

# The Gospel of John

## The Truth Will Set You Free

### John 8:26-36

#### INTRODUCTION:

This morning we are continuing with the Gospel of John series. The passage that we will be covering is from John 8:26-36. It is a very, very important portion of Scripture. Because from it will be told how to identify a true faith.

#### All Stand and Read Scripture

##### **John 8:26-36 NASB)**

<sup>26</sup> I have many things to speak and to judge concerning you, but He who sent Me is true; and the things which I heard from Him, these I speak to the world.” <sup>27</sup> They did not realize that He had been speaking to them about the Father. <sup>28</sup> So Jesus said, “When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am *He*, and I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me. <sup>29</sup> And He who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him.” <sup>30</sup> As He spoke these things, many came to believe in Him.

<sup>31</sup> So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, “If you **continue** in My word, *then* you are truly disciples of Mine; <sup>32</sup> **and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.**” <sup>33</sup> 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?’”

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

<sup>36</sup> So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.

Let's bow in a word of prayer.

#### Prayer

I want to first, look at the context that brings us to our passage this morning. Verses 21 - 25 show the dire situation that the Jews were in spiritually. The Old Testament scriptures referred to them as God's chosen people. Therefore they thought they were the representatives for God. They were the people that everyone should listen to and pattern their lives around. They certainly did not feel they were sinners needing salvation. They had made up their own religion based on morality and adhering to their rules for living a Godly life.

But unfortunately, they had wandered far away from the "TRUTH" set forth in scripture. Jesus told them they were self-righteous, worldly, unbelieving, and obstinately ignorant. And because of this condition, they were going to die in their sin.

## **BODY:**

### **I. THE TRUTH FROM HEAVEN.**

#### **John 8:26 (NASB)**

<sup>26</sup> I have many things to speak and to judge concerning you, but He who sent Me is **true**; and the things which I heard from Him, these I speak to the world."

It is due to their **willful ignorance** that Jesus tells them again that God had sent Him to this world to teach mankind the "TRUTH". He is telling them that their religious system is wrong. He's says, "I've been speaking and speaking, and what I've been speaking is the very Word of God."

And to show you how willfully ignorant they were look at verse 27.

#### **John 8:27 (NASB)**

<sup>27</sup> They did not realize that He had been speaking to them about the Father.

Jesus had made it clear that God was His Father. And the Jews **did** understand what He was claiming. They just chose not to believe. Here are a couple of verses that confirm that the Jews knew Jesus claimed God to be His Father.

#### **John 5:18 (NASB)**

<sup>18</sup> For this reason therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also **was calling God His own Father**, making Himself equal with God.

#### **John 6:41-44 (NASB)**

<sup>41</sup> Therefore the Jews were grumbling about Him, because He said, "I am the bread that came down out of heaven." <sup>42</sup> They were saying, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does He now say, 'I have come down out of heaven?'" <sup>43</sup> Jesus answered and said to them, "Do not grumble among yourselves. <sup>44</sup> No one can come to Me unless the **Father who sent Me** draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.

They had heard the **truth**. But, even after all they had heard, "**They did not realize that He had been speaking to them about the Father?**" They just chose to not believe and be willingly ignorant.

Why are they willfully ignorant?

John 3:19 makes it clear, Men love darkness rather than the - " what? LIGHT.

#### **John 3:19 (NASB)**

<sup>19</sup> This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the **Light**, for their deeds were evil.

They were in the darkness because they wanted it that way. It is always dark when you love your sin. It was a willful darkness. Back in 8:19 He says,

### **John 8:19 (NASB)**

<sup>19</sup> So they were saying to Him, “Where is Your Father?” Jesus answered, “You know neither Me nor My Father; if you knew Me, you would know My Father also.”

Jesus told them that although you claim to be God's people., you don't know either of us. You are in the dark, and that's the way you want it, because you love your sin.

### **John 7:17 (NASB)**

<sup>17</sup> If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know of the teaching, whether it is of God or *whether I speak from Myself.*

When you get to the place where you are willing to do God's will instead of your desiring your own sin, **then** you will know of My teaching. Truth comes to those who desire it.

It's like the Old Testament says, “**If you seek Me with all your heart, you'll find Me.**”

But as long as you are obstinately loving your sin and cherishing your sin, even the sin of pride and self-righteousness, you will die in your sin.

Their ignorance was due to self-content. They were satisfied with their made up religion. It was comfortable to them. They had heard from the lips of Jesus many, many time concerning Who He was. They saw ample evidence of it and really couldn't deny it, but sin produces unbelief, and unbelief produces obstinate ignorance. So they refused to know because they loved their sin.

So what was Jesus' answer to their willful ignorance?

### **John 8:28-29 (NASB)**

<sup>28</sup> So Jesus said, “When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am *He*, and I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me. <sup>29</sup> And He who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him.”

Jesus was referencing His crucifixion and implying His resurrection. Christ's death and resurrection validated every claim ever made for Jesus by the prophets and apostles and erased all doubt to any open mind as to His deity. **There will be a day when you will know that you actually crucified the Son of God!** If you are fortunate enough that it should happen in your lifetime, how you respond to that knowledge will determine your eternity.

### **John 8:30 (NASB)**

<sup>30</sup> As He spoke these things, many came to believe in Him.

The truth was so convincing that even the Jews were beginning to believe. But as we will see, that for most of them, their belief was shallow and short lived.

## II. THE TEST OF TRUE FAITH.

### **John 8:31-32 (NASB)**

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

What jumps out of this text are the words of our Lord in verse 31. “If you **continue** in My Word, then you are **truly** disciples of Mine.” This is about being a true disciple.

