

John 8:31–36

³¹ Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.

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

³³ They answered Him, “We are Abraham’s descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can You say, ‘You will be made free’?”

³⁴ Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin.

³⁵ And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever.

³⁶ Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.

“Disciple, Slave, Son” John 8:31-36

INTRO:

When someone asks us who we are, our answer is usually tied to some relationship in our lives. We might say, “*I am Paul’s son or daughter.*” If we were to ask this question in the first century, we would more likely hear a reply like this, “*I am Markus’s slave.*” Or, “*I am Hillel’s disciple.*” As we eavesdrop on this conversation between the Lord Jesus Christ and these Jewish leaders here in **John 8**, we find all three of these points of reference.

First, Jesus talked about disciples. Second, they discussed being a slave. Finally, the conversation turned to being a son. We will look at each of these relationships in turn. So, our road map is:

I. Disciple (v. 31-32)

II. Slave (v. 33-34)

III. Son (v. 35-36)

I. Disciple (v. 31-32)

A. **Verse 30** leads into our text today.

“As [Jesus] was saying these things, many believed in Him.”

While our Lord taught, a good number of those who heard believed in Him. Jesus interrupted His conversation to instruct these new believers.

“So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in Him, ‘If you abide in My word, you are truly My disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.’”

B. Why did John include this in his Gospel? It seems out of place. The answer is that what Jesus said in counseling these new believers sparked the rest of this conversation.

1. Undoubtedly, there was much more to this conversation than is recorded here, but it is important not to miss the point Jesus underlined. Saving faith is more than assent; it involves a commitment to the Lord Jesus and the truth of His Word.

2. In effect, our Lord said to them, true believers are disciples and true disciples are those who abide and remain in the Word of God. The word *“disciple”* means to be a student or an apprentice. The believer in Jesus Christ must become a student of the Word of God. They must study it, know it, love it and practice it in their lives. If they do this, our Lord promised them two results. First, they will show they are genuine disciples. Second, they will know the truth and the truth of God’s Word will set them free.

II. Slave (v. 33-34)

A. Our Lord’s instruction struck a nerve in the hearts of those who were listening.

“They answered him, ‘We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, ‘You will become free?’”

1. This is an astounding statement. The Jewish people had a long history of bondage. They had been in bondage to Egypt. They fell into bondage to the Babylonians and then the Greeks, and now they were the vassals of the Roman Empire. Politically they had been and were in bondage.

2. Although they had been in bondage politically, the Lord was not talking about political bondage. He referred to bondage to sin.

B. In **verse 34** we read,

“Jesus answered them, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin.’”

Here our Lord introduces the second term in our text. They did not understand what it was to be a slave to sin. They did not feel their own bondage.

1. In **Titus 3:3** we read Paul’s description of what we were before Jesus came by in our lives and changed us.

“For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another.”

Before the Lord saved us, we were locked into slavery to sin. Our lusts and our desires controlled us and we could do nothing to change the situation.

2. In **Romans 6:15-18** Paul described the enslaving power of sin.

“What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to

which you were committed, and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness.”

Because these Jewish people did not recognize they were enslaved to sin, they did not seek the means of deliverance in the Lord Jesus Christ.

3. Have we recognized our own previous slavery to sin? Are we actively choosing to submit ourselves to the Lord Jesus Christ as our new master today? This does not mean that we do not have to work on obeying Him or that we do not struggle with sin every day, we do. But He has given us the ability to have victory in Him.

III. Son (v. 35-36)

A. Finally, in **verses 35-36**, the Lord Jesus introduced the last term for our consideration, ***“The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.”***

B. We tend to want to put a break between **verse 34** and **verse 35** so we can define the slave differently.

“Jesus answered them, ‘truly, truly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever.’”

The Lord Jesus moved from the idea of slavery to the status of slaves. Slaves are not permanently in the household.

1. These Jews were sure they had a place in God's household because they were Abraham's offspring. They thought they could not be rejected by God the Father because of their positions as Abraham's sons.

2. Jesus said to them that they are only slaves, and God the Father endures with them for just a little while. Only those who come into the household through the Son remain permanently. To become part of the family a person must be made free by the Son. The blessing of deliverance from sin and a personal relationship with the Father can only come through the Son of God.

3. If the Son makes us free, a part of that freedom is to become a member of the immediate family of the infinite God of the universe. In **1 John 3:1-2** John wrote about this.

“See what kind of love the Father has given to us that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know Him. Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when He appears we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him as He is.”

C. So, what do we learn?

1. First, we learned we start out as slaves to sin. We are unable to please God or enter into a relationship with Him. The way to find freedom from our sin is to have the Son of

God, the Lord Jesus Christ, release us from our bondage to our sins. That happens when we trust Him alone to save us. Here is the rest of the story from **Titus 3**.

“But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to His own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by His grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”

2. Second, we learned that if we believe on Him and are saved, we become His disciples. We are students of the Son of God. We live, walk, and serve with Him, and learn from Him! We are ever learning more about the truth.

3. Finally, we discovered that when the Son made us free, He also made us a part of His family. We are sons of God. We are permanent in the family of God and we shall be with our Heavenly Father for all eternity.

Have you recognized you are a slave? Have to come to the Lord Jesus to be made free? If the Son has made you free, you are truly free!

***“Long my imprisoned spirit lay/ Fast bound in sin and nature’s night.
Thine eye diffused a quickening ray: / I woke my dungeon filled with light!
My chains fell off, my heart was free,/ I rose, went forth and followed Thee.”***