

- Church Web Site

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A just weight
and balance

are the
LORD'S:

Thus saith the Lord...

- **John 8:31-32**

***So Jesus said to the Jews
who had come to
believe in him:***

- ***"If you remain in my word,
you are truly my disciples:
• and you will know
the truth:
• and the truth will
make you free."***

- **Freedom**:
- Men have fought and died for it,
- **Philosophers** dream of it,
 - **Jesus** guarantees it.

- Few New Testament passages have such a complete picture of discipleship as this.
 - Discipleship begins with belief.
- Believing that what Jesus says:
 - About truth.
 - About the love of God,
 - About the terror of sin,
- About the real meaning of life.

- Discipleship involves four things.

- Let's see what they are.

- (1) It involves constant listening to the word of Jesus.
- The Christian listens for the voice of Jesus all of his/her life.
- And makes no decision until having heard what he has to say.

- (2) It involves constant learning from Jesus.

- The disciple
(mathetes)
{G-3101}
is literally the learner.

- All his life
a Christian should be learning
more and more about Jesus.

- The shut mind is the
end of discipleship.

- (3) It involves constant study into the truth which the words of Jesus bear.
- No one can hear or read the words of Jesus once and then say that he understands their full meaning.

- (4) It involves constant obeying of the word of Jesus.
 - The disciple is the learner who learns in order to do.

- To learn from Jesus is to learn the truth.

- "*You will know the truth,*" said Jesus.

- **What is that truth?**
 - There are many possible answers to that question
 - The truth which Jesus brings shows us the **real values of life.**

- **The fundamental questions**
to ask are:
 - **"To what am I to give my life?"**
 - To a **career**?
 - To material **possessions**?
 - To **pleasure**?
 - To the service of **God**?"

- The truth we should be seeking is..
 - To see in life what things are really important and what are not.

- True Discipleship
results in freedom.

- "*The truth will
make you free.*"

- In his service
is perfect freedom.

- If so
freedom from what?

- Discipleship brings us four freedoms.
 - (1) It brings us freedom from fear.
- The man who is a disciple never again has to walk alone.
 - He walks for ever in the company of Jesus, and in that company fear is gone.

- (2) It brings freedom from self.

- Many a man fully recognizes that his greatest handicap is his own self.

- Revelation 21:5

And He that sat upon the throne said,
"Behold, I make all things new."

- 2 Corinthians 5:17

**If any man *be* in Christ,
he is a new creature:
old things are passed away;
behold, all things are become new.**

- (3) It brings freedom from other people.
- There are many whose lives are dominated by the fear of what other people may think and say.

- **H. G. Wells**
once said that
the voice of our neighbors
sounds louder in our ears
than the voice of God.
- The disciple is the man
who has ceased to care
what people say,
- Because he thinks only
of what God says.

- (4) It brings freedom from sin.
- Many a man sins, not because he wants to, but because he cannot help it.
- Sin has become master.
 - Try as he will, he cannot break away.
 - Discipleship breaks the chains which bind us to sin.

- Jesus' talk of freedom **annoyed the Jews.**
- They claimed that they **had never been** slaves to any man.
- Obviously there was a sense in which this was simply **not** true.
 - They had been captives in exile in **Babylon**;
 - At the moment they were subjects of the **Romans.**

- Again and again **Jewish rebellions flared up** because some fiery leader insisted that the Jews could obey no earthly ruler because God was their only King.

- Josephus writes of the followers of **Judas of Galilee**

who led a famous revolt against the Romans:

- ***"They have an inviolable attachment to liberty, and they say that God is to be their only Ruler and Lord"***

(Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, 18: 1, 6)₂₃

- Even to suggest to a Jew that he might be regarded as a slave was a deadly insult.

- But it was another slavery of which Jesus was speaking.
- "Everyone, who commits sin is the slave of sin."
(**John 8:34**)
 - Jesus was reiterating a principle which the wise Greeks had stated again and again.

- **The Stoics said:**

***"Only the wise man is free;
the foolish man is a slave."***

{<https://www.thestandupphilosophers.co.uk/stoic-paradoxes>}

- **Socrates had demanded:**

***"How can you call a man free
when his pleasures rule over him?"***

{<https://www.azquotes.com/quote/1430537>}

- Paul thanked God that the Christian **was freed from** slavery to sin (**Romans 6:17-20**).

- “**You were slaves to sin.**”
(**Romans 6:17**)
(Youngs Literal Translation)

- Note
the tense.
- As a state that is
past and **gone!**

- The great sin power
- And not just “sin,”
- That grip of sin on you.

- Note in John Jesus states:

- **The Light**

Vs.

- **The Darkness.**

- It's **NOT**
just one sin.

- It's the
POWER
that enslaves you.

- It is
“*The truth*”
(**John 8:32**)
- VS
- “*The darkness*”
(**John 8:12**)
- That is the battle
where souls
are won or lost.

- A man can let a habit get such a grip of him that he cannot break it.
- He can allow a pleasure to master him so completely that he cannot do without it.
- He becomes powerless to break away from it.
 - As Seneca said,
he hates and loves his sins at one and the same time.

