

John 8:30-36

The Truth Shall set you Free Pt.2

John 8:30–36 (NKJV)

³⁰ As He spoke these words, many believed in Him.

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, “Most assuredly, 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.

Introduction

As a hymn-writer Charles Wesley was unique. He is said to have written no less than 6500 hymns
Charles Wesley, M.A. was the great hymn-writer of the Wesley family, perhaps, taking quantity and quality into consideration, the great hymn-writer of all ages.
Charles Wesley was the youngest son and 18th child of Samuel and Susanna Wesley, and was born at Epworth Rectory, Dec. 18, 1707.
He died March 29, 1788

He wrote hymns like
"Christ the Lord Is Risen Today"
"Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus"
"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"
Jesus, Lover of My Soul
O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing
Arise my soul arise

At Oxford Charles organized a Holy Club, where members met each evening to read the [Bible](#) and pray. Charles Wesley and his friends sought a disciplined method of spiritual improvement; some ridiculed the group and called them methodists for their methodical ways. John later

returned to Oxford and became the leader of the Holy Club Charles had organized.

The way of faith

Back at Oxford, after his brief stay in Georgia, Charles came face to face with the claims of Christ; he recognized his previous religious commitments lacked the simple faith in Christ which marked true Christianity. May 21, 1738 marks the date of Charles' conversion, and on that date, he opened his Bible to Psalm 40:3, "He hath put a new song in my mouth; many will see and fear and will trust in the Lord." Charles had indeed received a new song, and the next day he started his first hymn, probably "And Can It Be?" It is a powerful, wondrous rejoicing in the freedom to be found in Christ:

Charles Wesley's expressions of praise are rooted in a theology borrowed from his Calvinist friend George Whitefield's preaching on the new birth.

And Can It Be

1 And can it be that I should gain
An int'rest in the Savior's blood?
Died He for me, who caused His pain?
For me, who Him to death pursued?
Amazing love! how can it be
That Thou, my God, should die for me?

3 He left His Father's throne above,
So free, so infinite His grace;

Emptied Himself of all but love,
And bled for Adam's helpless race;
'Tis mercy all, immense and free;
For, O my God, it found out me

4 Long my imprisoned spirit lay
Fast bound in sin and nature's night;
Thine eye diffused a quick'ning ray,
I woke, the dungeon flamed with light;
My chains fell off, my heart was free;
I rose, went forth and followed Thee.

Lesson

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, “Most assuredly, 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**.

The glaring assumption behind the words of Jesus is **that you are not free**.

In fact, it is indicated that the only way to **be come free is to become a genuine disciple** of Christ, which means that all people that are **not disciples** of Christ **are not free**.

It is clear that the audience that he was addressing were fully convinced that they were free.

They even denied reality, because they were currently under the tyranny of Rome before them

Greeks

Medo Persia

Babylonia

Assyria

Egypt

They were saying they never been in Bondage in there Hearts, They freely worshiped God regardless of what nation controlled them physically

True, their relative freedom and especially their religious independence under the Romans (whether in the days of

Jesus or when John most likely wrote his book) was substantial; yet the fact remains that they were in service to Caesar. It is much more probable that the Jews are talking about spiritual, inward freedom and privilege.

Thus, Rabbi Akiba is credited with saying that all Israelites are kings' sons, *i.e.* the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (B. *Shabbath* 128a). The Jews saw themselves as 'sons of the kingdom' (*cf.* Mt. 8:12).

Bauer (p. 125) and Barrett (p. 345) rightly compare Mark 2:17, where the Jews are convinced they are whole and therefore need no physician—just as they are here convinced they are free and therefore need no liberation (*cf.* also 9:40–41).

The final sentence of this verse, *How can you say that we shall be set free?*, has an ugly, challenging tone to it that anticipates v. 53.

These 'believers' are already demonstrating their unwillingness to hold to Jesus' teaching (v. 31), for their sense of inherited privilege is so strong they can neither acknowledge their own need nor recognize the divine Word incarnate before them.

Their very words demonstrate their slavery in the categories of the next verse.

Jesus thus finds himself in the place where he must explain what he means

Carson, D. A. (1991). *The Gospel according to John* (p. 349). Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans.

Jesus responds

34 Jesus answered them, “Most assuredly, 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.

8:34. With the strong asseveration (Amen Amen) *I tell you the truth* (cf. notes on 1:51), Jesus makes plain the kind of slavery (and, implicitly, the kind of freedom) he has in mind: *everyone who sins is a slave to sin* (cf. Rom. 6:12, 13, 17).

