

Freedom in Jesus

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

Selected Scripture:
John 8:31-38

PRIOR TO SPEAKING THE words of our Key Verse, Jesus said to those Jews who believed on him, “Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” (John 8:32) True disciples of Jesus, who heed his words as their great Teacher and continue in all things to be his pupils, are set free from ignorance and superstition. They are also set free from the service of sin by the development of a new spiritually-focused mind, based upon the Word of truth and the example of the Master. —Rom. 8:1-6

To reach such “freedom in Christ,” certain conditions must be met. First, there must be a realization of one’s fallen condition and a desire for reconciliation with God; second, sin is to be fully renounced and forgiveness sought; third, a consecration, or dedication, of one’s heart, mind, and will to the Heavenly Father must be made. The world in general at the present time is not blessed with the freedom described by Jesus, because they do not “know the truth” concerning the plan of God, which has as its objective the blessing of all the families of the earth. (Gen. 22:18; Acts 3:25) Freedom in Christ is promised only to those who have responded to the call, “My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways.”—Prov. 23:26

Freedom which comes through Christ and an understanding of God's Word of truth has many positive results. It blesses rather than causing injury. It brings humility instead of pride and boastfulness. It realizes the need for patient endurance instead of anger and complaining. It produces generosity and benevolence instead of spitefulness and selfishness. It gives evidence by bringing joy and peace rather than producing discontent and bitterness of spirit.

As earnest and sincere disciples of Jesus, we should be deeply rooted and grounded in the Truth which makes us free from the errors and pitfalls of the great Adversary. Truth is never found except in the divinely appointed channels. "Thy word is truth," Jesus said in prayer to his Father. (John 17:17) The sources of truth found in God's Word are the inspired words of our Lord, the apostles and the prophets. To continue in the doctrine set forth in their words, to study and meditate upon them, to trust implicitly in them, and to faithfully conform our characters to them, is what is implied in obtaining and continuing in the freedom we have in Christ.

As we grow in the grace of God and in our freedom in Christ, we will gladly heed the words: "Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear [reverence]: Having a good conscience."—I Pet. 3:15

The freedom we have gained through our Lord must be maintained. We are told to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints, ... building up yourselves on your most holy faith." (Jude 1:3,20) "Fight the good fight of faith." "Endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." (I Tim. 6:12; II Tim. 2:3) Finally, we have the promise, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." (Rev. 2:10) Thus, may we "be free indeed!" ■