Jesus is truth – therefore, if we abide in Him, we are true disciples of the Truth

32 “And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

There are many higher learning institutions that have verse 32 up on their walls.

They put it up in latin - Veritas vos liberabit (*veritas vas liberbeet*)

Harvard, Yale, Cal Tech in Southern California

They tell the students – we will instruct you with knowledge for the next 4 years – and then the knowledge shall make you free.

It will free your mid to do whatever you want to be and do –

That is not what Jesus is saying here-

Jesus is saying, “When you abide in Me, as a true disciple of Me - you will know the truth that comes from Me, and that will set you free”

You see church,

Freedom doesn't come in knowledge

As a matter of fact, the bible says that knowledge has a way of puffing us up with pride, the more we know.

Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies. 1 Cor 8:1

Knowledge doesn't set us free – it is only the truth in God's word that sets us free.

33 They answered Him, "We are Abraham's descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How [can] You say, 'You will be made free'?"

The multitude / the Jews that are listening to Jesus

They are still thinking in terms of the horizontal – their minds are set on the earthly –

They are thinking that Jesus is talking about being in bondage to a person / like a slave being in chains.

And they make the claim that as descendants of Abraham – they have never been in bondage to anyone?

Is that true?

Of course not –

The Jews here were suffering from selective memory

When we studied Exodus, we saw that they were in bondage in Egypt

In our studies through the book of Judges, we have seen that they were in bondage to a cycle of sin and also in bondage under a few kings of the Canaanites.

And we also know that they fell into bondage to the Assyrians and the Babylonians

And at this point in their history – in their current condition – as they were having this conversation with Jesus, they were in bondage to Rome.

Sure, Rome allowed them to continue to worship in the temple – but we have to remember that they were oppressed during this time – that is why the people were eagerly awaiting for the Messiah that would deliver them from the oppression of Rome.

Remember, the Jews were expecting the Messiah to be a conquering King, they were expecting the Messiah to break the yoke of bondage right then and there.

We also have to remember that they were in bondage to religion.

So, we could even make a case that the Jews knew a LOT about being in bondage.

But again, Jesus isn't talking about slavery or bondage to a human master or a human king; He's talking about a different kind of slavery / a different type of bondage.

34 Jesus answered them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. 35 "And a slave does not abide in the house forever, [but] a son abides forever. 36 "Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.

Each of us is guilty of sin.

We all practice sin.

And we sin because, by nature, we are sinners.

Therefore, we are a slave to sin.

Now, sometimes because of our pride – we can be like the Jews that were in the audience that answered that they have never been in bondage –

We may say -

"I am not a slave to sin"

“I don’t have anger issues”

“I don’t have a bitterness problem, a gossip problem, a worrying problem, a pornography problem, etc”

I am not in bondage to these things - These things don’t control my life -

Illustration

I was remember watching a documentary about World War II and the concentration camps that they set up in Eastern Europe, one of the things that the guards did at many of the concentration camps was that on the front gate they had the words,

Arbeit macht frei – which is the German phrase for Work sets you free

So as the Jews would be led into the concentration camps – they were told the lie that if they worked hard enough, they would be set free – They were led to believe that their best efforts would earn them the right to go back home to their previous life of freedom and happiness.

And we know that this was a total lie – nobody was ever allowed to go free, they were there for one purpose – and that was to die.

The reason I bring this up is because Satan continues to use the same lie in the world today – through religion.

-Our hard work will set us free from the bondage of sin and death

-If I really try hard enough – I can be good

-God will see my effort – and then He will cut me some slack

-I can earn God's favor if I go to church or if I pray hard enough or give a little extra in the tithe box

Arbeit macht frei

Work sets you free

It's all a lie church

The truth is – freedom is found through Jesus and Jesus alone.

The truth is - There **is** only one path to freedom.

The truth is - There **is** only one way of salvation.

The truth is - There **is** only one hope for sinners like you and like me.

Jesus alone is the Truth that sets the captive free

You see, to the believer, one of the gifts that God gives to us is freedom.

Freedom to “not to” live like a slave to sin

Freedom to live a life that walks in obedience –

Freedom to live a life that pleases God

Freedom from condemnation

This is true, true freedom

In Christ, we are no longer slaves to sin and never will be again.

And the reason is that those chains have been broken.

Therefore, we no longer live to satisfy our former sins, rather, as those who abide in Him as true disciples of Jesus, we now live for His glory.

