

## EXPOSITON OF JOHN

Message #40

John 8:31-47

There are all kinds of people who say they believe in Jesus Christ. In fact, probably most would say they believe in Jesus Christ. But the real question is what do you mean by believe? When Jesus Christ was here on earth you had to believe something about Him because He was standing right before you in Person. He was doing spectacular things and He was teaching in the temple, so you had to believe something.

**However, believing something about Jesus Christ and believing in Him to be your only Savior are two different things.** One writer said whenever one really believes in Jesus Christ, God will test that faith to see whether or not it is real. Never is that point more vivid than in this passage. The primary point of these verses is this:

**ONE WHO HAS TRULY BELIEVED IN JESUS CHRIST AS PERSONAL SAVIOR, WILL BE ONE WHO HAS A PASSION TO KNOW GOD'S TRUTH AND TO OBEY GOD'S TRUTH, AND ONE WHO HAS NOT TRULY BELIEVED WILL MANIFEST CERTAIN QUALITIES THAT MAKE IT CLEAR HE HAS NOT TRULY BELIEVED.**

Now the Jews loved to be religious. They loved the liturgy. They loved to go to the worship services, however, that was not the same as believing on Jesus Christ as one's own Personal Savior, as the only one who could save one from sin. It is with this in mind that we come to this passage of Scripture.

In this passage Jesus Christ takes the initiative to address those Jews who had "believed" (v. 31). The tense of the participle "believe" is perfect, meaning these had believed on Christ at some point in the past and continued to believe in the present. **It seems to me from the following discussion that Christ knew that some who were saying they believed on Him really hadn't.** So in this section, He gives a series of four addresses to the crowd, which included His own disciples. He does not tone down the message so it doesn't hurt the disciples' feelings.

**ADDRESS #1** – Jesus establishes the relationship between a true believer and the Word of God. 8:31-33

Now the noun "disciple," which never shows up in the Church Epistles, is a Greek word (μαθητης), which generally means to follow someone and learn from them. It was used in reference to those who physically followed Jesus Christ, who physically followed John (Luke 11:2), and even those who physically followed the Pharisees (Matthew 22:15-16). In verse 31, Jesus is addressing those Jews who had believed on Him and were considering becoming His disciple or who were telling others they were Christ's disciples. So Christ brings out three key points that are about a believer and his relationship to God's Word, which are necessary to being His true disciple:

**(Point #1)** - The true disciple will have a continual passion to be in the Word of God. 8:31a

Diligent teaching of the Word of God is prescribed in every dispensation (Deuteronomy 6:7; II Timothy 4:2). The word “remain” is one that means to stay in and abide in. The subjunctive mood of the “if” clause indicates this is the mood of probability (3rd class condition). What this means is that if one does not remain focused on the Word of God, specifically in regard to the fact that Jesus Christ is the only Savior, there is a good probability that this person is not a real disciple and perhaps not a real believer because the real disciple remains focused on God’s Word.

J. Vernon McGee said I used to watch out for the person who was very active in the church but was not interested in seriously studying the Word of God. He said these kinds of people are dangerous and perhaps they are not even saved. If you are really right with God you will love the Word of God.

**(Point #2)** - The true disciple will be able to grasp the Word of God. 8:32a

True believers, true disciples can grasp the Bible. This is not theoretical or philosophical, this is real. A true believer has a supernatural ability to grasp truth. When the Word of God is accurately expounded, it comes to life for one right with God. So not only does a true believer love the Word of God, he has a supernatural ability to grasp the Word of God.

**(Point #3)** - The true disciple will be set free by the Word of God. 8:32b

I want you to notice what sets a person free - not personal ambition, or personal promises that you’ll try to do better, or not readjusting your goals in life, not good intentions, not your feelings or emotions; the thing that will set you free from guilt, hang-ups, sin, quirks and problems is God’s truth.

The Word of God frees a person from sin, from guilt, from condemnation. This is not only true positionally, but also practically. You can be set free from any sin that enslaves you through the truth of God. To know the truth is more than just knowing academic subjects. It is knowing Jesus Christ and the truth of God’s Word. It is so important to be in and under the Word of God. True disciples will be set free by God’s truth.

