

***The Great Sayings in the Gospels***  
***Message 90***  
***Freedom***

John 8:21-47

- 21 Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come.
- 22 Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come.
- 23 And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world.
- 24 I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.
- 25 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? And Jesus saith unto them, Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning.
- 26 I have many things to say and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him.
- 27 They understood not that he spake to them of the Father.
- 28 Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.
- 29 And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.
- 30 As he spake these words, many believed on him.
- 31 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;
- 32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.
- 33 They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?
- 34 Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.
- 35 And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever.
- 36 If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.
- 37 I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you.
- 38 I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father.
- 39 They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.
- 40 But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham.
- 41 Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God.
- 42 Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.
- 43 Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word.

- 44 Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.
- 45 And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not.
- 46 Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?
- 47 He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God. KJV

Introduction:

In this text we have a theme that recurs over and over again in scripture and in the world that we live in. There exists in the world of those who do not know God two basic types of people. There are those who really care little or nothing at all concerning religion, God, or any kind of organized worship of Him. They live their lives basically as intelligent apes, just seeking what they desire or what they need to survive and caring for little beyond the world that they see and experience. Then, there are those who are concerned about religion, about spiritual things, about knowing God and having some hope of preservation in the afterlife. Those in the first group give little, if any, thought to the life beyond this one.

Those who are religious, especially those who have some level of seriousness concerning spiritual matters, typically find themselves in a system which purports to be a method of true understanding of God and possesses a means of preparing a person to have a happy life after this one is done. These systems typically have a set of “do’s” and “don’ts” that are to govern the lives of those who participate. And, they normally have some methodology of transforming a person from one who goes through the “initiation” into a person who is thought of as having a right standing with God.

It is this second group to which the majority of the religious Jews of Jesus’ day belonged and they were the ones who gave Him the most trouble.

Mankind in general has an almost instinctive belief that those who are the most religious are the ones closest to God and if anyone is going to be taken care of in the afterlife, it is those people. This belief is so deep and ingrained in the human psyche that it takes a profound work of God to change it.

**I. Several times in this passage, Jesus told these religious Jews, “ye shall die in your sins.”**

- 21 Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and **ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins:** whither I go, ye cannot come.

- 22 Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come.
- 23 And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world.
- 24 I said therefore unto you, **that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.**

This statement encompasses several principles in one package.

**A. One is the certainty of death.**

The Jews knew quite well that they were going to die but Jesus reminded them of it anyway, “it is appointed unto men once to die and, after that, the judgement.” The problem was that the religious Jews thought that all would be well with them in death because they had the right religion.

**A. The other is the idea of the consequences of the violation of God’s laws.**

These people did not think of themselves as sinners because they were so fastidious in keeping even the minor details of the Law of God. The problem was that the Law of God contains some issues of the heart that they were ignoring. He pointed this out to them on another occasion quite dramatically.

Matt 23:23

- 23 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.  
KJV

The essence of the Law, real faith accompanied by real repentance and a change of heart, they had missed. This made them violators of the Law of God in worse shape than the non-religious people that they scorned.

**A. Finally, there is the concept, startling to the Jews, that their religion was of no avail.**

Without real faith, given by God in the New Birth, there is no religion on the planet that can save a man who dies without it.

Now, the religions of the world, including those invented by so-called Christians, do not agree with Jesus on this issue. Martin Luther came to an understanding of this principle but when he taught it openly he found the entire “Christian” religious establishment of his day in opposition to him and determined to kill him to keep him quiet. The only people that he found to agree with him was a rag-tag group of Anabaptists called the Bohemian Brethren who were despised and persecuted by the Roman church.

**I. Although they did not understand it, Jesus was affirming His Deity in their presence.**

24 I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.

He borrowed the language of God from the encounter of Moses with God at the Burning Bush.

Ex 3:13-14

13 And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them?

14 And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. KJV

Then, He told them that He was sent by the Father, God Himself.

John 8

26 I have many things to say and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him.

27 They understood not that he spake to them of the Father.

29 And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.

And, He denied that they were sons of God, based on the fact that they had no love for Him.

42 Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.

The idea that a man from Nazareth in Galilee should be even a prophet of God was rejected by most of these Jews. The notion that He was the Son of God was so heretical to them that they could not even conceive of such a thing as being true.

