



Free Indeed
Message Notes, June 26, 2016
John 8:31-36

As Jesus continued the dialogue with these “Jews who believed” he told them: You are slaves to sin, you have murderous hearts, you are children of the devil, you are liars! (vv. 34, 40, 44, 55) How can such things be for “ones who believe”?

There are two kinds of belief:

- Cognitive, conceptual belief (with the mind only)
- Deeper, *soulful* belief that transforms and expresses itself outwardly in how one lives

How are these two dimensions of belief captured in Jesus’ parable of the soils (Matthew 13:1-4)?

- Path soil
- Rocky soil
- Thorny soil
- Fruitful soil

Which of the above are unbelief, conceptual belief, transforming belief?

How does James 2:19-20, 26 express this same dichotomy of conceptual belief and transforming belief?

If you had been present when Blondin took a man in a wheelbarrow on a tightrope over a gorge, would you have believed in him? Would you have volunteered to be his next rider?

Fundamentally, the difference here is Lordship! Not simply believing *about* Jesus, but trusting *in* Jesus by surrendering the reigns of my life to Him. Submission is the essence of true belief.

“If you hold to my teaching, you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

“Hold to” – honor, practice, live it out. Submission > Truth > Freedom

In their arrogance, these Jews defensively (and quite erroneously) declared, “we have never been slaves of anyone.” (v. 33) Jesus bypasses their debate to zero in on the heart issue of freedom: That sin enslaves (v. 34).

Whoever yields to sin is in bondage. Yielding to sin > Deception > Bondage

There are two kinds of freedom:

- External, circumstantial freedom (shallow, variable, artificial)
- Inner, spiritual freedom (deep, unshakable, genuine)



There are people who think they are free but they are really not.

Freedom is born out of submission not license. We are only free when we are bound to one who can give true freedom—like a kite, free to fly as long as it is anchored to one on the ground. If the string is cut, it falls mercy to the erratic winds, spinning and spiraling out of control until it eventually crashes to the ground.

We were created to live in submission to our loving Creator. If we do not submit to Him, we will come under the control of sin. Romans 6:15-16 clearly expresses this principle of submission.

Jesus is the only source of true freedom (John 8:36). His life, death and resurrection *and* his teachings bring freedom.

- Past: We are forgiven. Freed from the power of past mistakes.
- Present: We have a new identity in Christ. We are sons and daughters, forever (v. 35). Freed from the bondage of having to validate ourselves to the many others around us. Freed to live before (a loving) audience of One.
- Future: We have an eternal destiny. Freed from fear of future uncertainties and “what ifs.”

Freed from and to:

- Freed from sin; freed to righteousness.
- Freed from our flesh; freed to His Spirit.
- Freed from the things that bring destruction; freed to the things that give life.

Reflection Questions

1) Where do you long for freedom in your life?

- Past mistakes, wounds?
- Present pressures to validate your significance? Present stresses of life? Present battles with sin?
- Future fears, worries, uncertainties?

2) What obstacles (rocks or thorns) hinder your roots of belief from growing deep and bearing transforming fruit?

3) Are there any areas of your life that you have not submitted to the (loving) Lordship of Jesus?

4) If you answered “yes” to any of the above, how might you tangibly respond to the Lord in submission, obedience, or trust?