

John Chapter 8 Second Continued

These verses are a pivotal passage in understanding genuine salvation and true discipleship. John emphasized these realities by stressing truth and freedom. The focus in the passage is upon those who were exercising the beginnings of faith in Jesus as Messiah and Son of God. Jesus desired them to move on in their faith. Saving faith is not fickle but firm and settled.

Such maturity expresses itself in full commitment to the truth in Jesus Christ resulting in genuine freedom. The passage has three features:

- (1) The progress of freedom (verses 31-32);
- (2) The pretense of freedom (verses 33-34); and
- (3) The promise of freedom (verses 35-36).

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;"

The first step in the progress toward true discipleship is belief in Jesus Christ as Messiah and Son of God.

"If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed": This reveals the second step in the progress toward true discipleship. Perseverance in obedience to Scripture is the fruit or evidence of genuine faith. (Eph. 2:10), The word "abide" means to habitually abide in Jesus' words. A genuine believer holds fast, obeys and practices Jesus' teaching. The one who continues in his teaching has both the Father and the Son; (2 John 9, Heb. 3:14, Rev. 2:26). Real disciples are both learners (the basic meaning of the word), and faithful followers.

Jesus says to them (Jews), if you believe, discipline yourself and walk in my ways, you will truly be my followers. The only way any of us then, or now, can walk in God's ways is to know what His will is for our life. The way to find out what that will is, is to read His Word (Bible).

The secret of life everlasting is in His Word. To be His disciple, we must make Him our Lord, as well as our Savior.

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

"Truth" here has reference not only to the facts surrounding Jesus as the Messiah and Son of God but also to the teaching that he brought. A genuinely saved and obedient follower of the Lord Jesus will know divine truth and both freedom from sin (verse 34), and the search for reality. This divine truth comes not merely by intellectual assent (1 Cor. 2:14) but saving commitment to Christ (Titus 1:1-2).

One of the names Jesus is called by is the Truth. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life (John 14:6). Jesus is also the Word. If you study His Word (the Bible), then you will know the Truth. That Truth does set you free from the bondage of sin. Jesus also, is the Light. If the Light shines in your heart, it does away with darkness (sin).

We are told that in the end times, there will be false Christs who are deceivers (Matthew 24).

Matthew 24:24 "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect."

There is only one way not to be deceived, and that is by being full of the Word of God; so that if they change even one word, you will be aware of it.

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?"

You see, these people are caught up in the flesh, and cannot see the things of the Spirit. They are Abraham's descendants in the flesh, but are not Abraham's descendants in the Spirit.

Galatians 3:28-29 we read "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

You see, not those who have Abraham's flesh are his heirs, but those who believe.

Because the Jews had often been in political subjection to many nations (Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Greece, Syria and Rome), they must have been referring to their inward sense of freedom.

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

The kind of slavery that Jesus had in mind was not physical slavery but slavery to sin. The idea of "committeth sin" means to practice sin habitually. The ultimate bondage is not political or economic enslavement but spiritual bondage to sin and rebellion against God. Thus, this also explains why Jesus would not let himself be reduced to merely a political Messiah (John 6:14-15).

You cannot be the servant of sin and the servant of God all at the same time.

In Luke 16:13 we read "No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

The notion of slavery (in verse 34), now moves to the status of slaves. While the Jews thought of themselves only as free sons of Abraham, in reality they were slaves of sin. The genuine son in the context is Christ himself, who sets the slaves free from sin. Those who Jesus Christ liberates from the tyranny of sin and the bondage of legalism are really free.

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

We cannot take on sonship as long as we are a servant to sin. We either belong to God as His son (or daughter), or else we serve sin. This is like oil and water. Sin and God cannot, and will not mix. We belong to God or Satan: there is no in between.

If we belong to God, we are His sons and heirs of Abraham's promises.

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

Romans 8:2 “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.”

Gal. 5:1 “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.”

John 8:37 “I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you.”

Jesus shows that discipleship depends on having the right Father. They had the wrong father. He refers to your father (in verses 38, 41, and 44). They claimed to be sons of Abraham (verse 39), but Jesus shows this to be false (in verses 39-40).

These are physical descendants of Abraham, but he is not their spiritual father. They are still thinking of flesh, and not Spirit. The Word of God is Life. You cannot have Life without the Word, because they are the same.”

John 8:38 “I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father.”

Jesus says here, that His Father is not the same as their father. Since Jesus is teaching the opposite of them, then it is obvious that they do not have the same father.

