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[00:00:03] Let's all stand together today. Verse 31, chapter eight. John, the Bible says. 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. Where are the offspring? They're not. They're not happy with this. We're where we are. Offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it? There's this, like, sarcasm, anger. Like he's struck a nerve with them. They're not asking because they are looking for an answer. How is it that you say you will become free? Jesus answered them. Truly, truly. I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin. The slave does not remain in the house forever. The son or the daughter remains forever. So if the sun sets you free, you will be free. Indeed. Can I read that again? Okay. So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, if you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free. New King James version. The truth will make you free. I like that word better. We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say you will become free? Jesus answered them. Truly, truly. I say to you, everyone, what's the issue He's talking about here? The issue is sin. I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave. To send the slave does not remain in the house forever. The son or the daughter remains forever. So if the sun sets you free, you might be free. No, no, no, no. You will be free indeed.

[00:01:58] Let's pray. Father, thank you so much for the words of Christ. And thank you, God, for the power of your truth, God. Maybe more than ever. Maybe more than ever. God. We are in desperate need to anchor ourselves to the way to the truth and to the life. God, more than ever, our lost society needs him. And so, God, today we pray that you would just. Take our full attention. And help us God to, number one, really walk in the fullness of what's been provided, the power of truth. And number two, God awaken the lost. Awakened the lost. Who is living in darkness and is blind to your truth. God, we pray that you would open those eyes by the power of your spirit in Jesus name. Amen. You can have sleep. A 21st century Jewish rabbi made this statement about the power of words. He said, Words are singularly the most powerful force available to humanity. I think in some sense this guy was right. He said, words are singularly the most powerful force available to humanity. You know, the general yells charge and the soldiers go right into the battle. The doctor on the day of delivery says, It's a girl and you're wrapped around a little finger for the rest of your life. Right. There's a lot of power in that. The pastor is officiating a wedding service and he says, I now pronounce you husband and wife and. Right. An amen? We got anything else on that? Possibly any. Like this is a setup for you guys to be, like, all for marriage. Right. That's what that was. Yeah. You just lost it. So forget it. So words are powerful, but there aren't more powerful words in the words of Christ.

[00:04:03] I think of what he just said as we studied last week. Neither do I condemn you. Those are powerful words. And so I would say to you today, no one is power in the words like Jesus does. No one has power in their words like Jesus does. And his words are powerful because they're his. So when he speaks, lives transform. There is an intrinsic power in the words that Jesus said, not not for just the sake of the words themselves or how they're ordered in a sentence, but because He is Almighty God. You know, the Bible says that everything in the universe is held together by the Word of Christ. You want to think about how powerful this word is today? I'm sure you woke up, you know, you had your you had your espresso and you had your toast and you were driving in today and you're thinking, man, God, the universe is so huge, right? How is it all held together? You're thinking about black holes and nebula, which are star generator, star manufacturing plants. You're thinking about quantum physics. You're thinking about how your car and all the atoms are all contained together like they are. I know you were pondering that today, and I just want to answer that question for you. All right. Here on Sunday morning, it's all held together. Everything in the universe in a micro sense, in a macro sense, by the very word of Christ, by the very word of Christ, he holds all things together by the power of his word. And he makes a very strong statement here. And let me just tell you today, there are two things he says here. Everything is powerful, right? But there are two really extraordinary things he says in verse 32.

[00:05:44] These are memorize the whole verses and you will know the truth and the truth will make you free, man. That is that is a strong statement, isn't it? Somebody in the house of God say yes today. Thank you very much. And then in verse 36, he says, So if the sun makes you free or if the sun sets you free, you will be free. Indeed. Yeah. Hallelujah is right. And I'll wait for that. It's true. It begs the question, who? Who are these promises? Who are these statements for? Who are they for? Because you can read this and think, well, just in a general sense, that's just for everybody, no matter what. But Jesus was speaking to a group of people that in particular needed to hear these words. You'll notice as we started in verse 31 that he's talking to a group of Jews who believed but they were fringe in their faith. We're going to see this in just a minute. They weren't really sincere followers or disciples of Christ. And what Jesus here is doing is he's unmasking false professions of faith before they flood the ranks of the messianic community. He is unmasking false professions of faith before these false professions of faith flood the messianic community. As you read this chapter, and I would encourage you to read the chapter. All right. Because we're like locked into a portion or a fragment of the argument. But what you'll discover about these people is they were fickle in faith. The Bible says in verse 34, they were slaves to sin. The Bible says in verse 37 they were indifferent to the words of Christ. The Bible says in verse 44 that they were of the devil. Like this argument gets really intense.

