

Date: November 25th, 2025

John Section: John 8:31-59

Key Text: John 8:31

Main Idea: The truth will set you free

Genre: Theological Narrative

Author: John

Audience: Primarily second-generation believers, Jews, and Gentiles, needing encouragement and clarity about Jesus' identity.

Setting: Likely written from Ephesus, AD 85-95, in a context of synagogue opposition and emerging false teachings.

Quote of the Week: "What's wrong with you people?!" "You're not just wrong — you're *dangerously* wrong!"

R.C. Sproul (Obviously inspired by Jesus talking to the religious leaders in John 8...)



John Preview:

Highlight:

The Gospel of John is a unique New Testament account of Jesus' life, written by the Apostle John, the beloved disciple. John's Gospel is not merely a biography but a theological portrait, revealing Jesus as the eternal Son of God who became flesh to bring life and light to the world. Unlike the Synoptic Gospels, John emphasizes signs and discourses that unveil Jesus' divine identity and mission. From the opening words—"In the beginning was the Word"—to the climactic resurrection appearances, John presents Jesus as the one in whom God's glory is revealed, calling all to believe in Him for eternal life. This Gospel is rich with imagery (light, life, bread, water, shepherd, vine) and repeatedly centers on the theme of belief.

Focus of John:

- **Purpose of John:**
 - John tells us his purpose plainly: "But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name." (John 20:31).
- **Themes in John:**
 - Jesus is the Word made flesh
 - Jesus reveals God's glory
 - Eternal life is found in Him alone
 - Belief is the way to life
 - Life flows only from union with Christ
- **Our Response to this Truth:**
 - Believe in Him – Abide in Him – Live by His Word – Trust in His promises – Love as He loved

Recap:

John 8:31-47 - The Truth Will Set You Free - Josiah

- Last week, we concluded our study with many people coming to faith in Jesus Christ. Jesus' interaction began with him introducing himself as the light of the world, and toward the end of our study last week, he focused on the idea of being dead in sin as opposed to believing in Jesus. In this week's section, we resume Jesus' interaction with the Pharisees. This week, he begins by addressing the believers in the crowd by saying, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (John 8:31a-32).
 - This is a packed statement, but before we dive into its significance, we must understand what the word 'abide' means.
 - If you are to read or listen to articles or commentaries on this section, the predominant narrative and takeaways from this passage were that merely believing is not good enough, but in order to realize your faith and experience freeing truth, you must. Not only is this contrary to the purpose of John, but it is not the purpose of Jesus' words.
 - Therefore, what does "abide" mean?
 - In short, it means to stay, remain, or stand, and it would be synonymous with "having faith". Defining this is very helpful; without this, it can cause fear and doubt, but ultimately, Jesus is calling people from faith to faith, to continue believing and resting in him. When an individual comes to faith, they experience an immediate change, and they are set free, and yet through sanctification, if we continue to abide, we can continually experience this freedom more and more. This statement serves as a reminder of a present reality and a call to continuous faith so that we can further experience the freeing truth of the light of the world.
 - **What are we being freed from, what are we being freed to, and what does this look like for a believer?**
- The Pharisees respond to this statement in defense, claiming that since they are of the line of Abraham, they have never experienced slavery. It is unclear whether their words are referring to their physical or spiritual reality; either way, they are wrong. Physically, the Israelites have a long track record of being enslaved, most notably to the Egyptians, as seen in the exodus. Furthermore, even in their current state, they are not slaves, but they sure aren't free under the rule and reign of the Roman Empire. Now, if they are talking spiritually, Jesus has continually spoken words contrary to them being free, even if we just return to the last passage, he uses the language of being dead in sin.
 - If Jesus wasn't clear before, his next statement directly attacks the Pharisees' position. He does so by using an analogy of a slave and a son in a household.
 - "The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed." - John 8:35-36
 - **What is the purpose of this image? Who is the son, and who is the slave?**