Not only does the practice of sin (the Greek is literally ‘the one who does sin’; cf. 1 Jn. 3:4, 8, 9) prove that one is a slave to sin, but the practice of sin actively enslaves. For Jesus, then, the ultimate bondage is not enslavement to a political or economic system, but vicious slavery to moral failure, to rebellion against the God who has made us.

The despotic master is not Caesar, but shameful self-centredness, an evil and enslaving devotion to created things at the expense of worship of the Creator.

Carson, D. A. (1991). *The Gospel according to John* (pp. 349–350). Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans.

"For if man has lost his freedom, and is forced to serve sin, and cannot will good, what conclusion can more justly be

drawn concerning him, than that he sins and wills evil necessarily?" Martin Luther BW pg. 149

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

In this context, the application is clear: the Jews think of themselves as sons (of Abraham), but in reality they are slaves (to sin). As sons of Abraham, the Jews felt spiritually confident, not to say self-assured; to be told they are but slaves strikes at the root of their assurance, for *a slave has no permanent place in the family* (cf. Mt. 3:9; 8:11–12; Mk. 12:9).

The genuine son in this context is not the Christian, but Christ himself (the Gk. word for 'son' is *ho huios*, always used in John for Jesus Christ; believers are *ta tekna tou theou*, 'children of God').

this may mean no more than that a son cannot ever be anything other than a son, while a slave can be sold or given away.

Carson, D. A. (1991). *The Gospel according to John* (p. 350). Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans.

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

So if the Son sets you free—now not simply the son of the householder, but the Son of God, as that title is repeatedly used in this Gospel (*cf.* notes on 5:19ff.)—*you will be free indeed.*

Jesus not only enjoys inalienable rights as the unique Son of God, but exercises full authority, vested in him by the Father (3:35), to liberate slaves.

Those whom Jesus liberates from the tyranny of sin are really (*ontōs*) free (*cf.* Rom. 8:2; Gal. 5:1). True freedom is not the liberty to do anything we please, but the liberty to do what we ought; and it is genuine liberty because doing what we ought now pleases us

Carson, D. A. (1991). *The Gospel according to John* (p. 350). Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans.

So the foundational thought that is under all that Jesus is saying is, You may think you are free but you are not.

You can feel and believe you are free but you are not
If you are lost, and not a believer, you are a slave of sin.

This is HUGE

This is fundamental to understanding the condition you are in before you are saved

You are a slave to sin.

YOU ARE NOT free to do whatever you want.

One of the most hotly debated topics among believers is the topic of the freedom of the will

“For centuries, philosophers and theologians have almost unanimously held that civilization as we know it depends on a widespread belief in free will—and that losing this belief could be calamitous. Our codes of ethics, for example, assume that we can freely choose between right and wrong. In the Christian tradition, this is known as “moral liberty” —the capacity to discern and pursue the good, instead of merely being compelled by appetites and desires. The great Enlightenment philosopher Immanuel Kant reaffirmed this link between freedom and goodness. If we are not free to choose, he argued, then it would make no sense to say we ought to choose the path of righteousness.”

It is almost universally accepted among most evangelicals that you have a “Free Will”

Statements like this are made

1. Everyone has a free will
2. God would never violate your free will
3. If we don't have free will we are robots
4. Its unfair for God to judge us if we don't have free will
5. We chose God of our own free will.

The problem with all these statements and often the problem with the debate about free will is that it misses the most important points

1. The Bible **never says you have a free will**

2. The Term Free will is a loaded word.

- a. you are not free to do anything
- c. you are not free to say anything

for instance

1. you cannot fly like a bird. you don't have feathers

that fact that you a human, means you cannot fly. You may believe all day long that you are a chicken and can fly but you cannot.

2. you cannot speak intelligently on Brain surgery unless you are a Brain surgeon. Your understand can be limited by your, brain, your intellect, your understanding, your schooling and your experience

You are limited by the natural boundaries you are born with.

3. A Better word to use would be volition
The ability to choose

We choose all the time, We make choices with the context of our existence.

At home, work or play we make all types of choices but they are restricted by our abilities. We can only choose to do what we can do. We cannot choose to do what we cannot do.

So when it comes to our will, we are only free within a certain Context.

Before we are saved, the Bible says

John 6: 34 Jesus answered them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin.

