

## Journey Into God's Word



#13

Deuteronomy 1-16

Proverbs 7-12

John 6-10

*“Jesus said, ‘If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth and the truth will set you free.’”* John 8:31,32

My Dear Co-Workers,

Truth provides freedom. Jesus is the embodiment of truth Who challenges us to not only know the truth by hearing His words, but also by living them by being united with Him Who is truth. Jesus clearly says, “I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”(John 14:6)

So many speak today of freedom but they live lives enslaved to sin. Our journey through the scriptures this week not only tells us the need to be set free from sin but also how to be set free and remain free. This involves making the right choices. Moses, in **Deuteronomy 11:26-28**, put it this way, “See I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse – the blessing if you obey the commands of the Lord your God that I am giving you today; the curse if you disobey the commands of the Lord your God.” Just as there are physical laws, which govern this universe, even so there are also spiritual laws. If you walk off the top of a roof, you fall to the ground because of the law of gravity. The same is true concerning the spiritual laws. If you choose to disobey God’s commands you will also fall and never achieve the great heights He intended for you.

Believing and abiding (holding on to the teaching of Jesus) are essential if we want to know the truth that will set us free. (**John 8:31,32**) This freedom enables us to move beyond traditional limitations into the area of the miraculous: For example, when Philip could only see how much it would cost, Jesus saw 5000 hungry people, five small barley loaves and two small fishes. He took these resources at hand, gave thanks, and proceeded to distribute them until the whole crowd was fed. Think about it, any gift, no matter how small, when it is placed in the hand of Jesus is adequate to meet the needs of the poor around us. (**John 6:1-15**) As you study the feeding of the

5000, notice how Jesus said, “Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted.”(**John 6:12**) Why do you think He said this, Even though He has the power to create more?

Believing and holding on to the teachings of Jesus gives us freedom from fear. In the midst of the storms of life, we are able to hear His words, “It is I; don’t be afraid.”(**John 6:20**) Living in the realization of God’s love day-by-day, moment-by-moment enables us to believe that He is there at all times. Yet, Jesus says, “Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you.”(**John 6:27**) He is saying this in response to those who saw Him multiply the fishes and loaves. Jesus goes on and says, “I am the Bread of Life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and He who believes in me will never go thirsty.”(**John 6:35**) Now the question is what does all this have to do with me today? The answer is; Jesus can meet those inner longings like nothing else can. Each of us have been created as a trinity in a body. This trinity consists of the body, mind (emotions and will power) and spirit. The body we can fill with all kinds of food (Jesus was referring to this in **John 6:27**). The mind we can fill with different types of learning, but that still leaves the emptiness in the spirit. Some try to meet this inner longing with drugs, alcohol, overeating, workaholism, etc., but the only One who can really fill it is Jesus. Feasting on His word in the scriptures, beholding the wonders of His creation and drinking in the depth of His Spirit fill us like nothing else can. This fulfillment and freedom that only the resurrected Christ can provide applies not only to the emptiness and boredom of this life, but also for all eternity. “For my Father’s will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in Him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.”(**John 6:40**)

Jesus is speaking to you now as He says, “I tell you the truth, He who believes has everlasting life. I am the Bread of Life. (**John 6:46,47**)

As we feast on this bread of life, remember that Jesus is the One who shows us how to live in unity with God the Father.(**John5:19,30**) Jesus shows us how to walk with the Father, live in His presence and radiate God the Father’s holiness and love in our lives.(**John 5:36;6:38**) Because of Jesus we can, along with the rest of creation which was also polluted by sin, now be brought back into oneness with the Lord of the universe.

Those enslaved in sin who continue to live in darkness not only don’t see God’s love demonstrated through the wonders of creation, but they also certainly don’t understand statements like, “whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has

eternal life and I will raise him up at the last day.”(**John 6:54**) We celebrate this reality in Communion and believe that, “if you walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, His Son, purifies us from all sin.”(**1 John 1:7**)

As a people liberated from the slavery of sin, we can truly experience life. “The Spirit gives life, the flesh counts for nothing.”(**John 6:63**) Peter, believing this, declares to Jesus, You have the words of eternal life. We believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.”(**John 6:68,69**) Do you agree with Peter? If so, how is Jesus making a difference in your life?