John 8:39 “They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.”

The construction of this phrase indicates that Jesus was denying that mere physical lineage was sufficient for salvation. The sense would be “if you were Abraham’s children, but you are not, then you would act like Abraham did.”

Just as children inherit genetic characteristics from their parents, so also those who are truly Abraham’s offspring will act like Abraham; i.e., imitate Abraham’s faith and obedience.

“Works of Abraham”: Abraham’s faith was demonstrated through his obedience to God. Jesus’ point was that the conduct of the unbelieving Jews was diametrically opposed by the conduct of Abraham, who lived a life of obedience to all that God had commanded. Their conduct toward Jesus demonstrated that their real father was Satan (John 8:41, 44).

The works spoken of here is Abraham's belief. Abraham believed, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.

Genesis 15:6 “And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.”

You see, Abraham believed in the Lord. These people (Jews), pretending to be Abraham's descendants, did not believe in the Lord.

John 8:40 “But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham.”

God does not teach to kill, and they want to kill Jesus. Abraham did God's will. When God said move, he did. He lived in tents after leaving Ur of the Chaldeans, because he moved when God directed him.

John 8:41 “Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God.”

Killing is of Satan, not God. You tell the father by the children he bears, whether their deeds be good or bad. Perhaps, their mother was married and they were not bastard children, but the fornication here is spiritual, not physical.

They believed their Father is God, but God is Spirit, not physical.

The Jews may well have been referring to the controversy surrounding Jesus’ birth. The Jews knew the story about Mary’s betrothal and that Joseph was not Jesus’ real father. Thus they implied that Jesus’ birth was illegitimate (see Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-38).

John 8:42 “Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.”

If God were your Father, you would not want to kill me, you would love me. The construction here as (in verse 39), denies that God is truly their Father.

Although the Old Testament called Israel his “firstborn son” and affirms that God is Israel’s Father by creation and separation. The unbelief of the Jews toward Jesus demonstrated that God was not their Father spiritually.

Jesus stressed that the explicit criterion verifying the claim to be a child of God is love for his Son, Jesus. Since God is love, those who love his Son also demonstrate his nature (1 John 4:7-11; 5:1).

The Father is the source of Jesus' power and wisdom. Jesus was with the Father in heaven. Jesus was the Word of God in the beginning. Jesus' home is in heaven. Jesus was just on a mission when He came to earth. His mission was to save the lost, even at the cost of His flesh.

John 8:43 “Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word.”

This is an affront on these Jews for not knowing the Word of God. They really do not understand the Word of God, which they professed to know. The Word is Spirit and Life, and they have neither. They do not understand His Word.

John 8:44 “Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.”

Sonship is predicated on conduct. A son will manifest his father’s characteristics. Since the Jews exhibited the patterns of Satan in their hostility toward Jesus and their failure to believe in him as Messiah, their paternity was the exact opposite of their claims, i.e., they belonged to Satan.

“He was a murderer from the beginning”: Jesus’ words refer to the fall when Satan tempted Adam and Eve and successfully killed their spiritual life. Some think that the reference may also refer to Cain’s murder of Abel.

This is a statement here that their conduct is not in keeping with God the Father. Their words and deeds actually rebel against the Truth. They are enemies of all that is good, which is not compatible with love of the Father. Just as Lucifer rebelled against the Father, so they have rebelled against the Son.

Jesus accuses them of being spiritual sons of Satan, because they do evil instead of good. They lie and lust for power as Lucifer did, and want to kill. These are not fruits of God, but of Satan.

John 8 Second Continued Questions

1. How would these Jews, who believed on Jesus, be His disciples indeed?
2. What shall make you free?
3. How can you know God's will for you?
4. Truth sets you free from what?
5. Matthew 24:24 says who might deceive many?
6. Who were they bragging was their ancestor?
7. "And if ye be _____, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."
8. "...Whosoever committeth sin the _____ of sin."
9. Luke 16:13 says no servant can serve _____.
10. In verse 35 "And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the _____ abideth ever."
11. Who must set you free for you to be free indeed?
12. What has made us free from the law of sin and death?
13. What is Jesus saying about their father in verse 38?
14. "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the _____ of Abraham."
15. What was counted unto Abraham for righteousness?
16. They told Jesus, they be not born of _____.
17. Jesus told them "If God were your Father, ye would _____."
18. What was Jesus' mission on earth?
19. In verse 44, Who did Jesus say was their father?