**Carefully notice the change of pronoun in verse 33 - from “you” (v. 31-32), to “they” (v. 33).** These are the religious antagonists who are against Christ and their response is that they had **never** been enslaved to anyone, so what could Christ mean “you shall become free?” The Jews are claiming, we are Abraham’s seed and no one ever enslaves us. These people Jesus had just told would die in their sins actually believe they are free. Frankly, these Jews are living in some fantasy land. They have been enslaved to all kinds of people. They had been enslaved to the Egyptians, the Babylonians, the Medes and Persian, to Greece and at the time Jesus was teaching, they were enslaved to Rome . People who are not right with God do not have a handle on reality. They are delusional. They think they are free and really blessed by God when in all reality they are heading to judgment. **If your freedom is not based on God’s truth, you are not free and you are living your life in a very delusional frame of thinking, which doesn’t grasp that you are heading to serious judgment.**

**ADDRESS #2** – Jesus establishes the relationship between a true believer and sin. 8:34-38

Three times in this chapter, Jesus drives home truth with a “truly, truly” statement (vv. 34, 51, 58). These statements are designed to stress dogmatic certainty. There are a series of five profound points that Christ makes to these Jews:

**(Point #1)** - The person continually committing sin is a slave of sin. 8:34

The worst form of enslavement one can actually have is an enslavement that is so dominating that one does not even realize he is enslaved. Sin can so enslave and dominate a person that they actually lose sight of the fact that they are totally controlled by their evil. If a person persists in a life of sin, that is what a person is a slave to. You are not free if sin has such a gripping control of your life that you cannot shake it. What Christ is saying here is you have a sin problem and the way to tell whether or not you are really right with Me is whether or not some sin enslaves you. If you are continually being drawn to indulge in something sinful, then you are not free. The worst tyrant to which any may be enslaved is to sin because the end result is always death. Sin will kill your spiritual life and it will kill your spiritual victory.

**(Point #2)** - The person who is right with God will continually remain in fellowship. 8:35

The slave does not remain in the house forever. I understand this to mean this - **the person who is enslaved to some sin will eventually leave the fellowship of those truly right with God because they were really not part of the family of God.** A real child of God will remain in the fellowship of a place zeroed in on God’s truth, on God’s Word. But a phony will get out.

**(Point #3)** - The person who has a real relationship with Jesus Christ will be free. 8:36

The verb “make free” is aorist tense and the verb “shall be free” is a present middle. What this means is that at one point in time Jesus Christ sets you free from sin (aorist) and from that moment, you, in and of yourself (middle), will discover, by the power of the indwelling Spirit of God, that you are no longer a slave to sin. Jesus Christ instantly transforms a person from being a slave to a son. By the way, notice carefully who can make you free from sin - **only** Jesus Christ. No one else and nothing else can set you free from sin.

Jesus Christ has the power to break any sin that enslaves you. Any addiction. No counselor can do this, no twelve step program can do this, no pill can do this - only Jesus Christ can do this.

**(Point #4)** - Physical heritage, no matter how religious, does not mean one has believed in Jesus Christ to be his personal Savior. 8:37

The Jews laid claim to the fact they were related to Abraham, which they thought automatically meant they were right with God. Jesus said unless you are right with Me you are not right with God and you are not right with Me because you want to kill Me and My word has no effect on you whatsoever. Abraham was willing to believe God and obey God even to the point of sacrificing his own son.

**(Point #5)** - One who is right with God listens to God, one who isn't listens to Satan. 8:38

If a person listens carefully to the Word of God and responds, that one is a believer. If on the other hand, one does not listen to God's Word, that one is following, not the voice of God, but of Satan. To Jesus Christ, the devil was a very real person. Dr. Ironside said some people never want you to preach anything that might offend or hurt some specific person's feelings. He said the greatest Christians he ever knew were believers who got their feelings hurt by the Word of God and responded to the voice of God.

Remember these Jews go to worship services and they sing and give and listen to Pharisees talk about the Bible - but they were being led by Satan, not by God. If they were led by God, they would have responded properly to Jesus Christ and they would have loved His teaching of the Word of God and they certainly would have realized they were sinners and they needed Him to be their Savior.

The people responded in verse 39, that Abraham is our father. We are Jewish.

**ADDRESS #3** – Jesus establishes a relationship between a true believer and Himself and great people in the Bible. 8:39-41

These people were laying claim to the fact that they were related to Abraham. So Jesus says if you are right with God like Abraham was, then do what Abraham did. There are three main differences between them and Abraham:

- 1) Abraham did not reject the heavenly messenger God sent to tell the truth;
- 2) Abraham did not seek to kill the heavenly messenger God sent because He told the truth (8:40).
- 3) He was justified by faith because he believed God, not by his works (Genesis 15:6).