[00:07:38] Okay, the Bible says in verse 55, Jesus calls them liars. And then at the very end, you know, this conversation doesn't get better with these people. It gets more heated, it gets more antagonistic, it becomes physically violent because, you know, they want to murder Christ. And so there's an attempt even to murder Jesus. And obviously that is not the fruit of someone who is sincerely a disciple. And so you say, well, what is a disciple? I want to just give you a working definition today for for a disciple. A disciple is a student or an apprentice of Jesus. One who believes in him follows his way by emulating his teachings in lifestyle and leads others to do the same. That's a disciple. That's a sincere follower. It's important to say today, because you guys know that churches across the country are filled with people who attend regularly. They're ritualistic in their observance of Christian rituals, but they're not really disciples of Christ. And that's a that's a big deal because. You know, you can think that you're right with Christ and you can think that you're saved. But if you're not really a disciple, you've never really experienced the power of his truth. So a disciple is one who not only believes in Jesus, but also follows his way by emulating his teaching and lifestyle and leads others to do the same. Jesus is truth. Jesus is truth. And maybe truth right now is the single most important issue facing societies in the West. There's no doubt that there has been an abrogation. There has been a decline in the belief of truth in our own society. In fact, I would say when it comes to truth, our society is a spiritual war zone. It's a spiritual war zone.

[00:09:31] I was reading in the news maybe you guys saw this article this week, the city of Boston. And of course, you know, we lived in New England for a long time. I love the city of Boston. It's just a it's a great city. But the people who are leading the city, they're dealing with a pretty significant problem. There's a rise in sexually transmitted disease because of the use of intravenous drugs. And, I mean, it's rampant in the city. And so they're trying to figure out solutions. This was their solution. They're trying to get people to stop using needles to get their drugs. And so the city now is passing out free crack pipes and meth pipes and other drug paraphernalia to get people from you know, to get people to stop using needles. Now, you read that you think. How in the world could anyone possibly think this is a good solution? And it's even crazier to hear these people in positions of power politically defend their position as if it's a good thing. But you know that we live in a culture that's just in chaos. Our culture is in chaos. And people can hear something like that as as a way of mediating or resolving a problem and step away and think, well, isn't that nice what the city is doing? How awesome that they're passing out free crack pipes. And there's a lot of us who are like, that is not a solution, right? We have a culture that celebrates and encourages thinking and behavior that's self-destructive. We have a culture in the name of truth, right? In the name of truth that celebrates and encourages thinking and behavior that's self-destructive. I was reading a it was it's more than an article is a small publication by Timothy Keller, who I think is one of the brightest minds in Christianity Today.

[00:11:25] And he's tracing this issue in Western societies, especially in America, this this departure from truth and this celebration of destructive behavior. He traces it, rightfully so, to the abandoning of a belief in a sacred order, and that is to say, a belief in a spiritual being, a transcendent, spiritual being, or transcend transcendent, spiritual world that is connected to moral standards. Because for a long time that was pretty much consistent within our culture, the belief that there was a transcendent spiritual being and that there were ethics and morals. And I'm not saying it was in any sense homogenous across the board over the last number of centuries. But for the most part, there were morals and ethics that were kind of standard within the culture that everyone could look to and say, well, you know, we at least agree on these things. But I'll tell you, and I don't need to tell you because you know it and you experience it all the time. There has been a rapid decay. There has been a rapid moral decay in our culture, and it is connected to the abandoning of belief in a transcendent being. And that vacuum now has been filled with things like social media. Right. We we we have now been, you know, that in conjunction with the exponential increase in utilization of technology has led us to a place where that vacuum where truth used to exist and no longer exists is being filled by things like social media. Did you know the average adult spends two and a half days on their social media? Did you know that the average teen's screen time on a daily basis is is up to now 5 hours and 33 minutes. I mean, that is a lot of screen time, and I'm sure there's a very low percentage of that that is connected to the pursuit of God or the pursuit of real truth.

