

John 8:31-36

READ THE PASSAGE

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

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

³⁵ The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son does remain forever.

³⁶ So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.

TRUTH

I read something recently that is absolutely startling.

The Economist Magazine

What is truth? It is the question that goes even as far back as Pilate when he asked Jesus that question. Pilate never gave Jesus a chance to answer the question. However, if Pilate had given to attention to all that took place in the next few days after asking that question, he would have seen the answer unfold before his eyes.

What is truth? A recent cover story for The Economist, an international magazine, was entitled "Yes, I'd lie to you: The post-truth world." The article analyzed the dishonesty that's wreaking havoc in politics, journalism, social media, and many other areas of our common life. One expert quoted in the article said, "Right now, it pays to be outrageous, but not to be truthful."

In the passage from which we read, we find Jesus giving teaching regarding truth as it relates to His Word. "If you continue in My word, you will know the truth."

Truth is central to the Word of God, our Bible. The reason being is that God is central to the Word, and God is the ground of all truth. God is the ground of all truth, for His name is truth. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life."

I want to share with you very quickly 10 statements given by John Piper regarding Biblical truth.

Biblical truth saves.

Biblical truth frees from Satan.

Biblical truth imparts grace and peace.

Biblical truth sanctifies.

Biblical truth serves love.

Biblical truth protects from error.

Biblical truth is the hope of heaven.

Biblical truth will be resisted by some.

Biblical truth, rightly handled, is approved by God.

Biblical truth: Continue to grow in it.

Some of these statements resonate in John 8. In this passage from which we read, Jesus gives three things that serve as commands/or privileges as the result of truth.

They are commands given. However, once obeyed, the commands complied to become privileges, promises fulfilled.

Believe the truth
Continue in the truth
Be free in the truth

Believe the truth – verse 31.

This statement comes because in the confrontation Jesus has with the Pharisees in the earlier verses, many came to believe in Him.

They believed the words he spoke to the Pharisees even though the words were responses to what the Pharisees were saying to Jesus in a disrespectful and sometimes sarcastic manner.

Were these statements of faith real? Or were they like John 6:66 superficial in that they become abandoned once the hard times come?

What is involved in believing, or better, the proper word, faith.

Three things are involved in faith.

First is knowledge. This is not heart knowledge that comes through experience. It is head knowledge that comes with understanding. This is the intellectual component of faith. Biblical facts are heard and understood.

Jesus died on the cross to forgive me of my sin. He was raised to give me eternal life. These are facts that I heard and understand.

Second is assent. This is a step further than mere knowledge of the facts. It is having the confidence to affirm that these facts are true. Perhaps, I have brewed on these facts. Maybe I read passages that teach these facts. I may have heard speakers or read writers who reasoned these facts out to the point that I understand them to be true. Not only do I understand the fact that Christ did indeed die and was raised, but I have also heard and read of persons whose lives were transformed because of placing their lives and souls to Christ.

I read scripture. I have read works like Lee Strobel and Josh McDowell who have sought to disprove the facts of Jesus' death and resurrection only to find them true, and they themselves turn from being atheists to believers.

Third is trust. Without this step, faith is not real. It is not completed. Faith is an active verb. It is something we do because of something we heard and believe. Trust is acting personally to ask and receive forgiveness of sin, and surrendering my life to Jesus as Lord and Savior. It is pledging my life completely on Him.

That is believing the truth. Jesus said to them who believed on His words. Once a believer, then the rest of this message applies to you. If not a believer, listen to rest of what I have to say as Jesus taught.

So the first command that has privileges, believe in the Truth. Faith in the truth.

Continue in the Truth

Jesus was saying to the Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My Word." That is a condition that needs to be met. "Then you are My disciples."

Continue can also be understood as remain or abide. How do you remain in the Word? Hear it. Read it. Study it. Memorize it. Meditate on it. We will then believe it, obey it, and the Word will become a part of us.

Meet the condition and the promise is actually a statement of reality. You ARE truly disciples of mine. Not you will become my disciples. You ARE my disciples.

What is a disciple? I'm going to repeat this over and over. A disciple is one who knows and follows Christ. How you know and follow Him? Encounter Him in the Word. Be in a relationship with Him.

A disciple is one who knows and follows Christ, one who is being changed by Christ, and one who is committed to the mission of Christ.

Disciples are Word and Truth Oriented.

Jesus said, "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments."

He also said, "If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My father's commandments and abide in His love.

The one who says, "I have come to know Him," and does not keep His commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him; but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him; the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked. 1 John 2:4-6

One other thing about being disciples. Being a disciple and being Christian are not two distinct and different things. They are one and the same. If you say you are a Christian, you are saying you are a disciple. If you are not going to obey the commandments of God, don't call yourself a disciple, and stop calling yourself Christian.

Believe in the truth.

Continue in the truth.

Be Freed in the Truth.

"If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine, and you will know the Truth, and the truth will make you free."

The truth will set you free. The truth will liberate you from sin. That is multi-faceted truth.

You will be liberated from the bondage of the god of sin, Satan. You will be liberated from the condemnation of sin.

You will be liberated from the judgment of sin.

You will be liberated from the guilt of sin.

There is no freedom in sin. Jesus makes that statement in verse 34. Truly, truly, I say to you. Everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin. It promises to fill some need in your life. When the need is not met, the hunger for the met need gets bigger, and the more we indulge in sin. So, it is true sin is believing in the empty promises of Satan rather than the fulfilling promises of God.

Kathleen Norris writes, "I have become like the child I once knew who emerged one morning from a noisy, chaotic Sunday-school classroom to inform the adults who had heard the commotion and had come to investigate, 'We're being bad, and we don't know how to stop.'"

Be Freed in the Truth. However, the freedom doesn't end with being freed from sin. Listen again to what Jesus says. "The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son does remain forever. So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.

The son has permanent rights to the big house. The slave does not. What does that say to us. We are not transferred from slave to sin to slave to God, even though that relationship exists in a different way than our way of thinking. What Jesus is saying is that we are not only freed from sin, but we are adopted into the family of God.

¹⁵ For you have not received a spirit of slavery [\[s\]](#) leading to fear again, but you have received [\[h\]](#) a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!"

If we are adopted, then we really are free indeed.