

The Voice in the Wilderness

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The Truth Will Set You Free

Texts: John 8:32, 36

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

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

1. Introduction

In John 8:32, the LORD JESUS declares, **“And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”** Later, in verse 36, He adds, **“If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.”** These verses are among the most quoted statements of JESUS, yet they are also among the most misunderstood. Often lifted from their context, **“the truth will set you free”** is sometimes treated as a general proverb about honesty, education, or personal enlightenment. However, these words of JESUS carry a far deeper, spiritual meaning. To understand them rightly, we must examine according to Scripture, what this freedom is not and what it truly is.

2. What the truth is not

Firstly, the freedom JESUS speaks of is not merely intellectual knowledge or factual accuracy. Many interpret “truth” as information—knowing facts about the world, science, or even theology. While truth in the sense of accuracy is valuable, it does not by itself free anyone spiritually. The religious leaders JESUS was addressing in John 8 were well-educated in the Scriptures. Yet despite their vast knowledge of the Scripture, they remained in bondage. JESUS later said to them, **“Ye do err, not knowing the**

scriptures, nor the power of GOD” (Matthew 22:29). Knowledge without spiritual transformation does not bring freedom.

Secondly, this freedom is not political or social liberation. The Jews responded to JESUS by saying, **“We be Abraham’s seed, and were never in bondage to any man”** (John 8:33). Their response reveals that they were thinking in national and political terms. Historically, this was inaccurate—they had been under Egyptian, Babylonian, Greek, and Roman rule. More importantly, JESUS was not speaking about external oppression. He was addressing an inner bondage far deeper than political control.

Thirdly, the freedom JESUS promises is not personal autonomy or self-determination. Modern culture often equates freedom with doing whatever one desires. But Scripture teaches that such “freedom” can actually be another form of bondage. The book of Proverbs warns, **“There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death”** (Proverbs 14:12). Living according to one’s own desires apart from GOD does not result in freedom, but slavery to sin and self.

Fourthly, this freedom is not freedom from all suffering, hardship, or responsibility. Some assume that being “free indeed” means a life without struggle. Yet JESUS Himself said, **“In the world ye shall have tribulation”** (John 16:33, KJV). The apostles, though free in CHRIST, endured persecution, imprisonment, and even death. It is important to note that Biblical freedom does not remove believers from the realities of a fallen world.

3. What freedom is

To understand what JESUS meant, we must look at the context. In John 8:31, JESUS says, **“If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed.”** Knowing the truth is inseparable from continuing in His word.

The truth that sets free is not an abstract concept, but a living reality revealed by CHRIST.

Firstly, this freedom is freedom from the bondage of sin. JESUS explains, **“Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin”** (John 8:34). Sin is not merely wrongdoing or mistakes; it is a transgression of GOD’s law (1 John 3:4). Sin is a master that enslaves. Paul echoes this truth in Romans 6:16: **“Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are”**. The freedom CHRIST offers is deliverance from sin’s dominion.

Secondly, this freedom is found in a Person—JESUS CHRIST Himself. In John 8:36, JESUS declares, **“If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.”** Truth is not merely something JESUS teaches; He is the truth. Later He states plainly, **“I am the way, the truth, and the life”** (John 14:6). To know the truth is to know JESUS CHRIST, and to be united with Him through faith.

Thirdly, this freedom is spiritual adoption rather than slavery. JESUS contrasts servants and sons. He says in John 8:35: **“The servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever”**. Through CHRIST, believers are no longer slaves but children of GOD. Paul writes, **“For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father”** (Romans 8:15). This freedom includes security, belonging, and inheritance.

Fourthly, this freedom leads to obedience rooted in love, not fear. Being free in CHRIST does not mean lawlessness. Instead, it produces joyful obedience. JESUS said, **“If ye love me, keep my commandments”** (John 14:15). True freedom is the ability to obey GOD from the heart, no longer constrained by condemnation or guilt.

As Paul declares, **“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in CHRIST JESUS”** (Romans 8:1).

Finally, this freedom results in transformation and sanctification. As believers continue in GOD’s truth, they are changed. JESUS prayed, **“Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth”** (John 17:17, KJV). Freedom in CHRIST is not static; it is a growing reality as believers are conformed to His image.

4. Conclusion

It is important to note that the expression, **“The truth will set you free”** is not a slogan about information, independence, or earthly liberation. It is a profound declaration about redemption. According to John 8:32 and 36, the truth is JESUS CHRIST, revealed through His word, and the freedom He gives, is freedom from sin, condemnation, and spiritual slavery. This freedom brings believers into a restored relationship with GOD as sons and daughters (John 1:12-13), enabling them to live transformed lives. Only when the Son makes a person free can that freedom be genuine, lasting, and complete.

I pray that the good LORD will give us the grace to walk and live in the truth in JESUS’ name. Amen.

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