

# DEVOTIONAL

TRUE FREEDOM // JANUARY 2, 2022

GRACE  
FELLOWSHIP

**Discussion Starter:** What do you think it means to be free in Christ?

**Key Text:** “So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, ‘If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples,<sup>32</sup> and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.’<sup>33</sup> 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?’<sup>34</sup> Jesus answered them, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin.<sup>35</sup> The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever.’” (John 8:31-35)

It is God’s desire that His children and creation experience freedom—what the apostle Paul called “*the freedom of the glory of the children of God*” (Romans 8:21). We experience freedom today when we know Christ as our personal Savior: “*If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed*” (John 8:36). And the day will come in the future when we Christians will have glorified bodies free from sin’s degrading power (1 Corinthians 15:35-49) and live in a wonderful new environment free from sin’s corrupting presence (Revelation 21-22).

**Discuss:** What are some things you are most looking forward to experiencing in Heaven?

For us to better understand what it means to be truly free, let’s pair the word “freedom” with the Bible-based concepts of life, truth, love, and service that support and clarify the concept of freedom.

## Freedom and Life

People who do not know Christ are not free since they do not have spiritual life—they are “*dead in the trespasses and sins*” (Ephesians 2:1). While non-Christians may be religious, God considers their religion “dead works” since they are practiced by people who are spiritually dead (Hebrews 6:1; 9:14).

When a person receives Christ, he/she experiences a rebirth—a spiritual, holy, and heavenly birth that results in being made alive spiritually through faith in Christ (Ephesians 2:4-6). Rebirth, also called regeneration, ushers in a radical change in a believer’s life—“*he is a new creation; the old has passed away; behold, the new has come*” (2 Corinthians 5:17). Just as physical birth fits us for life on earth, spiritual rebirth fits us for life in Christ and in heaven.

**Discuss:** How would you explain the connection between freedom and life to a person who is not a Christian but is interested?

**Discuss:** In what ways have you “come alive” since receiving Christ—what changes have you seen in your life?

## Freedom and Truth

There is a false freedom that relies on lies and leads to defeat and destruction. 2 Peter 2:2 says, “*Many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of truth will be blasphemed.*” Paul compared false teaching to yeast: let a small amount get into the dough and it will spread and infect the whole lump (Luke 12:1; 1 Corinthians 5:6-8; Galatians 5:9).

Freedom is life, and life must be led and controlled by truth. Jesus is truth (John 14:6); the Holy Spirit is truth (1 John 5:6); the Scriptures are truth (John 17:17), and the church is a “*pillar and buttress of the truth*” (1 Timothy 3:15). For us to experience true freedom, we must allow the Holy Spirit to teach us the truth about Jesus from the Scriptures, and if we fellowship with the people of God, the truth will become a part of us, and we will experience freedom which is life! Jesus said, “*The truth will set you free*” (John 8:32).

**Discuss:** How would you explain the connection between freedom, life, and truth to a person who is not a Christian but is open to hearing your view?

**Discuss:** It has been said that God’s truth doesn’t just inform us; it also transforms us. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Why?

## Freedom and Love

A person who is filled with hatred demonstrates that they are not free—they do not have the life of Christ within them, nor are they governed by truth.

In contrast, a person who demonstrates love—the “*fruit of the spirit*” (Galatians 5:22)—shows they have been set free by truth. We cannot have freedom from hate until we are controlled by love, and this quality of love is not something we manufacture ourselves. It is a fruit that grows by the work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts as we humble ourselves, meditate on the Scriptures, pray for God’s help, and walk in the Spirit.

**Discuss:** How would you explain the connection between freedom, life, truth, and love to a person who is not a Christian but is seeking spiritual freedom?

## Freedom and Service

True freedom comes when we put Jesus first, others next, and ourselves last. Freedom is life that is led by truth, is based on love, and is expressed through serving others. A person who is locked in the prison of self is not free. We are to “*live as people who are free...living as servants of God*” (1 Peter 2:16).

**Discuss:** How would you explain the connection between freedom, life, truth, love, and service to a person who is not a Christian but is interested?

## For Further Study:

“What is Christian Freedom?” article at [www.gotquestions.org](http://www.gotquestions.org)

“The Power of the Cross: Where True Freedom is Found” article at [www.crosswalk.com](http://www.crosswalk.com)