

So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples," he said, "and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.

John 8:31-32 ESV



BEREAN BIBLE CHURCH

Worship & Communion Service

Sunday, November 6, 2022

SERVICES & CONTACTS


Sunday Worship Services in-person & live stream - 10:40am & 6pm

 <https://www.youtube.com/user/bereanbarbados/live>

Join us for Sunday School in-person - 9:30am

There is a class for ALL ages

Midweek Service in-person & online (Wednesday)

 **ZOOM Noon** and repeated **7:30pm** | link provided

Youth Service in-person - 7pm (Friday)

 **WhatsApp**  **Signal**  **Telegram 845-5752** or **Tel: 426-4707**

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www.bereanbarbados.org

Liberty in a World of Freedom Substitutes

What Jesus Teaches About Freedom in John 8

Giovanni di Lorenzo de' Medici was the second son of a famous ruler of the Florentine Republic. He grew up in one of Europe's prominent political and banking families. The Medicis were patrons of the church and also of artists like Michelangelo, Raphael, and Leonardo da Vinci.

For his own part, Giovanni was a good kid who loved his studies and loved helping people. So it wasn't surprising to anyone when he heard a call to the ministry. And because of his family's connections, it also wasn't surprising when he advanced quickly in church leadership. In the year 1513, Giovanni became Pope Leo X.

Seven years later, Martin Luther dedicated a book to him. In a letter he attached to his little pamphlet, *The Freedom of a Christian*, Luther praised Pope Leo's service to the poor and his godly reputation. But Luther also expressed concern that in spite of Leo's great wealth, power, and family heritage, he was enslaved without Christ.

It's easy to look for freedom in all the wrong places. In fact, when people today define "freedom," it's often a declaration of their individual autonomy—an announcement they're not bound by legal, religious, or moral constraints.

In John 8:31-32, Jesus had something different in mind: "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples," he said, "and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

Our Need for Freedom

The Jews who heard Jesus's words were offended. They believed their ethnic heritage and moral performance afforded them freedom by right (v. 33). After all, they were Abraham's children. They had the temple and the law. How could they not be free?

If you've grown up as a religious churchgoer, perhaps you can relate. Christians come from different cultural backgrounds and we have differing opinions about lots of issues—things like our kids' education, the use of alcohol, and which political candidate to support. In the last few years, we've discovered we differ in our approaches to mask-wearing and vaccinations.

Sadly, these differences lead to division, and they often expose our pride and self-righteousness. For my own part, I've discovered the hardest time to avoid pride and smug feelings is when I have the moral high ground.

It might begin with genuine concern for a friend whose decisions may cause them or others harm. But then if he doesn't respond to what I'm saying in the way I hope or expect, I feel hurt. The anger starts to rise in my chest, and I'm tempted to type a four-paragraph Facebook post in my head.

It's the sin within me. You see, self-righteous people like me can think moral behavior and religious performance sets them free. But Jesus knows better. He tells his Jewish followers a person can know sound doctrine and look perfectly upright but still be trapped. Why? Because "everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin" (v. 34).

Liberty Jesus Offers

But those who cling to Christ—who believe he’s the one the Father has sent—are set free from sin and death (John 6:29; 8:28) and into two beautiful new realities.

1. The freedom of a royal inheritance.

Even if a slave is brought up in the house, he can’t expect to live there long term; a son, however, is different (John 8:35). Jesus is the Son—the prince of heaven’s kingdom with a permanent place in the Father’s royal family. Yet the perfect Son came to earth and died for us. He took the guilt our pride and smugness incurs.

Jesus then rose and ascended back to his royal throne. In rising, he set the captives free. Now Christ shares his royal status with us. He gives those who trust him a certain future and glorious inheritance (John 1:12).

This freedom is for people who have never experienced free markets or governments. He gives it to those who don’t have the right family heritage or the best reputation. Even those trapped in Chinese labor camps and South African slums can possess it.