[00:13:35] Somebody said this, and I think that is true in our age today. Truth has become whatever you click. In our age today, truth is, become whatever you click. And our beliefs are being formed around the way that we see ourselves and the content we consume instead of objective truth. That's how our beliefs are being formed. You say, Well, I don't know if I necessarily think that that's true. I say, Well, how is the quality of life for our culture? Is the quality of our life getting better? You know, I've said this over the last number of weeks. What we see today is an increase in depression, an increase in self hurt, an increase in loneliness, an increase in addiction like it is a long list. And the list in a sense of percentage is only getting worse. The good news, you say, man, thanks so much. I'm so depressed today. I'm so glad I came to church. The good news is this truth can be known. Truth can be known. I think one of the greatest lies in our society today is the lie that truth is unknowable. And and, you know, you've heard the arguments before about how truth is is relative. And, you know, there's no such thing as objective truth. And no one has the corner on the market when it comes to truth. And you can't know truth, but based on the words of Jesus, can we just start with the words of Jesus? What we understand is this truth can be known. Truth can be known. In fact, he describes three ways that we can know truth. Before I tell you what they are, I want to remind you truth is not winning. Truth is not winning an argument. Truth is not just being on the side of a winning argument.

[00:15:18] Number one, truth is a person and it's a person who can be known. Right. We have we have relationships. Relationships mean knowing someone personally. And the great thing about truth is this Jesus is truth. He is truth. The house of God, say amen to that. Do you know that Jesus didn't make an argument He sent his son? I want you to just let us let that sink in. Jesus didn't make an argument. He sent his son. This is what the Incarnation is all about. Jesus himself said in John 14 six. He said, I am the way, I am the truth, and I am the life. Like just locate that that centerpiece of this statement. He is declaring himself to be not just someone who is a proponent of the truth, not someone who just brought principles of truth, not just through his lifestyle, that he embodied truth, but he himself is truth. And this is critical for us in this current age that is so much in conflict with truth we can find ourselves are make you know, making divisions, marking out the arguments, making sure we're on the right side, conveying our position and our argument to the culture around us. And we can really miss the whole point that God intends for us, which is not to win the argument, but is to win the soul, right? And if you win the argument and you don't win the soul, you've lost the battle. And how do you how do you win the soul? I'm not saying arguments are an important, but the argument should always lead to the person of Christ, because Jesus is the truth and Jesus is the one who makes us free. So we can know the truth because truth is a person and a person is knowable.

[00:17:16] The second way we can know the truth is through the the teachings of Christ. It is in the content of what He said. In fact, the Great Commission, most of us know the Great Commission for how it begins. And I know I talked a little bit about this a couple of weeks ago. Just with respect to authority, right. All authority has been given to me and heaven and earth go there for and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son in the Holy Spirit. And so we have the authority of Christ. We have the Commission to go, we have the Commission to make disciples. But then He follows up all of that by saying, and this is what gets left out so often, teaching them to obey what all things I commanded you. So, yes, we, we we make disciples, not converts. Right. It's not just a matter of having someone respond in a singular moment at a particular point in time by raising their hand or coming forward. That is just the beginning of a journey with Jesus. And now what we're called to do, because it's not converts we're making is disciples that we're making. And according to Jesus, a disciple is someone who abides in His Word on a continual basis, living in the word, living submitted to the word, orienting their life around the word. And so what we do as a community together is we discover all of. Things that Jesus said. Church. All of them. And we choose to obey them. Today, it is very popular to ignore some of the things that Jesus said because, you know, some of the things he said didn't sit well with people. And some of the things that he said then that didn't sit well with people, then don't sit well with people today.

