

GLENKIRK CHURCH



WEEKLY DEVOTIONS

# The DEVO

JANUARY 27 - 31, 2020



Questions

FOR JESUS

SERMON SERIES

JANUARY 5 - FEBRUARY 23

# MONDAY

## John 8:31-38 – Freedom!

“... and the truth will make you free.” —Jesus Christ (John 8:32)

FREEDOM—a most valued, highly charged word, inspiring revolutions and wars, mass movements in literature, art, and music. It’s almost the very definition of what is good, and the lack of it is defined as bad. People struggling for freedom are regarded as great and heroic.

To be free is to be human. Theologically, it’s the very essence of the man and the woman when they were first created by God “in His own image” (Genesis 1:27)—His giving them the gift of “free will”—for only in freedom can the other human virtues become true or real. Love, for instance, can only be true and real if it is expressed freely. That’s why when a bride and groom are married, it’s assumed they are under no compulsion but freely accept each other to be husband and wife.

On closer look, however, “freedom” is not such a simple concept. First, it has a **physical** and a **mental** aspect. A person in chains is still free to think as he wills. It has an **age** aspect. Children are not allowed as much freedoms as adults are. It has a **social-relational** aspect. A person may

exercise his freedom only up to the point where it does not violate the freedom or rights of others. That’s called being **responsible** in one’s exercise of freedom.

And it has a **spiritual** aspect, which we’ll see in the next pages.

## QUESTIONS

What does “freedom” mean to you?

## PRAYERS FOR CHRIS AND CHRISTINE KERNAGHAN AND CRU

Pray for Chris and Christine Kernaghan’s college ministry at SFSU. (Chris is a former Glenkirk pastor’s son.) This ministry, CRU, formerly Campus Crusade for Christ, seeks to provide an opportunity for college students to learn about Jesus in an authentic community that seeks to care for itself and serve the city of San Francisco.

# TUESDAY

## John 8:31-38 – 750 Years of Bondage!

*“And you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.”*

—Jesus Christ (John 8:32)

In Jesus time, the longing for freedom was heavy in the heart of the Jewish people. In the early 30’s AD—the years considered to be Jesus’ earthly ministry—Judaea had already been under foreign domination for almost 750 years, falling under one foreign empire after another during the last 100 of those years under the Roman Empire.

The longing for freedom was kept alive in their synagogues where they gathered on the Sabbath days where they were constantly reminded of their exodus—their departure from the land of slavery in Egypt with Moses leading them. Although they were God’s “Chosen People,” God allowed foreign nations to conquer them due to their own stiff-necked disobedience to God’s laws.

But they were also reminded that God never truly abandoned them. For instance, they were allowed to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem under Cyrus the Persian Emperor. The stories of Nehemiah, Esther, and Judas Maccabee, among others, gave them hope that they would be free one day when the promised Messiah would come and restore the glory of their kingdom as in the days of King David.

It was in the midst of this fever pitch longing for freedom when Jesus of Nazareth came into the scene, proclaiming “the time is fulfilled, the Kingdom of God is at hand, repent and believe in the Good News!” (Mark 1:15).

But the freedom that Jesus came to give is of a different kind.

## QUESTIONS

What do you need most to be free from, or to be free to do?

## PRAYERS FOR CHRIS AND CHRISTINE KERNAGHAN AND CRU

Pray for the continued growth of a new student who joined the Tanzania mission trip this summer.

# WEDNESDAY

## John 8:31-38 – How Can We Be Set Free?

“... continue in My Word ... and you will know the truth ...”

—Jesus Christ (John 8:32)

When Jesus said “the truth will make you free,” His Jewish hearers were puzzled. So they asked Him, “We are descendants of Abraham and have never been slaves to anyone. What do You mean by saying, ‘you shall be made free’?” (v. 33)

In reply, Jesus explained a deeper kind of bondage we can be subject to: the bondage to sin. It’s deadlier because it cuts us off from the source of what we all desire most—everlasting life with God, the Source of love and everything that is good. Jesus says, “Very truly, I tell you, everyone who commits sin is a **slave** to sin” (v. 34).

