

Series Title: At the Crossroad: From false beliefs to Freedom

Sermon Title: Week 8: The identity of Freedom!

Date: 11-24-19

– **In John 8:31-32 Jesus said...**

“If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. ³² Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.

† **The Truth will set you free...**

- **If the truth sets you free, then the opposite is also true... lies... false beliefs... hold us in bondage.**
- **Over the last eight weeks we’ve spent a lot of time talking about TRUTH. Specifically, GOD’S TRUTH that has the power to bring the light of freedom into the most common lies- false beliefs that through our lives can take root deep in our hearts, distorting our thoughts, leading to unhealthy emotions, and destructive behavior.**
- **In outline, 5 false beliefs... As we have walked through these, lots of scripture, lots of truth! But here’s the deal. All the truth in the world, if it only stays in our heads, as information, doesn’t do us- or those around us- any good.**
- **God didn’t send Jesus to us, FULL OF GRACE AND TRUTH, just so we could know that there is the possibility of freedom, but so that we might actually be FREE. As Jesus says just a breath later in John...**

John 8:36 *So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.*

† **Free Indeed!**

- **In John 8 we see Jesus move us from KNOWLEDGE of truth, to the promise that this truth WILL set us free, it has the power to set us free, to the great hope of being FREE IN DEED. In how we actually think, feel, and act. ONLY JESUS, who is IN US through the holy spirit, can make this happen, in partnership with our faith and trust. YOU SEE...**

† **Reality! God doesn’t call us to just agree with Truth. By the Spirit, God calls us to invite Christ into our places of wounded-ness, the actual places of our heart where these false beliefs have taken root.**

- **Man or woman who is working so hard to meet expectations of another person- spouse, boss, peers, parent... you believe your well being, sense of worth, is based on that persons approval. It could be that this pattern goes back into your life, maybe childhood, when love and acceptance were withheld unless you performed to a persons satisfaction. This has stuck with you, holding you captive.**
- **Person who has carried deep shame because of abuse you endured. You’ve buried this deep, wanting to avoid the pain and shame of exposure, but it’s hurting you, hurting your relationships.**
- **Maybe you hurt someone, and guilt and shame together have bound you for years.**
- **Young person- struggling with acceptance, who you are, fear of future, afraid to really be honest about your questions, your fear, your hurts, because you don’t want to be exposed, afraid people won’t understand, will think less of you. COULD GO ON!**
- **In the epilogue of his book, Pete points out that it’s very possible go to an unhealthy extreme in search our past for the roots of our struggles. It can become an obsession, ‘navel gazing’. BUT, it’s very biblical, necessary, to let the HOLY SPIRIT lead us, to open our hearts as we release our grip on the doors, to show us where we need healing, redemption...**

Psalm 139:23-24 Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way **FALSE BELIEFS** in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

- Think with me... not just **DO YOU HAVE THESE FALSE BELIEFS**, but **WHERE**. Where in your heart, in your past, maybe right now, have these attached to your understanding of who you are?
- As I walk through these, **IMAGINE** that **TRUTH** that in that time, in that place, that you are **NOT ALONE**. That **CHRIST IS THERE**, present, showing you the truth that he desires you to see.

† **False belief #1:** Pain is bad, I need to protect myself from experiencing it.

Truth! Pain is actually one of God's most important gifts

- What is it? What happened. What are you carrying? Can you see Christ in that place, with you, holding you. What is he wanting to show you, free you?

† **False Belief #2:** My well-being depends on meeting the expectations of others.

- You're working so hard to live up to an impossible standard. What is it? Whose is it? Show this, fully, to Jesus. Lay it out. Let him show you truth that...

Truth! My well-being is in Christ and comes from living by Grace, not by keeping the law

† **False belief #3:** Fulfillment of my core needs can be found in a source other than God.

- We all share the core needs of **SECURITY/ Love, affirmation, acceptance... and SIGNIFICANCE-** meaning, belief your life has value.
- You've been trying to meet these needs in sources that fall short. What are these? What is your deepest needs that your heart is crying out for? Show these to Jesus! Be honest. Ask him to take you on journey, to show you truth that can free...

Truth! Jesus is the key to my needs being met; He is the source!

† **False belief #4:** The standards of my own Justice system must be met by everyone.

