



SERIES: September 2022 – February 2023 Believe

SPEAKER: NAT CRAWFORD

Thursday, December 1, 2022

Scripture: John 8:31-33

TITLE: The Truth Will Set You Free

What is truth? Is truth relative? Is it up to each person to define? Is it up to a culture? Does truth actually exist? When someone makes a truth claim, should you believe them? Who should you believe? Truth has become a very confusing business.

So, if truth exists, I want to know it. And if it exists, I want to know why it matters.

That's what we want to talk about today as we continue our study of the Book of John. Let's pick up the story in John 8:31-33.

So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." They answered him, "We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, 'You will become free'?"

Jesus is speaking in the temple court and it is filled with a wide variety of people. There are non-believers, religious leaders, haters of Jesus and everything in between. In verse 31, it says, "Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him." Believed what? They believed what Jesus said. But here's the deal. Earlier in John, Jesus said that people believed in Him but He did not believe in them. In other words, their faith was shallow, inauthentic and would be short lived.

This describes many of these people. So Jesus makes things clear: "If you abide" that means to live inside, to cling to, to be of – if you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples." In the book of James, James will say that faith without works is dead. Abraham and Rahab proved their faith by their works. Jesus is saying, "If you are truly my disciple – my follower, you will listen to what I say. You will follow what I say. You will be in love with all of me, not the just parts that work for you."

And guess what, according to Jesus, His word and He himself is truth. That truth will set you free. There is life to the fullest in Christ. There is freedom in Christ. He is truth. He speaks truth. Those who abide in Christ are His disciples and in Him there is freedom.

But the Jews responded with, "Whoa, Jesus, we are children of Abraham. We've never been slaves." They are speaking spiritually because they have a long history of being slaves of rulers and kingdoms. They were slaves in Egypt, Babylon, Assyria, the Philistines, and now to Rome. So they are saying, "We are God's chosen people through Abraham. You're full of it, Jesus."

What a tragic response to truth and freedom. But many of us today think we are free when we are really slaves. Think about it: we have more money, more freedom, more things, more resources, and more information than ever before but we are unhealthier than ever. We're more depressed than ever. We are more anxiety ridden than ever. We are free in one sense but in the real sense, we are slaves of sin, performance, religion, and darkness. We need truth. We need hope. We need Jesus.

So here's my challenge for you today: pursue truth. Many of us pursue what makes us feel good rather than what is good. We want half-truths when we need whole truths. Nothing will free us like Christ. But many of us bind our hands in slavery to something. Jesus says, "You don't have to. Abide in me. Listen to me. Look at me. Follow me. Trust me. When you do, there is real freedom."

Today, abide in Christ. Cling to truth. When you do this, you will win the day.