Jesus gives a parable based on their knowledge of the institution of slavery common at that time: “The slave does not have a permanent place in the household. The son has a place there forever. So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed” (vv. 34-36). Being right with God is equal to “having a place in God the Father’s household.” Since He, Jesus, is God’s Son, His place in the household of God the Father is **permanent**. Believing in Jesus Himself is **the guarantee of freedom**—

from the status of a slave who can be thrown out anytime, and to the status of another son who can stay in God’s household forever.

In God’s economy, freedom is being with God and slavery is separation from God. To be free is to be united by faith with the One who has a place with God forever, Jesus the Son of God.

## QUESTIONS

Are you learning the words of Jesus more and more?

## PRAYERS FOR CHRIS AND CHRISTINE KERNAGHAN AND CRU

Pray for the launching and growth of the new Destino Club which ministers to the Latino community at SFSU.

# THURSDAY

## John 8:31-38 – Illusory Versus True Freedom

*“If you continue in My Word, you are truly My disciples. And you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.”*

—Jesus Christ (John 8:32)

In the final analysis, our earthly status has secondary importance to our spiritual status in relation to God.

Sadly, in today’s world, when people enjoy democratic political freedoms and unprecedented levels of economic prosperity, people believe we have never been “more free.”

Spiritually, however, more and more people are turning their backs on God and His Word, deceived and enslaved by the lie that the universe is the product of pure, meaningless chance, and that we humans are merely “evolved from lower animal forms” without the need for a personal Creator God.

Thankfully, there is also no lack of scientific thinkers whose scientific, mathematical calculations have come to the sober conclusion that it is practically impossible for the conditions that allow the creation of the basic molecules of life—amino acids—coming together at the same time, computing its mathematical probability to 1 in  $10^{300}$  (with 1 in  $10^{50}$  being considered as virtually impossible). They conclude

that PHYSICAL AND BIOLOGICAL LIFE NEEDS ANOTHER LIFE, THE EVERLASTING LIFE OF GOD, TO CREATE IT.

Therefore, *true freedom* comes with knowing and believing in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. To dedicate one’s life to His service and to stay true to God’s revealed Word, the Bible, is evidence that one is truly free. As Jesus says, *“If you continue in My Word, you are truly My disciples. And you will know the truth, and **the truth will make you free**”* (v. 31).

## QUESTIONS

Are you experiencing the joy of being free in Christ?

## PRAYERS FOR CHRIS AND CHRISTINE KERNAGHAN AND CRU

Pray for the recent effort to enlist college professors at SFSU to meet with each other and share a vision for living out faith in their academic environments and the subsequent impact on students.

# FRIDAY

## John 8:31-38 – Freedom in Christ

“If the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.” —Jesus Christ (John 8:36)

“Continue in My Word”—that is Jesus’ admonition and command. We need to be continuing students of Jesus’ words and His story as recorded in the New Testament and in the Old Testament, which prophesies His coming. Teaching one another in the Word, finding the joy of obeying it, and encouraging others to do the same is a never-ending, lifetime endeavor. By this we know that we are *truly His disciples*, getting to know Jesus’ story more and more as His truths acquire richer meaning with our growing life experiences.

Increasing in knowledge and understanding of His Word also results in our being released more and more *from* the shackles of falsehoods and lies that threaten to harm and destroy us, into the FREEDOM, LOVE and JOY that God our True Father has always wanted for us, both now and forever!

An excellent example of a *free man* is the Apostle Paul—well-versed in the knowledge of his time. He knew Roman law, but he was also deep in the Scriptures. Thus, he could masterfully engage in conversation with people at all levels, sharing with them the true freedom that Jesus gives.

As he wrote in one of his inspired letters, “Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free ...” (Galatians 1:8).

We are not truly free—regardless of the superficial, deceptive, false freedom we think we are enjoying—until we attain the True Freedom that the Truth of Jesus gives us.

## QUESTIONS

Are you helping others to find true freedom in Christ?

## PRAYERS FOR CHRIS AND CHRISTINE KERNAGHAN AND CRU

Pray that Christine will continue to experience improvement in a long-standing health issue.



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