Yet, the Deity of Jesus Christ is an essential truth which must be believed and accepted in order for any person to be saved from the consequences of dying in his sins.

**I. He also affirmed in guarded language His death on the cross and His subsequent resurrection.**

28 Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.

This idea of ‘lifted up’ was speaking of the cross. It was also a reminder of the deliverance of Israel from the fiery serpents by Moses ‘lifting up’ a brass image of the snake.

40 But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham.

The internal conversations concerning how to get rid of Jesus were already going on in the Jewish leadership. It was secret because they did not want the people to know of their purposes until the right time, but Jesus showed them that He knew what they were planning.

**I. Jesus told them of their hopeless depravity and their lost condition in spite of the fact that they were descended from Abraham and had a (false) hope of being right with God.**

32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

33 They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?

34 Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.

They denied any need to be ‘free.’ They were not in bondage, they said, they were children of Abraham and heirs of the promises of God to him. Jesus affirmed, on the other hand, that they were the bond-slaves of sin. Those who practice sin are its slaves.

This is a truth for all people, not just the Jews. It is a truth which must be particularly considered by those who believe that they have some hope of a relationship with God. The habitual practice of sin is servitude to sin and the evidence that a person has not been set free by the Son of God.

41 Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God.

42 Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.

43 Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word.

44 Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

Not only were they “in their sins” but they were the children of the devil. And, not only they but they were completely unable to even hear with understanding and faith the words of the Son of God being spoken right to them.

Think about what He was saying. They were in bondage, the bond-slaves of sin. Their father was the devil. They did not love God but rather loved lies. And they could not ‘hear’ the truth.

Such is the condition of man apart from God and it is the very reason that no religion concocted by man can save. None of them can solve the problem.

You see, man's religion must, by definition, deny one of the fundamental truths of God's Work, the total inability of man. Man's religion assumes that man has some ability to change the outcome of his eternity, that something he does can make him right with God and able to inherit His blessings. Jesus denied that over and over.

John 6:44

44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. KJV

No one can bring himself to God. No one can save himself by his own deeds. No one can "get saved," "be born again," or regenerate himself. At one point, the disciples of Jesus asked Him, "who, then, can be saved?"

Matt 19:26

26 But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible. KJV

**I. Finally, He told them that they could not free themselves, even with the religion handed down at Sinai and that only the Son of God could free them from bondage and give them hope of life.**

36 If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

When all is said and done, the great truth of the Word of God is that salvation is all the work of God and none the work of man.

This doctrine is hated by man because it strips him of a false hope that he holds very dear, that he is the Sovereign of his own life, the master of his own fate, and the god of his own destiny.

It is simply not true. The only way for one who is a bonds slave of sin to be free is for the Son of God to smite his soul with a terrible sorrow for his sins, speak life into his dead soul and grant him faith by which to trust in the Finished Work of Jesus Christ on the cross as his Only Hope of salvation from his sins.

**I. Conclusion: What is your hope of heaven?**

Is it, like that of the Jews, based in some thing that you have done? Some prayer you have prayed? Some church ceremony that you went through?

Listen to me carefully. If your belief is that some thing that you have done has made you right with God, then you are in the same state as those Jews that Jesus was addressing.

You are still the servant of sin and you know it. You have not been set free. And, if you are the servant of sin, then you are, by nature, the child of the devil, not a child of God.

The Son of God is the Only One Who has the power to release you from the Kingdom of Darkness. Not Michael, not Gabriel, not even the mighty Cherubim that encircle the throne of God have that kind of power. And you certainly do not. Your 'free will' is a captive to the great enemy of God, Satan, the liar and blasphemer. He will hold you in bondage in this life and drag you to an eternity of misery and torment unless the Precious Savior, the Lamb of God, comes to your defense and rescues you from his grip.

And, let me flip this around as well. If the Son sets you free, you are really free. If you are truly converted and still living in bondage to sin, it is time that you lay claim to the freedom that Jesus Christ has granted you and walk free of all bondages, all corruptions, all wickedness, all sin.

It is time to reckon yourself as dead to sin and alive to God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The question is really a simple one. Are you living in the freedom of a child of God or in bondage as a child of the Devil?

Life is short. Hell is real. Eternity is a long, long time. Seek the freedom that the Lord Jesus Christ gives and be satisfied with nothing less.