To believe (adhere to and trust in totally) and know that Jesus is the Son of God, the “Holy One of God,” is to experience a new life that will flow forth into the lives of others. Whoever believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him. By this He meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were later to receive.”(**John 7:38, 39**) After the Holy Spirit was poured out on the day of Pentecost following the resurrection of Jesus Christ, Paul declared in **2 Cor. 3:17**, “Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.”

This freedom results in compassion as demonstrated by Jesus who reached out to hurting people, seeing them as “God’s image bearers.”(**Gen. 1:27**) When the power brokers wanted to kill a woman caught in the act of adultery, Jesus declares, “If any one of you is without sins, let him be the first to throw a stone at her.”(**John 8:7**) What do you think this says about the whole issue of capital punishment in the USA where the legal system kills the poor without adequate legal defense, while the rich in almost every case never receive the death penalty? Yet even after the woman’s accusers leave, Jesus still does not want her enslaved to sin, so He tells her, “Go now and leave your life of sin.”(**John 8:11**) Now please state in detail what you think Jesus means when He says in **John 8:36**, “If the Son set you free, you will be free indeed.”

Eternal life means many different things to different people. What do the Words of Eternal Life mean to you? In **John 8:51** Jesus says, “I tell you the truth, if anyone keeps My word, He will never see death.” How do you think sinful human beings can keep the word of Christ?

In **John 8:58** we see Jesus clearly proclaiming the fact that He is God. He does this by just stating He existed before Abraham and secondly He applied God’s holy name (*I AM* found in **Exodus 3:14**) to Himself. Those who did not believe Him

tried to stone Him for blasphemy. The fact is Jesus is God. Do you believe this? If so, how is this belief making a difference in your life? What has it freed you from? What steps are you taking to live in this freedom?

In **John 9**, Jesus heals a blind man. Not only does this great miracle demonstrate how Jesus came to restore creation but as He declares in **John 9:39**, “For judgment I came into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind.” What do you think Jesus means by that statement?(see also vs.4:1)

Jesus makes it perfectly clear that He is the only way by which we receive freedom, life, and salvation. “He declares, “I am the Gate; whoever enters through Me will be saved.”(**John 10:9**) “I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.”(**John 10:10**) Note the different names that Jesus gives Himself to demonstrate what He has come to do for a humanity that is enslaved to sin. After examining each one of these names and looking up the Scripture reference where they are found, please explain their significance. #1. Son of Man (**John 6:27**) #2. Bread of Life (**John 6:35**) #3. Light of the World (**John 8:12**) #4. Gate for the Sheep (**John 10:7**) #5. Good Shepherd (**John 10:11**)

Jesus says in **John 10:27**, “My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow Me.” How do you think you can hear the voice of Jesus? The key is knowing Him and drawing closer to Him by reading His word, talking to Him daily and expecting Him to communicate with you. It may not be through an audible voice or from a burning brush, but He will speak to you through His Word, His Spirit, prophecy, tongues and interpretation, counsel of mature Christians, and in dreams and visions. The critical thing is knowing He will never contradict His written Scriptures. Stay close to Jesus for He has promised, “I will give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of My hand.”(**John 10:27,28**)

What 3 proclamations of deity do you see Jesus make in the following verses? #1. **John 10:30** #2. **John 10:36** #3. **John 10:38**

When we are living our lives in the freedom Christ provides, it is critical that we “throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus.”(**Heb. 12:1,2**) Proverbs gives us practical daily direction for doing just that. What warning is given to you in **Proverbs 7**? “To fear the Lord is to hate evil;”(Proverbs 8:13) what does **Proverbs 8** and **9** have to say about the virtues of

wisdom? “Leave your simple ways and you will live; walk in the way of understanding.”(**Proverbs 9:6**) “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.”(**Prov. 9:10**) What does this verse mean to you?