- Jesus' argument completely undermines the assumptions that the Pharisees hold. They think that their physical lineage does anything for them when in fact, Jesus says, "I know that you are offspring of Abraham; yet you seek to kill me because my word finds no place in you. I speak of what I have seen with my Father, and you do what you have heard from your father." (John 8:37-38). The lineage from Abraham is of no use for them; their spiritual lineage is, in fact, the only thing that matters. Jesus states that his Father is from heaven, while theirs is not.
- **How do we see people continue to value physical heritage or ethnicity over spiritual parentage and identity today?**
- In this next section, the Pharisees continue to defend their position as sons of Abraham, yet Jesus points out their works, and their hearts portray otherwise. They intend to kill Jesus, and they lie, and this does not reveal a descendant of Abraham; instead, this shows that their father is the Devil because "your will is to do your father's desires" (John 8:44).
 - **The Pharisees think they are sons of Abraham through their physical lineage, but how is one a son of Abraham according to the Bible? Where is this found in the Bible?**
- In conclusion, all of us are bound to our nature; we cannot do anything to escape who we are. Christ invites us to become free of our fleshly nature by abiding in his word, which is a reminder of a present reality and a promise of a future reality. There has never been a believer on the face of the earth that the Spirit has not worked in. He promises, all those who believe are truly my disciples and I am "steadfast to persevere you to the end" (Matthew 24:13). This passage is not a call to look different in order to experience the freedom of Christ, but it is a call to believe and rest in the reality that you are free. Paul does a much better job of explaining this reality than I do when he says, "For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith, as it is written, The righteous shall live by faith". If you believe in Christ for you, then your father is God, and you join in the inheritance that Christ purchased for you on the cross.

John 8:48-59 → Before Abraham Was, I Am - Noble

- We have just come off a passage where Jesus was facing intense persecution and confrontation from the religious leaders. They were trying to inquire about his identity (light of the world) and their spiritual status (their father is the devil). This passage is one of the clearest claims to Jesus' divinity in the entire gospel.
 - We then see that our passage starts out with the Jews (religious leaders) asking if they are not right to say that he is a Samaritan or if he has a demon in him.
 - They responded to the truth of Jesus with name-calling and not an argument. They essentially knew that they were wrong until they started insulting him.
 - Calling him a Samaritan would have been a racial and religious insult. These were people who didn't just "dislike" each other. They had centuries of political, religious, and cultural hostility built up, so we can see why calling Jesus a Samaritan would have been a serious insult.
 - After Assyria conquered the northern part of Israel, it deported many of the Israelites, and a lot of foreign people came into the land. The Jews began to intermarry with the foreigners, and because they were ethnically mixed, the Jews in the South did not want to associate with them.
 - Jesus will then go on to respond to their insults with more truth that no doubt upset them. But it is important to know that he does not fight back at them in return. He simply responds with the truth. This is seen in and backed up by other scripture as well.
 - 1 Peter 2:23 *When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.*
 - **In verses 49-51, Jesus talks about how there is One who seeks His glory, and He is the judge. In what way do we see that the Father will glorify the Son as judge? And have we seen other passages in John that talk about the judgment?**
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- **Is Jesus arguing for a works-based salvation in John 8:51? Please discuss and explain your answers.**
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- They then try to continue to push on Him and say that they know that He has a demon because Abraham (who was pretty much the greatest person they could think of) had not died. And now Jesus is saying that He will show people how to escape death?
 - We can see why the tension is so high here. These people are claiming Abraham as their Father, and Jesus is telling them that they clearly aren't of Abraham. This would be incredibly insulting because this was their identity (or so they thought).
 - **Why do we think that Jesus says that Abraham rejoiced to see His day (v. 56)?**

Discussion Questions:

1. Where have we seen the book of John talk about how unbelievers are enslaved to sin and under the wrath of God, and why do we think this is so important to understand?
 2. How do we think that people in the OT would have been able to see Christ?
 3. Are we able to rejoice when we see Christ, and are we glad when we see Him? If so, why is this important for us here and now?
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Other Helpful Resources:

- He Must Increase Podcast by Connor Shady & Adam Tredeau (Official Podcast of 3:30!)
- Waukesha Bible Church John 8 Sermons (Find on YouTube)

Other Reminders:

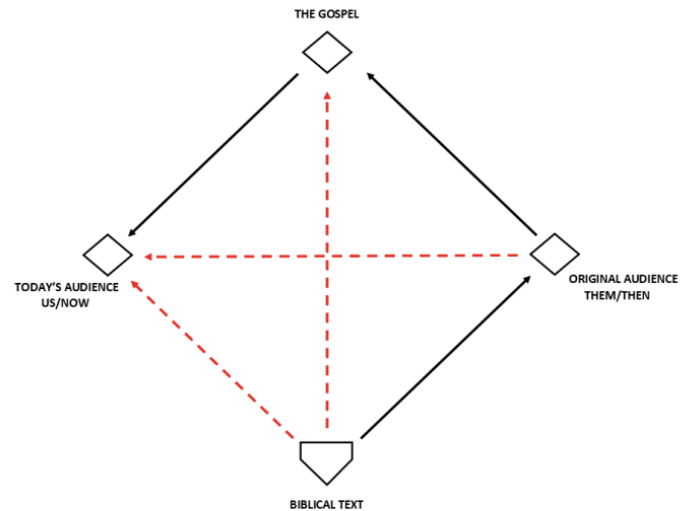
- Get involved with a church - **Specifically WBC!**
 - **Adam is teaching: 9 AM Class on the Book of Romans at WBC prior to service.**
 - WBC service is at 10:00 AM every Sunday!
 - Check out our Website: Threethirtyministry.com
- Join the 3:30 GroupMe chat to stay up to date on everything 3:30 Ministry.
- Also check us out on Instagram: @three.thirty.ministries and @three.thirty.mens.ministry
- Night of worship Dec 7th at 7:30 pm at WBC. (Free cookies!)

ANOTHER WAY TO GO ABOUT THIS IDEA: THINK BASEBALL

- When preparing and studying scripture, our focus is to always stay true to the scripture.
- In order to best do this, we use a method called the Simeon Trust method, which simply lays out a process to faithfully discern the Bible.

- FIRST:

- Understanding who the text was written to. (The Audience)
- Understanding why the text was written. (The Purpose)
- Understanding the structure, genre, context, emphasis, and melodic line of the text.
- In a nutshell, the first step focuses on understanding what the text meant to its original audience.



- SECOND:

- Once we have done this, we must filter it through the Gospel.
- This means understanding when and why this text was written in reference to the cross.
→ Is it pointing to the coming of Christ (OT), is it pointing to Christ and what Christ has already done (NT), is the text speaking of law, is it speaking of the Gospel, etc?

- THIRD:

- Once we've understood the text's original meaning/audience and have filtered it through the Gospel lens, we are able to determine what it means to us now. Without this process, the proper application of the Bible is essentially impossible.

- COMING HOME: Once we understand the appropriate application of the text, our legwork essentially stops, and we become fully reliant on the Holy Spirit to work in us.
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The Gospel: **We Can't**, **God Can**, **Jesus Did!**

- **Sin.** None of us can escape it. Because of it, we are spiritually dead and in need of life. Our debt before God is insurmountable. It is the biggest problem any of us has, since there is nothing we can do ourselves to pay that debt. God's standard is perfection, so no amount of good works or religious activities is enough.
 - 1 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins 2 in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience - 3 among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.
(Ephesians 2:1-3)
- **But God...** These two words are some of the most powerful words in the Bible. God is merciful and loving. He did what we could never do in and of ourselves. He saved us by grace alone and gave us new life in Christ.
 - 4 **But God**, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ - by grace you have been saved - 6 and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.
(Ephesians 2:4-7)
- **Jesus saves.** He is God's gift to us. He paid our debt before the Father. And through his death and resurrection, we are raised to eternal life. There is nothing we can do to earn it. It is only through Christ that we live a life pleasing to God.
 - 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. (Ephesians 2:8-10)