Jesus is making this offer to all of us here this morning.

An offer to not only believe, but to obey and have life and life eternal.

This freedom is ours today

We don't have to walk in bondage anymore.

Truth and freedom comes in Jesus Christ

Real freedom is found in living sin behind

Real freedom is found in not thinking so highly of ourselves

Real freedom comes in repentance

True freedom comes in humility

True freedom comes in pleasing God

Abiding in the Word

Not only receiving His word but acting on it

Church – we can either be bound or we can be free

Even as a true believer, we can be free yet not walk in freedom.

Jesus is looking for disciples.

Let's look at the response from the Jews -

37 "I know that you are Abraham's descendants, but you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you. 38 "I speak what I have seen with My Father, and you do what you have seen with your father."

Jesus gave them the offer –

What He is saying here is this -

“Guys, I know your hearts, I know that you are in bondage, I know that intellectually some of you believe in Me

But some of you don't believe because you are prideful

Some of you think that you have achieved this freedom because of your spiritual heritage

Some of you think that you have achieved this freedom because of your knowledge of the law and the scriptures

Because you keep the law

Because you are God's chosen people

And because you are prideful – you do not believe in Me

Therefore you do not accept My offer of freedom

And as a result – you continue to be a slave to sin

The Jews were proud of the heritage and Jesus says – the reason you don't believe is because there are two Fathers involved.

Jesus has one father and the unbelieving Jews have another father,

39 They answered and said to Him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham.

Jesus had already acknowledged that they were physical descendants of Abraham

But what He is saying here is that they are not spiritual descendants of Abraham.

[Gal 3:7 NKJV] 7 Therefore know that [only] those who are of faith are sons of Abraham.

Their pride was on their genetic link to Abraham –

What Paul says in Galatians 3:7 is that it is not the genetic link that matters – it is the link of faith that mattered.

Remember, Abraham believed God – meaning that he put his trust in Him.

So if they were truly Abraham's children, they would have the same faith that Abraham did.

40 "But now you seek to kill Me, a Man who has told you the truth which I heard from God. Abraham did not do this.

These Jews were claiming to be descendants of Abraham but Jesus points out that they were doing the total opposite of what Abraham would be doing.

So, where they're seeking to kill Jesus, Abraham would have sought to exalt Jesus. Where they're at war with the truth bearer, Abraham would submit to the truth being told by God.

Where Abraham "believed God and it was counted to him as righteousness," they're rejecting the message of God.

Abraham was a man who listened to, walked with, and trusted God... even when nothing made sense.

Remember, God told him –

"Get out of your country,

From your family

And from your father's house,

To a land that I will show you.

God didn't even tell him where he was going – He simply told him go!

Abraham went

Abraham was a man whose faith resided in the promises of God.

Abraham believed God and they rejected God.

41 "You do the deeds of your father." Then they said to Him, "We** were not born of fornication; we have one Father--God."**

Jesus accuses them of having a different father – you are not sons of Abraham

And they responded by taking a jab at Jesus

We were not born out of fornication – unlike someone we know – wink, wink

They're claiming that they belong to the one true God. But, Jesus responds by showing them that their hatred of Him reveals who their father actually is.

And we will see next week that Jesus will take a page out of Jerry Springer and reveal that God is not their father – that their true father is the devil.

Church, I want to end this morning with a reminder

We are all sinners in need of a Savior.

We are enslaved to our sin and on a crash course with death and hell and eternal punishment for our sin by a just, holy, and righteous God.

But God... who is rich in mercy provided a way out for us.

Jesus Christ, God in the flesh, came to earth and lived a perfect life.

He was crucified to pay the penalty of our sin, that we deserved.

And then He rose from the dead, conquering sin and death once and for all.

And because of what Jesus did, God offers us freedom from sin and death!

All we must do is repent of our sins, accept the free gift offered to us, and have an abiding relationship with Him.

Amen

Let's pray...

To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.

Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

We don't walk in bondage – we want to walk in freedom

And most importantly, we need to make sure that we thank God for our freedom

Thank you for freeing me

Thank you for delivering me

Thank you for setting me free – for relieving the burden in my life

[Num 6:24-26 NLT] 24 '

May the LORD bless you and protect you.

May the LORD smile on you and be gracious to you.

May the LORD show you his favor and give you his peace.'

