

Sermon Notes

Practical Lessons for Understanding the Word of God



Real Freedom

KEY PASSAGE: John 8:28-32 | SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE: Luke 4:18; 19:10 | John 10:10
Hebrews 4:15-16 | 2 Peter 1:3-4

SUMMARY

What do you think and feel when you hear the word *freedom*?

We usually associate it with the right to live as we please and pursue our ambitions and dreams. However, Jesus spoke of a deeper aspect of freedom that pertains to the state of our souls. God wants to free us from every internal form of bondage that prevents us from becoming the person He created us to be. This kind of freedom is not achieved by war and revolution, but by the knowledge of truth. Jesus said, “If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free” (John 8:31-32).

SERMON POINTS

The reasons Jesus came

- **To seek and save that which was lost** (Luke 19:10). The primary reason Jesus came to live with us on earth was to pay our sin debt in full on the cross so we could become the God’s children.
- **That we might have life and have it abundantly** (John 10:10). Salvation is just the beginning of our Christian life. When we discover and live in God’s will, we can enjoy the fullness and abundance He promised. We discover the richness of living in the will of the almighty God.
- **To set captives free** (Luke 4:18). Whether we recognize it or not, all of us have been held captive at one point or another. Jesus wants to reveal those hidden areas of bondage and lack of control, so we can deal with them and live in true freedom.

Causes of captivity

- **Errors.** Some people are in bondage to false beliefs. Those who think good works or performance earn God’s acceptance will never know what’s good enough and how much is sufficient. Others have confusing ideas about who’s going to heaven. Some believe everyone is universally accepted into heaven whether they accept Jesus as Savior or not. Others think only their specific group is worthy of heaven because of their rituals or family of origin. All these ideas lock people in a spiritual jail because none of them are true.
- **Evil habits.** A prevailing attitude today is, “This is my life; I can do whatever I want.” However, toleration of sinful practices results in enslavement to them.
 - **Lying and deception.** For some people dishonesty is a lifestyle, especially if they fear rejection or have grown up telling lies.
 - **Sexual immorality.** Many people hold the misconception that expressing their sexuality whenever and however they please is true freedom. But in reality, they are held captive by their lust.
 - **Drunkness.** Addiction to alcohol enslaves individuals and causes heartache, misery, and suffering for their families.
 - **Drugs.** When people take illegal drugs, they’re giving control over to a substance.
 - **Smoking.** A person’s unwillingness or inability to stop smoking is proof of captivity to it.
 - **Laziness.** Constantly avoiding work is bondage to laziness.
 - **Profanity.** When someone cannot carry on a conversation without using some form of

profanity, it has become an enslaving habit.

- **Emotions.** Emotional bondage is sometimes very difficult to identify because it lies deep inside a person and often originates in childhood. One of the signs is an inability to overcome a particular sin despite repeated confession and repentance. The only way to become free is to discover the emotion which is fueling the sin.
- **Fear.** Despite being gifted with abilities and talents, some people never move forward in life because they are captured by fear of failure or rejection.
- **False guilt.** Once we trust Christ as our Savior, all our sins are forgiven. But if we repeatedly confess and repent of the same sin, we're under a burden of false guilt.
- **Jealousy.** When jealousy holds us captive, we don't even think straight.
- **Worry and anxiety.** If we continually live in anxiety concerning what could happen, we work ourselves into a cellblock of uneasiness, uncertainty, and fear.
- **Prejudice.** Being prejudiced against those of other nationalities, languages, or social status keeps us from becoming all that Christ desires us to be.
- **Failure.** When we feel unable to please the Lord despite all our efforts, we've failed to realize that He desires a relationship—not a performance.
- **Bitterness.** Those who can't get past mistreatment or adversity will find that bitterness becomes part of their lives, affecting what they think, feel, and do.
- **Unforgiveness.** God wants us to forgive those who offend us and move on with life, but unforgiveness ensnares us.
- **Insecurity.** If our sense of security is tied to anything earthly, we'll feel vulnerable because everything changes. Jesus is the stabilizer who breaks the bonds of insecurity because He's always the same.

Effects of bondage

We know that any area of captivity can carry additional consequences as it:

- **Affects our personal testimony.** Other people see if our behavior doesn't match our profession of faith.
- **Hinders our spiritual growth.** As long as we allow areas of bondage in our lives, we'll hinder what God wants to do in and through us.

The truth that sets us free

When Jesus said, "The truth will make you free," (John 8:32) what did He mean by that? He was referring to:

- **Truth about our salvation.** First of all, we must recognize that freedom is based on a relationship with Christ. Furthermore, we have the indwelling Holy Spirit to guide and empower us to overcome any bondage.
- **Truth about our position.** We are now children of God and joint heirs with Christ—accepted, forgiven, and spiritually alive. In order to accomplish His plans for our lives, the Lord wants to reveal any hidden areas of bondage and help us deal with them.
- **Truth about our possessions.** As children of God, we have His divine power, promises, and nature which provide everything we need to live a godly life (2 Pet. 1:3-4).

RESPONSE

- Is there anything in your life that is difficult to relinquish? Could it be an area of bondage that is hindering your spiritual growth?
- Are you repeatedly struggling with a particular problem or recurring sin?
- Would you be willing to ask the Lord to reveal and heal the area of emotional bondage that is causing your struggle?
- What price are you and your loved ones paying by living in this type of personal captivity?

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