- So far from doing what he likes, **the sinner has lost the power** to do what he likes.
 - He is a slave **to his habits.**
 - The wrong pleasures **which have mastered him.**
- This is precisely Jesus' point.
 - No man who sins can ever be said **to be free.**

- Then Jesus makes a veiled threat,
- He reminds them that in any household there is a difference between the slave and the son.

- The son is a permanent dweller in the household,
- But the slave can be ejected at any time.
- In effect Jesus is saying to the Jews:
"You think that you are sons in God's house and that nothing can ever banish you from God.
 - However, the slave can be ejected from the master's house at any time."

- It is a terrible thing to trade on the mercy of God
- And that is what the Jews were doing.
- There is a warning here for more than the Jews.

- Jesus is dealing a death-blow to a claim which to the Jews was all-important.
- For the Jew Abraham was the greatest figure in all religious history;
- And the Jew considered himself safe and secure.
 - Simply because he was a descendant of Abraham.

- The psalmist could address the people as :
 - "***O offspring of Abraham...,
sons of Jacob,
his chosen ones!***
([Psa 105:6](#)).
 - Isaiah said to the people:
***"But you, Israel,...
whom I have chosen,
the offspring of Abraham,
my friend!***
([Isa 41:8](#)).

- They believed that Abraham had gained such merit from his goodness that this merit was sufficient,
 - Not only for himself, but for all his descendants also.

- Justin Martyr had a discussion with Trypho the Jew about Jewish religion and the conclusion was that,

- **"The eternal kingdom will be given to those who are the seed of Abraham according to the flesh, even though they be sinners and unbelievers and disobedient to God"**

(Justin Martyr, The Dialogue with Trypho, 140).

- Quite literally the Jew believed that he was safe because

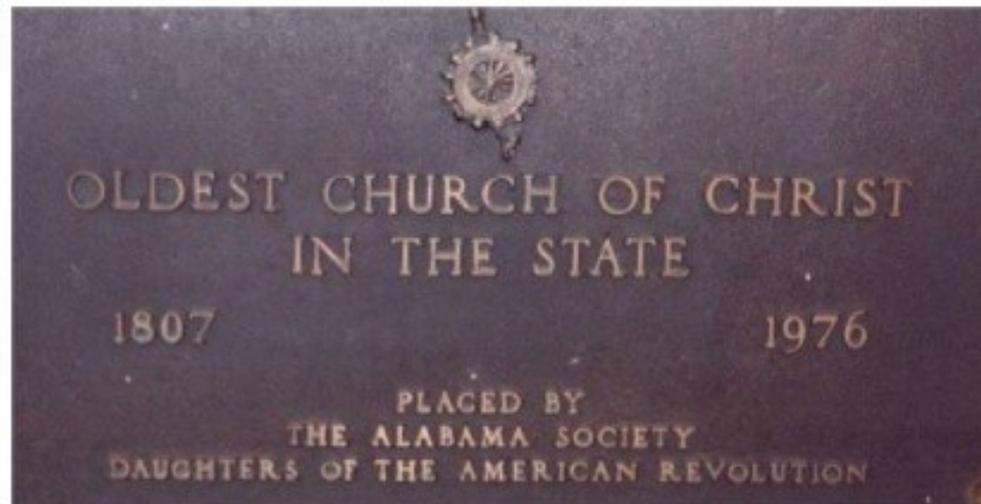
he was a descendant of Abraham.

- The attitude of the Jews is not without parallel in modern life.
- There are still those who try to live on a mom or dad's righteousness.

- There are those who try to live on a history and a tradition.
- There is many a congregation living on the spiritual capital of the past.

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1807-Present

- No man or church or nation can live on the achievements of the past.
 - That is what the Jews were trying to do.
- Jesus is quite blunt about this.
 - He declares that the real descendant of Abraham act in the way in which Abraham acted.

- That is exactly what **John the Baptist** had said before.
- He had told the people plainly **that the day of judgment** was on the way
 - And that it was **no good pleading** that they were descendants of Abraham,
 - For God could raise up descendants to Abraham **from stones,** if he chose to do so (**Matthew 3:9; Luke 3:8**).

- It was not flesh and blood which made a man a descendant of Abraham;

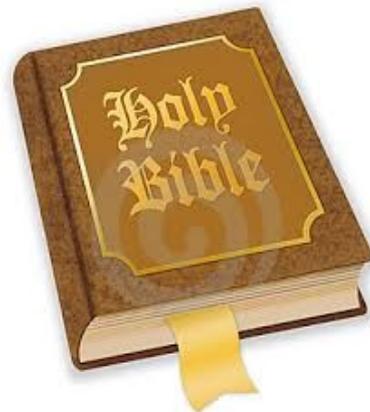
- It was moral quality and spiritual faithfulness.

- **Think on these things**
- **Philippians 4:8**

**The doors of the church
are open.**

**The Spirit and the Bride
Say
“Come”.**

Revelation 22:17



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