Jesus is telling them - **you are not like Abraham at all**. You are from your father the devil. Listen carefully. **Any person who tries to elevate any person, even Biblical people, above Jesus Christ is satanic**. When you hear people demeaning Jesus Christ but elevating Joseph Smith or Mary Baker Eddy or Mohammed or L. Ron Hubbard even Biblical heroes like Abraham - you are listening to the voice of Satan.

Now look carefully at how the people respond in **verse 41** – “We were not born of fornication.” They are actually implying that Jesus was born because of an immoral relationship between Joseph and Mary. They proudly announce - our Father is God, not some immoral parents like you have.

This verse changed the life of one of the great Bible teachers. He said he used to believe that it was possible for a person to be saved and not believe in the virgin birth. He said - I do not believe that anymore. If a person is really right with God, he will embrace all truth about Jesus Christ.

**ADDRESS #4** – Jesus establishes the relationship that will exist between a real believer and God the Father. 8:42-47

He brings out seven truths:

**(Truth #1)** - One really right with God the Father will love Jesus Christ. 8:42a

Paul would later say (I Corinthians 16:22) if anyone does not love the Lord, he is to be accursed, not befriended, not tolerated, but accursed.

**(Truth #2)** - One really right with God the Father will acknowledge Christ's Deity. 8:42b

John would later say that whoever denies the Deity of the Father and the Son is an antichrist (I John 2:22). If one does not acknowledge the Divinity of the Father and the Son, the worship is a lie and it is satanic.

**(Truth #3)** - One really right with God the Father will understand the Word of God. 8:43

If a person does not love to carefully and accurately understand the Bible, they can pretend all they want that they are really right with God, but it is not the truth.

**(Truth #4)** - One not really right with God the Father will manifest certain qualities. 8:44

Dr. McGee said that most people today do not like teaching like this, because they want to hear about love, love, love and forgiveness and grace. Most do not want someone to tell them you are of the devil and you are a liar and a murderer.

The devil is a very real angelic person and he does have his emissaries in religion and his goal is to murder and kill and destroy those right with God. Jesus brings out **three qualities** one manifests if they are not right with God.

**Quality #1** - His desires will be satanic (8:44a).

One right with God may at times do that which he hates, but one right with Satan will always do that which he loves and what he loves to do is to twist and distort truth and pursue that which is contrary to God's Word.

**Quality #2** - He will not stand in the Truth (8:44b).

A satanic person does not stand in the truth of God; he stands in his own opinions and views, which eventually are contrary to the truth of God.

**Quality #3** - He will continually speak lies (8:44c).

Make no mistake about this. A liar in any context, even a religious context, is satanic. There is a very close connection between that which is not true and that which is satanic.

**(Truth #5)** - One not really right with God will not believe the truth even about Christ. 8:45

Jesus Christ told the truth and hardly anyone believed Him. I have learned that there is a time to speak the truth and there is a time to be silent because they won't believe it anyway.

**(Truth #6)** - One who is really right with God cannot be convicted of any known sin. 8:46

This verse proves the sinlessness of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ NEVER prayed for forgiveness about anything. You can know this - if these people could have got one sinful bit of evidence on Jesus Christ they would have. If they could have had one shred of evidence against Him, they would have used it. They already threw up their "born of fornication" lie (8:41). Christ stands publically and says - let any of you tell me how I have sinned or what I have done wrong.

Now were any of us to stand up and say what Christ did - a whole list of things could be brought up. But nothing could be brought up against Him, which is why He is the only possible righteous Savior that there has ever been. Once one has come to faith in Jesus Christ, no valid charges should be able to be leveled against a true disciple.

**(Truth #7)** - One who is really right with God will know and believe that the voice of Jesus is the voice of God. 8:47

How can you hear the voice of God today?

- 1) Get away from distractions which draw you away.
- 2) Be very prayerful in your attitude when you come to hear the Word of God.
- 3) Give yourself to intense focus on God's Word.
- 4) Be willing to apply God's Word to your own life.
- 5) When God's Spirit and Word convict you, don't argue or twist truth, admit truth and respond to truth.

There is freeing truth in this text that can make you free. Jesus Christ is the Only Divine Sinless Savior and He will deliver you from your sin and guilt and despair - if you will believe on Him.