Proverbs 5:22 His own iniquities entrap the wicked
man,
And he is caught in the cords of his sin.

Romans 6:6–7 (NKJV)

⁶ knowing this, that our old man was crucified with *Him*, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. ⁷ For he who has died has been freed from sin.

Romans 6:17–22 (NKJV)

¹⁷ But God be thanked that *though* you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to

which you were delivered. ¹⁸ And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. ¹⁹ I speak in human *terms* because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members *as* slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness *leading to more* lawlessness, so now present your members *as slaves of* righteousness for holiness.

²⁰ For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. ²¹ What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things *is* death. ²² But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life.

Ephesians 2:1–3 (NKJV)

2 And you *He made alive*, who were dead in trespasses and sins, ² in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, ³ among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.

Titus 3:3 (NKJV)

³ For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving (**doulos PAI in slaved to**) various lusts

and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another.

2 Peter 2:19 (NKJV)

¹⁹ While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage.

2 Timothy 2:24–26 (NKJV)

²⁴ And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, ²⁵ in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, ²⁶ and *that* they may come to their senses *and escape* the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to *do* his will.

having been taken captive

Perf Pass Part

2221 *zōgréō* (from *zōos*, "alive, living" and **64** */agreúō*, "to capture") – properly, catch *alive* (Souter).

John 3:19–20 (NKJV)

¹⁹ **And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.** ²⁰ **For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.**

Romans 8:6–8 (NKJV)

⁶ For to be carnally minded *is* death, but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace. ⁷ Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. ⁸ So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

1 Corinthians 2:14 (NKJV)

¹⁴ But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.

2 Corinthians 4:3–4 (NKJV)

³ But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, ⁴ whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.

John 3:3 (NKJV)

³ Jesus answered and said to him, “**Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.**”

John 6:44 (NKJV)

⁴⁴ **No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.**

John 6:65 (NKJV)

⁶⁵ And He said, “Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father.”

John 8:42–43 (NKJV)

⁴² Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me. ⁴³ Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word.

John 12:37–40 (NKJV)

³⁷ But although He had done so many signs before them, they did not believe in Him, ³⁸ that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke:

“Lord, who has believed our report?
And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?”

³⁹ Therefore they could not believe, because Isaiah said again:

⁴⁰ “He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts,
 Lest they should see with *their* eyes,
 Lest they should understand with *their* hearts and turn,
 So that I should heal them.”

Jeremiah 13:23 (NKJV)

²³ Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard its spots?

Then may you also do good who are accustomed to do evil.

Matthew 12:34 (NKJV)

³⁴ **Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.**

At the heart of Martin Luther's theology was the conviction that human beings are totally dependent on God's omnipotent grace to rescue us from the bondage of the will by creating and decisively fulfilling every inclination to believe and obey God.

The debates of the sixteenth century about the freedom of the will versus the bondage of the will were not peripheral to the Reformation. They were at the heart of the issue. At least Luther believed they were.

His book *The Bondage of the Will* was an answer to Erasmus's book *The Freedom of the Will*.

Regarding [the plan] to collect my writings in volumes, I am quite cool and not at all eager about it because, roused by a Saturnian hunger, I would rather see them all

devoured. For I acknowledge none of them to be really a book of mine, except perhaps the one *On the Bondage of the Will* and the Catechism. (*Luther Werke*, 50:172–173; Luther compares himself to Saturn, a figure from Ancient Greek mythology who devoured most of his children)

It is remarkable that of all he had written, Luther saw his defense of the bondage of the will, and his demolition of Erasmus's view of free will, as so crucial he wanted it (along with his catechism) preserved more than anything he had written. Why was the issue so important for Luther?

Luther said to Erasmus,

It is in the highest degree wholesome and necessary, for a Christian to know whether or not his will has anything to do in matters pertaining to salvation. Indeed let me tell you, that is the hinge on which our discussion turns. . . . For if I am ignorant of the nature, extent, and limits of what I can and must do with reference to God, I shall be equally ignorant and uncertain of the nature, extent, and limits of what God can and will do in me. . . . Now, if I am ignorant of God's works and power, I am ignorant of God himself; and if I do not know God, I cannot worship, praise, give thanks, or serve Him, for I do not know how much I should attribute to myself and how much to Him. (quoted in *Luther Selections*, 179)

Luther knew that Erasmus, more than any other opponent, had put his finger on the deeper issue at stake beneath the justification controversy and the controversy over the mass and indulgences and Mary and purgatory.

