

REFLECTION GUIDE

JOHN 8:25-36 | THE FREEDOM JESUS GIVES

KEY TERMS

Abide - From the Greek word *meno*, meaning "to abide" or "to remain." Jesus returns to this theme of abiding in John 15, but here he introduces it with the point that genuine followers of his are those who "abide" or "remain" in his word (i.e., seek to understand Jesus and to obey him).

Truth - When Jesus says *the truth will set you free* (v. 32), he does not mean truth in general will lead to this freedom (although in some situations that may be true). Here, Jesus means that the truth about his identity and his work is what leads to freedom from sin (i.e., salvation).

DID YOU KNOW?

Jesus' phrase, *the truth will set you free* (v. 32), has been inscribed on university buildings, courtrooms, and government facilities/seals all over the world. In those settings the phrase is often misapplied, referring to truth in general and not the person and work of Christ.

SYNOPSIS

Following Jesus' statement *I am he* (v. 24), the religious leaders ask *Who are you?* (v. 25) The beginning of Jesus' response is an extremely difficult sentence to translate, with a variety of opinions. The ESV translates it: *Just what I have been telling you from the beginning*—meaning Jesus has been calming from the beginning to be the Son of God (v. 25). However, it's also possible Jesus means something like "I am from the beginning (meaning creation), what I tell you." Or even something like, "Why do I talk to you at all?" Either way, John inserts a comment that Jesus was *speaking to them about the Father*, and the ensuing discussion returns to a familiar discussion of Jesus' unity with the Father (vv. 27-29). At this time, *many believed* and Jesus began to teach them (vv. 30-31).

Jesus first says to them, *If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free* (v. 31-32). Jesus wants them to see that his true disciples are not those who "believe" and then fall away, but those who continue to understand and obey him. Those who do, according to Jesus, will experience spiritual freedom. The crowd responds and asks why they would need to be set free if they are *offspring of Abraham* (v. 33). Jesus responds and says, *everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin* (v. 34). The crowd sees themselves as having all they need spiritually speaking, but Jesus suggests that what they have is not enough. In other words, no special relationship to Abraham or the Old Testament law is enough to solve the problem of sin. Instead, Jesus says it's the *Son* who makes people free (v. 36). Jesus' claim is that in him and him alone is forgiveness and freedom from sin.

GOING DEEPER

Read Romans 6:17-18 and Galatians 5:1. How do these verses from Paul shape your understanding of what true freedom is? In what ways have you experienced—or do you long to experience—freedom through Jesus?



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

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Reflection Questions are available during Redemption Group trimesters. Groups are currently taking a break and will resume the week of June 1st. For more information or to jump into a group, visit redemptionedmond.com/groups.