What God says about you as his beloved child is more important than what anyone else says or does. Knowing you belong to him even gives you the confidence to hear hurtful, maddening words from a careless friend without it threatening your identity. “If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed” (John 8:36).

2. The freedom to serve in love.

In many societies, you can pursue any job you want. If you acquire the degrees and skills necessary for a position, it can be yours. But in the ancient world, a son learned from his father. If dad was a fisherman, his son was too. If dad was a carpenter, his son learned the trade.

Jesus had this in mind when he called Jewish leaders children of the devil (vv. 37–38). They looked like the devil’s apprentices. They’d believed his lies and had murderous hatred in their hearts. Before knowing Christ, we shared the same sinful identity (Eph. 2:1–3).

But in Christ, the opposite is true. We’re adopted as royal children who now imitate our loving Father. This doesn’t mean sinful anger won’t well up in our hearts sometimes. Sin remains until the resurrection. But Christ is with us too, and his Spirit within moves us to put our interests and emotions aside as we offer kindness to our neighbors.

Writing to Pope Leo, Luther had Jesus’s two-fold promise of freedom in mind. His tract began with this couplet:

A Christian is a lord of all, completely free of everything.

A Christian is a servant, completely attentive to the needs of all.

Have you been set free? In Christ, you’ll find a permanent inheritance as God’s royal child. You’ll possess true freedom while learning to imitate your Father in service and love. In a world of freedom substitutes, that’s good news.

Order of Service

WORSHIP & COMMUNION SUNDAY

November 6, 2022 at 10:40am

THEME: "Freedom in Christ"

1. Call to Worship
2. Announcements
3. Meditation & Invocation
4. **Agnus Dei** (Alleluia - For the Lord God Almighty Reigns)
5. **Thou Art Worthy** (Rev4:11)
6. **The Heart of Worship**
7. Scripture Reading: 1 Peter 4: 1-11
8. Prayer & Offertory - **Hymn 415: Leaning on the Everlasting Arms**
9. **Special Music - This is my Desire**
10. **Hymn 872: Brighten the Corner**
11. Sermon - Rev. Paul Garnes
12. **Behold the Lamb** (Communion Song)
13. Distribution of Elements
14. **Hymn 289: Consider Him**
15. Benediction

ITEMS FOR PRAYER



- Give thanks for 56 years of freedom as a Nation.
- Against gang culture and gun violence.
- For Gregory's family as they mourn.
- For comfort for families who have recently lost loved ones.
- For the ministry and wellbeing of our Pastor and family.
- For healing for our sick members.
- For grace for our shut-in members.
- For the Gideons, ISIVCF & CEF ministries.
- For the economic recovery of our country.
- For the many Berean Churches in the DR Congo.
- For the friends of Berean - The Gilmours, Haecks, Hulls, Moores, Montagues, Porchers, Rogers, Rudders and Taylors.
- For our students, entrepreneurs and those seeking employment.
- For the peace of Jerusalem.

November Birthdays

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|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| 3 - Aletha Parris | 21 - Leneisha Watts | 28 - Peter Thomas |
| 5 - Pearlita Seale | 22 - Sheila Gill | 29 - Malivia Garnes |
| - Audrey Thomas | 23 - Joyy Ellis | |
| 8 - Eden Barnes | 24 - Jade King | |
| 11 - Marva Blackette | - Paul Garnes | |
| 12 - Rhonda Ifill | 26 - Frances Patrick | |
| - Sandra Piggott | 27 - Joshua Lucas | |
| 20 - Angela Bourne | - Cecile Reid | |

DEC

- 3 - Julia Lowe
- Julianne Moore
- 4 - Joan Aimey

Anniversaries

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 3 - Barry & Kim Ward | 25 - McCurley & Glenschella Taylor |
| 12 - Sylvester & Joyce Branch | 26 - Angie & Priestley Anthony Blunte |
| 15 - Michael & Wendy Jones | 28 - William & Wendene Wells |