### **This is an urgent and important subject!**

It is not enough to just believe. Many people profess Christ. Many people declare themselves to be believers in Christ. Many people give witness to the fact that they are Christians.

But who is a true Christian? Who is a real disciple? This is an urgent and essential question. You have to be able to answer it for yourself, and you have to be able to answer it for those around you.

I would like to repeat from last week the words of the apostle Paul who addresses this important matter.

### **2 Corinthians 13:5 (NASB)**

<sup>5</sup> 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?

Is this **not** what Jesus is saying in this passage. **Read the Word and obey!** The **Word** is the **TRUTH** from God and the **TRUTH** will set you **FREE!** That makes a true disciple.

Knowing that you are a genuine and authentic follower of Christ is of utmost importance. You have read of people who genuinely felt they were true followers only to hear on judgment day “**Depart from me, I never knew you**”. What a **disappointment that would be!** We have seen false disciples since the beginning of the gospel. We have seen true faith such as in the case of the early disciples in chapter one. And we have seen less than true faith such as those who believed in **chapter 2:23**, “**But Jesus, on His part, was not entrusting Himself to them, for He knew all men**”. He knew their faith was not the real thing.

There were followers in **John 6:66** who had called themselves disciples and were even identified as disciples, but, in the end, found Christ's desired commitment from them too much, and turned their back and walked away. “**Walked no more with Him,**”.

Now, we meet another group of believers here in **verse 30** who came to believe in Him. He refers to them as, “**Those who had believed,**” in **verse 31**.

However, these same people are told in **verse 44**, “**You are of your father, the devil.**”

**How can it be?** How can people who believe in Him, whose faith Jesus acknowledges by His own words, be, at the same time, children of the devil?

Well, we already know there is such a thing as false discipleship and false faith. We know something about the characteristic of a false disciple. They are attracted by the crowd, they fascinated by the supernatural miracles, and they desire to have their needs met without having to work for them. This is what drives a false disciple, but we haven't really had a definitive statement about what the test of true faith is until we come to this passage. **This is why this is a very critical section of Scripture.**

### **Matthew 7:21-23 (NASB)**

<sup>21</sup> "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, **but he who does the will of My Father** who is in heaven *will enter*. <sup>22</sup> Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' <sup>23</sup> And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.'

This is the end result of a false disciple. And there are not just a few, there are many. Can you see how the Jews fit in this mold?

### **John 8:33 (NASB)**

<sup>33</sup> 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'?"

The Jews were so sure they were doing God's will, that they stuck to their tradition. In reality, Jesus was saying they were practicing "lawlessness".

That is exactly their attitude here. They did not believe they were lost. They're saying, "**We are Abraham's descendants and have never yet been enslaved to anyone.**" Why are you saying we will become free. **We are already free!**

So what kind of freedom is Jesus offering them?

## **III. THE TRUTH SETS YOU FREE.**

### **John 8:34 (NASB)**

<sup>34</sup> Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin.

**This is so important!**

**Freedom from what?** Slavery to sin. They were not free. They were slaves to sin. How do you know they were slaves to sin? Because the pattern of their life was to continuously commit sin, present tense. You all continually commit sin, demonstrating that you are the slaves of sin. Their sin was religious sin. They had a corrupt religion.

Our Lord is saying to them, the **Gospel truth** will give you spiritual freedom, which is freedom from slavery of sin, from sin's total power and control, freedom from spiritual blindness, freedom from the fear of death and judgment.

They didn't want to buy into that! They thought they were Godly people and they would not acknowledge their sin. In fact, it **infuriated** them. To be God's people and be called sinners! I am surprised that it took until **verse 59** before they picked up the stones again.

The true disciple, the real disciple comes to the Word of God sorrowfully and submissively embraces the Word of God. He lovingly obeys the Word of God, it's theological truth, it's assessment of his own condition, and it's mandates and commandments. The false disciple only wants what Jesus offers without giving up any of his own carnal pleasures. The false disciple is unwilling to take the diagnosis of his own wretchedness that is necessary to true salvation.

### **John 8:35 (NASB)**

**<sup>35</sup> The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son does remain forever.**

They were thinking, "We are sons of Abraham. We are Abraham's seed. We are the elect covenant people. We have the law, the prophets, the covenants. It's all ours." This is blind pride. Jesus is **accusing** them of being sinners and therefore slaves of sin.

Then He takes it a step further and says this shocking thing. "You are **slaves**, not **sons**." They are not about to accept that!

### **CONCLUSION:**

People still come to Jesus who are seeking personal fulfillment, people who are seeking a better life, people who are tired of falling into temptation, people who are weary of bad habits, people who want to feel secure, and people who are seeking heaven. For all those reasons, and many more, starting to believe in Jesus is easy. A lot of people do that. But when they start in that direction, the world, the flesh, and Satan, fully empowered by their own fallen nature, starts to pull hard against Christ; the half believer is unwilling to yield to the hard demands of true repentance and humble submission to Christ and falls away.

Who is a true disciple then? A genuine follower of Christ searches the scripture and gleans from it the **TRUTH and obeys**. He perseveres in the faith. He **endures** through **blessing** and **trials**, remains faithful to the end, and is lovingly obedient.

That is a true disciple. His soul is a son and not a slave. And that soul has been **set free** from sin's bondage. He now enjoys freedom from that sin and through **complete forgiveness** and the **promise of eternal life in the presence of our Creator**.

### **Matthew 7:14 (NASB)**

**<sup>14</sup> For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it.**

Examine yourself to see if you are a true disciple.

### **John 8:36 (NASB)**

**<sup>36</sup> So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.**

**God Be With You.**