

Series: The Gospel of John

Day 8: In the Word, free to be a disciple to the glory of God

Prayer

O God,
When we open Your Word now, let us see Your glory. Enlighten our hearts. Let the truth make us free. Make us Your disciples and let us abide in Your word.

Amen

Introduction

We are busy walking through the 21 chapters of the Gospel of John in 21 days. Today we are looking at John 8.

The first seven days...

In the first seven chapters in the last seven days we have seen:

- look at the cross and believe
- drink living water and believe
- hear the mighty voice of God and believe
- eat the living bread and believe...

And yesterday we saw if you believe you will be filled with the spirit and streams of living water will flow from you. Today then: As changed person you abide in God's word and you are free to be a true disciple.

Chapter 8

Yesterday we concluded in chapter 7 where the Pharisees sent the guards out to capture Jesus. They returned without Him and they asked:

"Why did you not bring him?"

46 The officers answered,

"No one ever spoke like this man!"

In the whole of chapter 7 and 8 we see no miracles, Jesus only speaks throughout the chapter. We see more and more of an uprising, but then we read in chapter 8:30:

30 As he was saying these things, many believed in him.

In chapter 6 we see the miracle of bread increasing, but the people walked away. Five thousand people, only eleven disciples stayed with Jesus. Here he says many people believed when they heard Him. Romans 10:17 says the following:

17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

Until this point in the chapter, Jesus was talking to the Pharisees. But here He turns to the people who believe.

31 So Jesus said to the Jews who had *believed him*,

"If you abide in my word,

you are truly my disciples,

32 and you will know the truth,

and the truth will set you free."

33 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'?"

34 Jesus answered them, *"Truly, truly, I say to you,*
everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin.

35 The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever.

36 So if the Son sets you free,

you will be free indeed.

He says if you abide in my word. The original text says Meinēte = stay in me. And singular Logō = word. He says who stays in My word or who lives in His word.

If you abide in my word. A condition: **If...** you abide in my word and we find it in the end of this text again:

So if... *If you abide in my word, the truth will set you free.*

So if...the Son *sets you free, you will be free indeed.*

The word sets us free. The Son sets us free. The word is singular. It summarizes the whole of what he has learnt about himself: it is Jesus Christ. His word is a magnetic field to us, it something in which we stay. If we stray too far from that magnetic field, we are no longer influenced by it. We live close to this magnetic field;

we are in His word and His **disciples**.

And in that word, we find the **truth, the truth that sets us free.**

The truth that sets us free we find in the Gospel of John. Even later in chapter 8 it says:

Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am." (John 8:58)

He uses words from Exodus 3:14, he Himself is the God of the covenant. In chapter 10 he says:

30 I and the Father are one. (John 10:30)

So, all of these words in John that Jesus Christ speaks tells us about Him. The Gospel of John states 7 times "I am"

1. *I am the bread of life. (John 6:35). If you stay in Him you will never hunger or thirst again.*
2. *I am the light of the world. (John 8:12 also read 9: 5) If you stay in Him you will never be in the dark*
3. *I am the door; (John 10: 9) You will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture.*

4. *I am the good shepherd. (John 10:11). You are safe, He laid down His life for you.*
5. *I am the resurrection and the life. (John 11:25). I will live, even if I die.*
6. *I am the way and the truth and the life. (John 14: 6). We will stay on the path of life*
7. *I am the true vine and my Father is the vinedresser. (John 15: 1,2) If we stray he will prune us to stay on the right path, that we stay close to the vine, that we stay in Jesus, in the Word.*

When we stay in the Word, we will know the truth, who Jesus Christ is. When we see the Glory of Jesus Christ it will set us free. It will set us free to be His disciples. Are you a true Christian? A disciple who follows Jesus Christ? It says, if you abide in my word you are a true disciple. Do you abide in His word? Then we read further:

33 *They answered him,*

"We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone.

They don't understand how they will be freed if they have always been free. We are the offspring of Abraham, the chosen nation, we have never been anyone's slave.

How is it that you say, 'You will become free'?"

The best example I can give is someone who free falls from an aeroplane, usually they do it with a parachute. But now they decide that they really want to be free, they don't want to be limited by the parachute and he jumps and he glides in the air and says, do you see? I am truly free! But he will fall himself into pieces. Those are people that doesn't abide in the Word, people who doesn't abide in Jesus is free falling to death.

What are we being set free from?

34 *Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you,*

everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin.

We are set free from sin. Like we saw yesterday, our hearts are changed. We are forgiven and the spirit comes to live within us. It is like John exclaims in John 1:19

"Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

35 *The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever.*

This brings the image of us during this time of the virus, we are stuck in our houses. It doesn't feel like we are free. But if we go outside now, there is a virus that can cause death. If we stay in the safety of our homes, we are truly free. Free from the virus. And in the same way he tells us if you stay in the word, you are free from sin, you are part of the household of God. You are a son.

1 *See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. (1 John 3:1)*

Because of His love He wants us close to Him in His house.

*36 So if the Son sets you free,
you will be free indeed.*

Also, in the word we live in, we read in 2 Corinthians 4:6:

6 For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

If you get to know the words of Jesus, when you get to know Jesus, if you understand the 7 "I am's", that He is God himself it radiates the glory of God. It changes your heart. It truly sets you free. Then you are free to be a true disciple of Jesus. In John 15 it says:

5 I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing....8 By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. (John 15:5,8)

If our hearts are filled we cannot help but to glorify Him.

I also presented this in Zimbabwe so before we pray I would like to share a testimony from one of the people there:

(VIDEO)

Let us conclude:

Like Paul teaches in Romans that faith comes from hearing, John chapter eight shows us how it works. He does it with the powerful statement:

If you abide in my word,

You are truly my disciples,
and he Truth will set you free

And throughout John, the Word taught us

1. who Jesus, the Word (John 1) is with seven I am statements
2. It also shows us that we were slaves to sin, but became children of God.
3. And thirdly we saw the Word teaches us about the light of the knowledge of the glory of God

The truth will not only set free, but will bear fruit that glorifies the father

Whoever abides in me and I in him,
bears much fruit
to the glory of the Father

And therefor our theme for today

In the Word,

free to be a disciple

to the glory of God

Reflection

Today we learned the power of the Word. What did it teach you about God, the Father and the Son? Take some time and read the passages again and write down the glorious things you learned.

Thanksgiving

When you reflect what you wrote down, what does it mean to you that these Words set you free? Write down one, very specific, thing that you, as a disciple, are going to do differently during today.

Prayer

O God, thank You for Your Word. Thank you that the Word became flesh and came to live among us, in our hearts. Thank You for coming to enlighten our hearts with that light that we might see Your glory.

We want to stay in Your Word. Yes, in Your Son as the vine. Then we are truly free, free to bear fruit and to be Your disciples.

Amen.