

Freedom is the absence of bondage. Freedom in our country is the absence of dictatorial rule. This freedom came at the sacrifice of many men and women losing their lives. The cost of this freedom is high. This is a time of year that our country pauses to remember this sacrifice and while we never want to forget the price paid for the freedom our country enjoys; there is a spiritual freedom that is just (if not more so) precious. I'm talking about the freedom from sin because of the sacrifice given by Jesus the Christ.

Jesus said that **if** they would live in my words, then they would truly be his disciples *John 8:31-32 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; (32) And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.* Obedience to his teaching would cause them to know the truth and knowing the truth would bring them freedom

From a spiritual perspective, what is holding us in captivity? We know the answer to be Satan. *2 Timothy 2:24-26 And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, (25) In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; (26) AND THAT THEY MAY RECOVER THEMSELVES OUT OF THE SNARE OF THE DEVIL, WHO ARE TAKEN CAPTIVE BY HIM AT HIS WILL.* Christ's law has set us free from the law of sin and death. Notice *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*

Let us understand that with freedom come responsibilities. Freedom is not doing as we please. If we do as we please with no restraints, then our desires will lead us right back into sin. There was a time when the Jews thought that serving God was captivity and saw the wicked as free and in one perspective they were right. *Romans 6:20 For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.* The servant of sin is free from the boundary of God's rules. They can make up their own rules of morality. Yet, men aren't the final judge. It is God who sets our eternal destiny. Spiritual Freedom requires doing God's will. *James 1:25 But whoso looketh into the*

*perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.*

Just like today, Jesus' listeners took offense Jesus message about being free. They believed themselves to already be free. ***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?*** There are many who hold the same views today. The confusion again comes from thinking in physical terms and not spiritual. Notice their statement is wrong. We are Abraham's offspring and never been enslaved. They forgot about their captivity in Egypt. They forgot about their captivity in Babylon.

From there Jesus explains the type of freedom offered in detail. ***John 8:34-36 Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. (35) And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever. (36) If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.*** Sin enslaves a person. In those days, slavery was a temporary status. An Israelite normally did not remain a slave for more than 7 years. The Jews were in God's house on a temporary status. Jesus, as God's son, would remain in God's house forever. If the owner's son frees someone from slavery, it is permanent. Jesus argues they are captives of sin, because of their attitude towards him. ***John 8:37-38 I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you. (38) I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father.***

They are seeking to kill him because they do not like his teachings and what Jesus is saying to them here probably galls them all the more. Just as Jesus was obedient to God, the Father, the Jews were obeying the instructions of their father, Satan.

Naturally the Jews protested this idea. Their father and ancestor was Abraham. ***John 8:39-40 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. (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.***

Jesus said if that was true, then they should act as Abraham did. Abraham believed God and repeatedly showed his belief. Jesus is bringing God's word, but these people are attempting to kill him, something Abraham would not have done. Instead, Jesus is saying that they show themselves to have a different father. ***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.***

Again, they protest – God is our father! Notice the change in their story from declaring Abraham as their father. It is typical of a person losing ground to shift to what they think is a better argument. Notice that twice Jesus accuses them of plotting to kill him and they have not protested the accusation. Jesus points out that since he is from God, they should have welcomed him with love and not hatred. ***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.*** These people did not understand Jesus' teaching because they were so use to listening to lies, that when someone came telling the truth, they reject the truth. ***John 8:43 Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word.*** Then he tells them in v44 that their father is Satan.

Satan is the father of lies. He has always lied. Lies are his language. Satan is described as a murderer. He murdered from the beginning and brought death into the world through his lies. Jesus proves his point in verses 45-46 by showing that they reject him, but not because he has sinned. He begins by saying ***because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not ... (46) And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me? (47) He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.***

Like some today don't like to be convicted of wrong, the Jewish audience retaliates. They accuse him of being a Samaritan (half-Jew) and having a demon (v 48). These people know that Jesus is a full- Jew from Galilee and they know that Jesus is speaking rationally. The reason they are accusing him is because they could not meet his arguments. This is often the case with people. If they cannot meet a rational argument,

they will accuse the messenger of irrational things. Since Jesus is speaking the words of God, Jesus points out in vs 48-51 that they are dishonoring God by calling his words the irrational words of a demon. Jesus is not here to gain their approval but to glorify God and have God's approval. If they are to have eternal life, they must accept Jesus' teaching.

Now they believe they caught Jesus mis-speaking when Jesus said *If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.* If keeping God's word brings eternal life, then why did the prophets of the past die (52-53)? they ask. Jesus again states that he is not seeking personal glory, but to honor his Father (54-55). In his argument states boldly that Abraham looked forward to Jesus' day. *John 8:56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.* This was met with derision. How could Abraham look forward to the day of a mere man born thousands of years after Abraham lived? "How," they asked, "do you know so much about what Abraham thought?"

Jesus said that he lived before Abraham was born. (v58). In fact, he called himself "I AM." The name of the eternal God - Exodus 3:14. This is one of many places that Jesus tells us he is God. The Jews understood this. They accepted Jesus' statement as blasphemy and sought to stone him (v59) but Jesus disappeared in the confusion and left the temple.

In going through this event, it is easy to overlook what is stated at the beginning. Jesus was addressing the Jews who *believed* on him - John 8:30-31. Yet these same people are accused of

1. Being slaves of sin
2. Serving Satan
3. Rejecting the truth
4. Being a half-Jew
5. Being possessed by a demon

Spiritual Freedom is more than merely believing. What was missing? Obedience was missing! They weren't putting Jesus' teachings into practice! Notice what Jesus

said at the start. - John 8:31-32 Are you among those who claim belief or those who show belief by the life you live?

Just as we celebrate of national freedom once a year, the Israelites celebrated their freedom from Egyptian slavery once a year with the Feast of the Passover. Christians celebrate their freedom from sin by the sacrifice of Jesus with the Lord's Supper each Sunday. The Lord emphasizes remembrance. The Christian would do well to remember their freedom from sin. Peter put it this way. **2 Peter 1:9 But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.**

### **Invitation**