And that issue was *whether human beings are so sinful that God's sovereign grace must create and decisively fulfill every human inclination to believe and obey God.*

Erasmus did not believe this. Luther did — so did Calvin and Zwingli. Erasmus's belief that the fallen human will contributed its own decisive self-determining power to the act of faith and the pursuit of holiness was, in Luther's mind, a perilous underestimation of the desperate condition of man without Christ. In Gordon Rupp's assessment of Luther's debate with Erasmus, he commented, "At the end of the day, Luther could maintain the great Anselmian retort: 'Thou hast not considered the gravity of sin'" (*Luther and Erasmus*, 12.).

And, Luther would add, the failure to see the gravity our sin and the depth of our corruption and the bondage of our will, if unchecked, will become an assault on the freedom and sovereignty and the glory of God's grace in salvation, and therefore an assault on the very gospel itself. In 1528, Luther put it like this: "I condemn and reject as nothing but

error all doctrines which exalt our ‘free will,’ as being directly opposed to [the] mediation and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ” (*What Luther Says*, Vol. 3, 1376–1377). By “free will,” I think he means decisive self-determination in acts of faith and obedience.

In another place he said,

This is my absolute opinion: he that will maintain that a man’s free-will is able to do or work anything in spiritual cases, be they never so small, denies Christ. This I have always maintained in my writings, especially in those against Erasmus. (*The Tabletalk of Martin Luther*, 206)

He doesn’t mean that the will is inactive. He means that wherever it is active in faith and obedience, God is decisively active, creating and fulfilling the acts.

For Luther, the issue of man’s bondage to sin and his moral inability to believe or be holy was *the root issue of the Reformation* — and the lynchpin of Protestantism. The freedom of God, and therefore the freedom of the gospel and therefore the salvation of men, and the glory of God were at stake in this controversy. Therefore, Luther loved the message of his book *The Bondage of the Will*, ascribing all freedom and power and grace to God, and, for us, complete dependence on God for faith and holiness. “It is true,” he wrote, “that the doctrine of the Gospel takes all glory, wisdom, [and] righteousness . . . from men and ascribes them to the Creator alone, who makes everything out of nothing” (*What Luther Says*, Vol. 3, 1374).

So back to the main question: *Are human beings so sinful that God's sovereign grace must create and decisively fulfill every human inclination to believe and obey God?*

Luther's answer — and the answer of all the Reformers — was yes. And my conclusion from Scripture is that their answer is true. Pelagianism is wrong. Fallen man cannot create his own holy choices. And semi-Pelagianism is wrong. In the act of faith and the pursuit of holiness, man does not complete God's prevenient grace by contributing his own decisive, self-determining power. The power and pervasiveness of our bondage is such that God must create and decisively fulfill the act of faith and the pursuit of holiness.

Your freedom in Christ is not freedom to sin. but Free to do good deeds

The Bible does not deny our Freedom it affirms it

We are free From

- 6. The Curse**
- 7. The Condemnation**
- 8. The Customs**
- 9. The Continuation**

1. Free from The Curse

Galatians 3:10

¹⁰ For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, “*Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them.*”

James 2:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one *point*, he is guilty of all.

2 Free from Condemnation

Romans 8:1–2 (NKJV)

8 *There is* therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. ² For the law of the Spirit

of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.

3. Free from the Customs Rituals

Galatians 5:1–2 (NKJV)

5 Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage. ² Indeed I, Paul, say to you that if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing.

Colossians 2:13–17 (NKJV)

¹³ And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, ¹⁴ having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. ¹⁵ Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.

¹⁶ So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, ¹⁷ which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.

4 Free from the Continuation

Romans 6:6–14 (NKJV)

⁶ knowing this, that our old man was crucified with *Him*, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. ⁷ For he who has died has been freed from sin. ⁸ Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, ⁹ knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. ¹⁰ For *the death* that He died, He died to sin once for all; but *the life* that He lives, He lives to God. ¹¹ Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

¹² Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. ¹³ And do not present your members *as* instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness to God. ¹⁴ For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

Galatians 5:13–25 (NKJV)

¹³ For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not *use* liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. ¹⁴ For all the law is fulfilled in one word, *even* in this: “*You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*” ¹⁵ But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!

¹⁶ I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. ¹⁷ For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. ¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, ²¹ envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told *you* in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. ²⁴ And those *who are* Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵ If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.