- There's a voice in your heart that is constantly looking around and crying out 'things aren't fair!' Maybe you have suffered an injustice, or someone you love. It's caused you to believe that life is never fair, maybe that God isn't just, and that you have to make life work on your terms.
- Your thirst for things to be fair, and right, on your terms is causing you to be frustrated, resulting in judgmental thoughts, even anger and bitterness, toward others.
- Jesus is inviting you to show him these places... to honestly give them to him, and come to know the deep relief of really believing truth that...

Truth! Justice is God's domain and his simply calls me to love and forgive.

† **False belief #5:** My real self will never be good enough.

- Oh friend. It could be one big thing, or many. But life has conspired to tell you that you are less than. Not of worth. Not worth knowing, or loving. You are damaged goods. This might be the deepest place of hurt, of injustice, and it may have led to unhealthy, even destructive thoughts, emotions, behaviors.
- Jesus is inviting you to take him into the places of your heart where these hurts began. He wants you to see that he is there with you, and he wants to show you that these voices are lies. **HIS TRUTH...**

Truth! I am God's masterpiece, and worth being, knowing, and loving.

- Inviting Jesus into these deep places of our heart is not easy. Our flesh will fight it. But **KNOW THIS...** you are not alone in that struggle. **YOU NEVER WERE ALONE**. In Hebrews 13....

Hebrews 13:5-6 *God has said, “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.”⁶ So we say with confidence, “The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me? **What can my past, actions, expectations of others, shame, guilt, lies of the enemy in all of these things...***

† **Communion: What God has given to us, what we give to God**

- **As followers of Christ, there are two great celebrations God has given us. Both are confessions of our UNION with Christ, and both are centered on the cross.**
- **The first is Believers Baptism, where we confess our union with Christ in his Death, burial, and resurrection. The SECOND is communion, as we purposefully remember the gift Jesus gave through his death, sacrifice of himself.**

1 Corinthians 11:23-28 *For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread,²⁴ and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.”²⁵ In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.”²⁶ For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.*

- **This is the gift we are to remember. The GIFTS of forgiveness, redemption, reconciliation... and the gift of the NEW LIFE, the NEW COV, that would come with His resurrection.**
- **We don’t think of it as much, but in Communion God also invites us to bring a gift to him... Paul says**

²⁷ *So then, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord.* ²⁸ *Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup.*

- **This sounds harsh, but it is actually a beautiful hope. Let me paraphrase... “Whoever remembers sacrifice of Christ without fully surrendering all of who they are to Christ sins, because they miss the true point of the cross! This isn’t just a religious exercise, it is a confession of what Jesus did, who Jesus is, which is the source of our life, who we are, our very identity! SO, let us give to Jesus the only gift we have- a heart that is fully open to him. A heart that desires to be examined, so the TRUTH of Christs sacrifice doesn’t just stay in our heads, but penetrates to the deepest part of our soul.**
- **OUR GIFT God calls us to surrender to Christ is our right to hang on to our false beliefs, our pain. Christ died and rose again so that IN HIM we may be FREE INDEED from the chains of the old life, the old person, we used to be.**
- **EDWARDS: Piece of paper. You may be thinking of very specific event, place you need to allow Christ to enter. Maybe there’s a word that for you sums up what you know Christ wants to do... WRITE IT. Maybe you just need to put your name, agreeing with Jesus that HE IS YOUR SOURCE, YOUR LIFE, and your heart is fully open to how he wants to you EXPERIENCE him as your life in all of who you are...**
- **Instructions.... PRAY.**

Heavenly Father,

By faith, I choose to believe I am who You say I am. I am redeemed, alive, and in union with You. You are my life, you are my true identity. I choose to believe that In Christ I am forever forgiven, a new creation, the chosen of the Father, God's precious possession, holy, righteous, blameless, and dearly loved. I am Your poiema, Your creative masterpiece! Lord Jesus, I fully invite You into the deepest places of my past and my present.

Lord, by your Holy Spirit show me Your redemptive presence in all these places that led to the false beliefs I now surrender to You.

*Search me, God, and know my heart;
test me and know my anxious thoughts!*

See if there is any offensive way in me, show me my false beliefs!

Lord I surrender these false beliefs so that by Your truth,

You may set me free and lead me in the way everlasting.

For from You and through You and for You are all things, including my very life.

To You be the glory forever! Amen.