[00:19:05] And so, you know, sometimes and in, you know, modern church leadership classes, what you'll hear is this, hey, you know what? You want more people to come. You want to fill the seats you want. You want the revenue to expand. And so what you need to do is you need to soften the message. There probably are some things that he said that are super controversial that you don't want to bring up on a Sunday morning. You can wait for those things to be said in a small group setting, which, by the way, never happens. It never happens. And there's almost been this instruction for the sake of church growth to select to select what we choose to teach that Jesus said, and to not select, to select those things that might hinder our church growth. Don't do it. Don't do it. So I just want to tell you, we don't do that. We don't do that. And I'm going to get to the hard part in a moment. The third thing, though, that the third thing about truth and truth being known. Number one, truth is knowable because truth is a person. Number two is in the content of what you said. If Jesus is true, then everything he said is true. The third thing is this truth is meant to be experienced. You shall know the truth. And the word no in Greek is gonosko. It doesn't mean just in intuitive knowledge. It doesn't mean just information or data that you have in your brain like you've memorized a couple of verses know is truth that's been experience, truth that's been tested. You you've taken what you've said, what you said. You've embraced it by faith. And now you're living it out in your life.

[00:20:40] It's not just true. It's true for you. Do you understand what I'm saying? Come on to me. And out of your innermost being will flow torrents of living water. While you look to that and you trust in Christ and you say, Well, I'm going to embrace that. And what happens out of your innermost being closed torrents of living water? He promises that there's going to be freedom from the power of sin in your life. So what do you do? What you trust in him and you discover over the course of time there's victory. He is your champion. He is the one who breaks the chains. He opens up the prison doors. Things that you were in bondage to, that you could not escape, that you couldn't. You know, there were times I was a I was a drinker. I drank all the time. And there were times where there were times where I drank so much I couldn't even speak straight when I was sober. And in those times, I was like, This is really bad. This is like this. This is not good. And so I would stop, you know, drinking for like 30 days, I think was was the longest I could go. And then I was right back to it. And that and you know what I'm talking about, right? I mean, maybe it's not alcohol, maybe it's not drugs. I don't know. Maybe it's greed, maybe it's gluttony, maybe it's lying. Like you fill in your own blank. But. But there was that inability. I don't care how much willpower you have. I don't care how strong you think you are. I don't care what culture you surround yourself with. There's only one way to escape the power of sin in your life, and that is through Jesus Christ.

[00:22:12] And when he sets you free, you're free indeed. But you can experience that. So whatever it might be, you know, Jesus said, Come on to me. If you're weary and heavy laden, if you're burdened while you do, and what does he do? He takes his yoke, which is easy and light, and places it on you. Today, you might be thinking, well, I just I don't know. I just don't agree. I just don't agree. Pastor, there are certain things that Jesus said that I just don't agree with. And then not only that, I look at the church today, and that's another reason that's a just another reason for me to say no to Jesus. And I say, well, look, maybe there are some things that you disagree with, and I understand what you say when you say you look at the church and and it's a justification for you not to believe. But I would also say to you, no one ever said believe in the church and you'll be saved. No, no one ever said that. No one ever said believe in some thing that he said some principle. And, you know, it'll set you free. No, no. The statement is this Believe in the son. Receive the son. He is the one that rescues. He's the one that delivers. And you can't just reject him without trying him. You can't just say he doesn't work or he's insufficient or it's not good enough for you until you actually take a step of faith and try him on for size. And I'll tell you this when you do, you'll never regret that. You'll never regret it. You know, I. I love sushi. I do. I love sushi. I confess to you today, I love sushi.

[00:23:51] And sushi is one of those things that when you eat it, you can just eat forever. Like I literally probably could die at a sushi restaurant just by gluttony in and of itself. Right. What happened to Derek? Oh, he died eating sushi, you know, was not a pretty thing. He just ate himself to death, you know? That's just kind of the way it goes. And if you were to ask me, let me just say, I do think at the marriage supper of the lamb. At the great banqueting table. I believe it's going to be sushi. All right. I'm just. Just my personal opinion. But if you were to say to me and I know we have a very sophisticated palate when it comes to sushi here in this church. If you were to say to me, well, what's your favorite sushi restaurant, I would say to you without hesitation. Osaka's I love Osaka's. It's a special family place for us. And and you know, you might say, and I get this sometimes from people, they're like, Oh, well, you know, my favorite place is bop bop bop bop bop. And I say, Well, have you ever tried Osaka's? And they say, Well, no, I've never tried it. I'm like, Well don't, don't rejected if you've never tried it, don't act like you actually know the best sushi place in the city until you try to Osaka's. And I just want to say to those of you who've just been resistant about the Lord Jesus Christ and you've formulated all of your arguments, don't say no until you've tried him. You say, Well, how do I do that? Open up the Scriptures and say, Jesus, reveal yourself to me. Start reading the Bible and ask the Lord to reveal Himself to you.

