Jesus,

what do you mean?

***“You will know the truth,***

***and the truth will set you free.”***

Or, “The Liberating Power of Obedience”

John 8:32

The Words:

It is far easier to identify a saying of Jesus than to discover its implications. We often hear about truth setting people free, but we usually assume enslavement from an outside source. Here, Jesus is in a “discussion” with people who have professed to believe in Him, and He lets them know how true believers, that is, His disciples, will be set free from their sin. It turns out that most of these folks were instead, slaves to sin, and captives of Satan. (See 2 Timothy 2:24-26.)

The Challenge:

When we voluntarily perform an action, we have a sense of it being a “free” act. That is, we often are unaware of all of the factors that brought us to act. But the Bible teaches us that our actions and words do not occur in a vacuum, but are truly spilling over and out of our hearts, whether good or bad. Ironically, it is when we don’t believe God that we are most in bondage to our fallen nature.

The Principle: God’s life sets Jesus-disciples free

True disciples find freedom in obeying Jesus. vv. 31, 32

Jesus corrects our ignorance, error, and bondage.

In following Jesus, we find freedom. [But what kind of freedom?]

False disciples remain in bondage to their own sin. vv. 33-58

False disciples assume religious heritage is enough. vv. 33-41a

False disciples presume a relationship with God. vv. 41b-47

False disciples refuse to submit to Jesus as God. vv. 48-59

The Application: Are you free in Christ?

Freedom from sin is not. . .

Freedom from temptation. James 1:2-15

Merely a theoretical possibility. Romans 6:1-11

A passive, unconscious spiritual state. Romans 6:12-23

A prevention from future sinning. 1 John 2:1, 2

An act of absolution by a human being. Mark 2:5, 10

Freedom from sin is. . .

The spiritual reality of the victory of Christ over death is not mythical, or magical. Freedom from sin works in three ways:

* In the past: The act of justification. Since Christ died for the believer and rose again, the believer has been saved from the penalty of sin. We are free from sin’s penalty. Romans 8:1-4
* In the present: The process of sanctification. Since the believer died and rose with Christ, he has been freed from sin’s dominion over him. He is now able, by the Spirit, to put sin to death in his daily life. We are being saved from sin’s power. Romans 8:5-17
* In the future: The moment of glorification. Since the believer will one day be made like Christ, he will then be free from the very presence of sin. We have hope and a future. Romans 8:18-39