[00:25:22] And as He does receive His truth by faith, when you do the power of Christ, truth will make and will make you free. When Jesus said these words to these people and, you know, they almost they seemed like we read those words, that the truth will make you free. And like, we're excited, you know, it's encouraging. We embrace it by faith. They were deeply offended at this statement because they lived in a very privileged religious society. And so what they heard him saying was, you're enslaved. Now, the condition that you're in right now is not good and you need to be set free. You are enslaved. And so from their perspective, I mean, they weren't they were not interpreting that as the issue with Rome or, you know, the ancient history of Israel with Egypt. They knew he was talking about an inward freedom, you know, a spiritual freedom. And they thought they had no problem with that regard because they live with this superior attitude. In fact, later on, what they're going to say to him is this We don't need freedom because we're sons of Abraham like we've got we've got Abraham as our father. And because we have Abraham as our father, there is this privilege that we carry. We're good to go. There was this attitude that they had of superiority because they were the chosen people, because they had this religious ritualism. There was a religious pedigree that they had that had put them in a position where they thought that they did not need to be set free from from sin, which was the issue. The ultimate bondage that Jesus is talking about was not political, it was not economic. It was a vicious slavery to moral failure, to rebellion against God and who God had intended them to be.

[00:27:20] And Jesus was teaching them freedom from that does not come through ethnic privilege or religious pedigree. Now, you might be thinking today, well, we don't deal with that. Right. They dealt with that then. We don't deal with that now. And I say no, we do deal with that now. We do deal with it now. I have people who say, well, yeah, pastor, I'm good. I go to church, I go to church. You know, I said, Well, no, there's a sin issue in your life and there's just this offense. Well, what do you mean, sin issue? My family's been going to church for generations. And by the way, we support the be the light program. And and not only that, but our kids are in Christian school. And I say, listen, thank you for supporting the Be the light program. And I'm glad your kids are in our school and it's good that you're present on Sunday mornings, but that does not rescue you from your sin. That does not rescue you from your sin. Do you guys know there are pockets of people in our country today that think that just because they're Americans, they're Christians, they think that just because they're Americans, they're safe? You say, how could someone come to that conclusion? And, you know, if you live in the South or if you live in the Northeast, you run into this pretty regularly. And in fact, you're almost it's almost absurd. If you present that as not the case, you'll have a conversation with somebody and they'll say, Well, don't you know the history of our nation? I'm going to I'm an American. And because I'm an American, I'm a Christian, and because those things are true, I'm good with God. And I say, Well, no, that's not that's not the way that it works.

[00:28:57] The Bible doesn't say that being an American or being a Brit or being a Colombian or being a Tunisian or being I know we got some Colombians. I like that. You know, your nationality doesn't save you. God wants to make. You are a citizen of heaven, and that only happens through trust and faith in Jesus Christ. That's just the truth. And this is this is an important issue for us to talk about, because, you know that there are people across our country today that come consistently and regularly to church, and they've never been forgiven of their sins. They never have been forgiven of their sins. They've heard the message over and over and over and over again. And it's created a gospel hardness in their hearts where because they've heard it and it's not been mixed with faith, there is a resistance now so that when the gospel is preached, they just hear blah, blah, blah. They don't even hear the words. They don't think the words are for them. Jesus is very clear about this. He He's talking about practicing sin, living a lifestyle of sin with no conviction, no repentance, and no victory. And if you're living in that place, I'm not talking about struggling against then, because that's what every Christian does. Like we all struggle against sin. He's talking about practicing it like you practice law, like you practice medicine. It's a way of life. There's no conviction. There's no repentance. There's no victory. That type of thinking, that type of behaving, that type of lifestyle is emblematic of someone who's disconnected from God. Like that's just a fact. In fact, a person who lives in bondage to sin is giving evidence that they're not truly a child of God. That's a hard truth, but it's a true truth.

[00:30:51] And our society rejects this notion. Our society says, you know what? I have individual rights. I've got the freedom to choose whatever I want to choose. And because I have the freedom and because I'm sincere, whatever I choose is good. In fact, if there was a moral principle that our culture was operating by, it would be something like this be who you want to be, hey, be who you want to be. And whatever that is, it's a good thing. And I say to that today, look, you do have in this country where we're so blessed, blessed with so many freedoms. You do have the freedom to choose. But just because you have the freedom to choose doesn't mean that it's good. It doesn't mean that it's pleasing to God. And it doesn't mean that it's the best thing for you. The truth is, in our natural state, we are enslaved to sin. And no one can rescue you from that except Jesus Christ. Amen. Romans chapter six verse 17 is up on the screen for you today. This whole arguments contained in these two verses, the past and the present of a Christian. And so this is what Paul says. He says, I like this, thanks be to God that you who were once slaves of sin. Like that's just a fact. You're not just arguing against Jesus if you don't believe it. But the whole testimony of Scripture, you who were once slaves of sin, have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, and having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. Jesus makes you free to be who God intended you to be, not who the culture tells you to be.

[00:32:37] And you can be free from lies. You can be free from false misconceptions. You can be free from the inability to overcome sin in your life. And you can be free to experience the beauty of God's purpose in your life. You can be free to experience Heaven's life in this life. You can be free to experience the power of the resurrection, real hope, satisfaction that's disconnected from circumstances. You can experience forgiveness. Hey, Church, by the way, you can drop in an amen for any of these that you like. Let me reread. You are free to experience the beauty of God's purpose. You are free to experience the power of Heaven's life in this life. You are free to experience the resurrection and the life to come. You are free to experience hope and satisfaction, disconnected from circumstances and the forgiveness of God and transformational relationships and courage in the face of death and the real reason behind the beauty that you experience every single day. It is the hand of God. And all of that. All of that happens when, like James said, you receive the implanted word, the word of Christ, the word of truth with meekness and humility. With meekness and humility. So I said to you earlier, one of the dangers we have today in our Christian culture is the word goes out, the gospel goes out, and people are sitting in seats week after week, month after months, a year after a year, and they're not receiving the word the way that God calls them to receive it so that there's fruit in their life. It's just over and over and over again. The Word of God might be being met in an intellectual sense, or you might be present, but not receiving.

[00:34:30] And what hap what happens over the course of time is it builds up a gospel hardness within your heart, a resistance to the Word of God. As much in those early days as the Spirit of God was touching your heart with conviction of sin, as you've resisted receiving the Word by faith and saying, Yes, I believe this to be God, your truth, and I'm receiving your truth by faith and orienting my life around it and obeying what your word is said. Resisting that will put you in a place where it is harder and harder for you to hear the conviction of God's Holy Spirit. James says, Don't be just hearers of the Word, but be doers of the word, receiving the implanted word with meekness which is able to save your soul. And so when he refers to the word is as a seed, like he's giving a picture, there's a seed was planted in the soil. And as that soil is filled with nutrients in water, what happens is the shell of the seed decays away and the seed germinates. And as the seed germinates, it begins to sprout. And as it sprouts over the course of time, it begins to grow. And as it grows, it bears forth fruit. And James is saying, you need to receive the word of God like that. The soil of your heart needs to be a place that embraces the truth that God has spoken to you. And by faith you're saying, Yes, God, not only do I believe that's true, but I believe it's true for me. And I'm going to walk in it. I'm going to think about it, I'm going to meditate on it. And as you do that, over the course of time, what happens is that seed begins to blossom and grow and it bears fruit in your life.

[00:36:17] That's the way we're called to receive the word of God. I want to encourage us today in in our lives. Remember, your mind is like a garden. And the seeds that you plant in your mind today will be the fruit that you reap tomorrow. And so spend time planting the seed of God's word in your mind, but make sure is being embraced by your heart and and all the more. Because, listen, I've got you for 40 minutes on a Sunday and you might be involved in a life group. And, you know, you may come to a Thursday night service. And God willing, you've got your devotional time where you're locked in to God's word and you're hearing his voice and you're having communion with him. But you also have the vast amount of time beyond that that's vying for your mind, vying to dominate the way you think the world is desiring to shape your beliefs. And if, in fact, there is two and a half days, 2 and a half hours a day on social media or maybe 5 hours of screen time, think about think about the competition that's happening over your very soul. Listen, receive the word and make sure that you are exposing yourself to God's word on a continual basis. Because the truth is this the final thing today is the child of God is free. Indeed, like when you receive the Word of God like that and you're His child, you will be free. This is a new reality that you have. Your life will be transformed and it'll be transformed by the power of Christ. The Bible says in Galatians 5:1, for freedom Christ has set us free. Do you believe that today for freedom, Christ is set us free? You stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery when you put your trust and faith in Jesus Christ, when you orient your life around all the things that He commanded and you obey them, what happens is you experience transformation and in a in an immediate sense, and then you also experience transformation in a progressive sense.

[00:38:35] He I'm just saying to you, he will change your life. He will bring light where there has been darkness. He will bring freedom where there has been bondage. He will bring hope where there's been hopelessness. He will bring joy. Where there's been discouragement. He will bring strength. Where there's been weakness. He he will bring a new beginning to the place that has been filled with tears and with sorrow. He is able to do this in your life. It's a new reality for the child of God. Not only is there a new reality, but you also have a new standing where at one time you were on the other team. I'm just saying. All right. You were in the Kingdom of darkness. The Bible says you were a son or a daughter of disobedience, a child of wrath. When you believe in Jesus, you have new standing with God. You belong to him. You're no longer estranged from him. The Bible says the Ephesians 2:13. But now in Christ Jesus, you who were once afar off, have been brought near, not by your willpower, not by your religious efforts, not because you attend church, not because you give money to the poor, but because of the blood of Jesus Christ. Paul says, Final thing is this You have new power. You have new power. So you have a new reality. You have new standing and you have new power. All the tools for your best life now are at your disposal. All the tools for your best life now are at your disposal. Peter says it like this Live is people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover up for evil, but living as servants of God. Let me read it again. Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover up for evil.

[00:40:21] So. So. Peter saying eight. Don't ever be in a place where it's like, well, God will forgive me. So I'll say in any way, like, you don't ever want to be in that spot. You don't ever want to be thinking, Well, you know what? He'll give me grace and and I'll be okay anyway. So, you know, he loves me and nothing can separate me from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord. All of that is true, but we would never want to use that as an imprimatur for our sin. It should do the opposite because he loves us like that, because he has been forgiving, because he is gracious. It doesn't compel us to disobedience, it compels us to obedience. And not only that, don't ever be in a place where it's like, Well, you know what, God, if I just had the tools, you know, I mean, there's areas in your life where there's still compromise and you're imprisoned by things. And it's like, you know, you know how we are. We blame everybody. We blame everything. Right? You know, it's my kids. I said this last week, it's my kids or it's my wife or, you know, it's my husband or, you know, it's the dog. And the dog bit me this morning. And so, you know, it's that stupid cat and having to clean the litter box every single day, which is, by the way, why we don't have a cat, all right? I mean, I don't know. You guys know we have a way of kicking the can down the road and blaming other people for our stuff. Even as Christians, it's the culture that we live in. Well, guess what? The Bible says you've been set free.

[00:41:44] Now, live is someone who has been set for you have every single tool that you need to go into this spiritual land and possess every promise that God has given to you. And I'm just wrapping up today with this exhortation. Live to that. Live to that. Stop speaking lies. Stop thinking lies. And stop consuming the devil's lies over your life. Because you don't belong to the devil anymore. You belong to God. The Bible says in Proverbs 18:21, Death and life are in the power of the tongue. And so Christians speak and live Christ's truth over your life. And then you will experience the power of His truth, making you free in Jesus name. Amen. Let's pray. Father. Thank you. God, we bless your name for your word today in the power of your truth. And God, what you're able to do. What you're able to do and. In our inabilities and in our weaknesses. You secured for us what we never could do ourselves. And we together as sons and daughters, want to say thank you. We prayed that your truth would just set people free this morning and break chains. Pray that you'd give us the strength not only to live it, but but God to speak it and to let. To let the power of your truth rest with you. Today as her eyes are closed in, as our heads are bowed. Maybe this morning you've never put your trust and faith in Christ. And you've got you've got your reasons. You've got your justifications. And maybe there are some things that he has said that just don't fit the worldview that you've created for yourself. Maybe today you you know that you're here, which is such a blessing. I'm so grateful for that.

[00:43:54] But, you know, you look at the church and you think, man, why would I want Jesus if he is like the church? And and so, you know, you've crossed your arms and dug in your heels. And and I just would say to you, what you need to do is you need to try him. You need to ask him to reveal himself to you. You need to open up your heart. To the one who is true. Because he has so much for you and he loves you so much. The message of the church is not some argument or. It's certainly not that the church stands between you and God. There's only one that does. And it's the son. So this morning, if this is you, you know, I want to encourage you to. As much as he's revealed to you, embrace it by faith and take a step today. Take a step and trust in Christ. This is you this morning and and today, you know, you need to believe in Jesus. You need his power setting you free. You need to experience the purpose of God in your life. You need him to renew you. You need to discover today how deeply he loves you. If this is you this morning, I want to ask you to raise your hand because I want to pray for you. God bless you. It's awesome. Thank you. Right here in the front. Anybody else retroactive? I see your hand and your hand. Thank you. I see your hand here in the center. And thank you so much. I see your hand in the back. God bless you. Anybody else. I see your hand. Thank you. I see your hand. Thank you so much. Today, maybe as a Christian, you know. Maybe there are some lies that you've been believing and.

[00:46:31] Some thinking in ways you've been behaving that. Is not his best for you. And today you need to. You need to come to him without any reservation. Today, you need to confess those areas to him and allow him to demonstrate his power as liberating power in your life. And so, Christian, today, if this is you, I want to encourage you to raise your hand right now. I want to pray for you, too. Thank you. So your hand and your hand in your hand and yours over here on my right. And I see your hands over here on my left hand. Here in the front. Thank you. Here in the center. I see your hand in the back. Thank you so much. I see your hand to. The more importantly, God sees you today. I see your head. Thank you for being honest and courageous today as your hand in the back. Over here on my left. This is a sweet beginning for you today. I see your hand right here on my right in the front. I see your hand to thank you. It's also. You're not too old today and you're certainly not too young. You can put your hands down, Father. Thank you. Just thank you so much for these precious lives. God, the work of your spirit and your presence here. And. And it is your truth. It is your truth that sets us or makes us free. And so in this moment, God, we pray as these. In a moment, we'll have an opportunity to pray that you would show yourself strong and that you would demonstrate the power of your son and his truth in Jesus name. Amen. Amen. Thankful for what God is doing in your lives, for sure.

[00:48:32] Hey, listen, what we want to do right now is this. There's a moment here for you to take a step of faith if you raised your hand and to really avail yourself to the power of Christ and his truth. And so I prayed for you, and that's a good thing. But listen, today you need to pray. God wants to hear your heart. God wants to hear your voice. God wants you today to acknowledge and confess whatever sin there might be in your life, and to trust in Jesus for His forgiveness and for his liberating power to be experienced right here, right now in this room. And so today, for all of you who have raised your hands, I'm going to invite you as the worship team leads us in a song of worship to stand up and to come on forward so I can lead you in a simple prayer. And there's a lot of you have raised your hands today and so match the raising of your hand. We're standing up and coming forward so I can lead you in this prayer. Don't be afraid to take this step of faith. Come on forward right now and give him praise today. Thank you, God, for your good work in the house. Just bow our heads together. And I want to lead you in a prayer today because. Because you connect with God through prayer and God hears you got here is your heart. The Bible says a broken and a contrite spirit God will not despise. God will not turn you away. God will not reject you today. God will hear your heart as you come to Him through Jesus, his son. And He is going to blow your mind. He's amazing. So follow me in this prayer.

[00:50:12] I want to encourage you to pray this out loud after me. Father, thank you for loving me. And I thank you for your truth. I thank you for Jesus. Who is the truth. And today I give my life to him. I'm confessing my sin. I'm turning away from it. And I'm turning to your son. Forgive me. And heal me. And save me. And free me. And in Jesus name, I pray all God's people said Amen. Amen.