Jesus brings freedom but “He thwarts the craving of the wicked.”(**Pro. 10:2**) When we have experienced the freedom of Jesus Christ, He will take steps to also clean up our mouths. Look at the following verses and note what they say concerning our speech. Note how our words can entangle and enslave us. Contrast the mouth of the righteous, which is a “fountain of life” to that of a “chattering fool.” **Proverbs 10:8,10,11,13,19,20,21,31,32**. “He who heeds discipline shows the way of life, but whoever ignores correction leads other astray.”(**Prov. 10:17**)

Jesus has come to set the captives free. Remember that He disciplines us as a father does His children. (**Prov. 12:1**) Those who run from discipline fall back into the slavery of sin. “The righteousness of the upright delivers them, but the unfaithful are trapped by evil desires.”(**Pro. 11:6**) “Be sure of this: The wicked will not go unpunished, but those who are righteous will go free.”(**Pro. 11:21**) Please study **Proverbs 11** and **12** carefully. Write out what it says about being enslaved by pride, your mouth, beautiful women without discretion, those who trust in riches, lying lips, an anxious heart, the lazy man, etc.. Remember “the fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he who wins souls is wise.”(**Prov. 11:30**)

Jesus wants to set you free in every area of your life and take you to the “Promised Land.” How many times in your life could it be said, “But you were unwilling to go up, you rebelled against the command of the Lord your God. You grumbled,”(**Deut. 1:26,27**) and fear and unbelief consumed you. “You rebelled against the Lord’s command and in your arrogance,”(**Deut. 1:43**) you did your own thing. The time to change is now. “If you seek the Lord your God, you will find Him if you look for Him with all your heart and with all your soul.”(**Deut. 4:29**) “Acknowledge and take to heart this day that the Lord is God in heaven above and on the earth below. There is no other, keep His decrees and commands.”(**Deut. 4:39,40**)

As Moses reminds the Children of Israel that the Ten Commandments are commandments to be followed not ten suggestions to be considered, He uses 3 key words in **Deut. 5:1**. As you consider these key words of hear, learn and follow how are they essential in having a growing relationship with God today? Study the Ten

Commandments and then explain why they must still be followed today if we are going to be a people who are free even though we no longer follow the commandments concerning sacrifices. Jesus said in **Matt. 22:37-39** that loving God with all your heart (**Deut. 6:5**) combined with **Lev. 19:18** to love your neighbor summarizes all the Old Testament commandments. How do these commands help free us from much of our daily worries and insecurities?

Just as the Lord had the Children of Israel drive out the ungodly nations before them, (**Deut. 7:1-6**) even so we must let Him drive out the addictions that exist in our lives if His Spirit is going to come and live in us. One of the most dangerous addictions today is greed and wealth. How does God warn the Children of Israel of this in **Deut. 6:10-12**. How does **Deut. 7:17-26** reassure the believer that they do not need to be enslaved to fear?

According to **Deut. 8:2**, what are 2 things that time in the wilderness can do to help us grow? How do verses **3-5** of chapter **8** show God's love for a people even when they are being forced to wander in the wilderness because of their rebelliousness?

Unbelief is the root of many sins and problems which enslave people. When you are feeling lost and alone, don't give up and give in to sin. Look to God for help and learn from the experiences of others. What do the following verses have to say about this? **Ps 81:6-12, 95:8, 106:13-20** and **Hebrews 3**. In **Deut.9:23,24** Moses declared, "But you rebelled against the command of the Lord your God. You did not trust Him or obey Him; you have been rebellious against the Lord ever since I have known you." How does rebelliousness keep one in captivity?

What five things do **Deut. 10:12,13** say that God desires? What command are you given in **Deut. 10:16**? How do you think this is done? How do verses **17,18** in this same chapter describe God? According to verses **19,20**, what does He want you to do?

In **Deut. 11:8** what is necessary to have the strength to go on? What are the 2 requirements in **Deut. 11:13** in order to receive the promises in verses **14,15**? Please study verses **16-20** of chapter **11**. What do the key words "be careful," "fix these words," "teach," "talking," and "write," have to do with getting the word and commandment of the Lord deep within you? In verse **22** what 3 things are necessary to realize the promises of verses **23-25**.

As you read **Deut. 14,15** what practical directions did you get to help you in your relationship with the Lord? How does **Deut.15** once again show God's great compassion for the poor? From our previous studies, what comparisons can you draw between the festivals in **Deut.16** and the work and ministry of Jesus Christ (example, Jesus is our Passover Lamb)?

There is so much that God has for us in the Scriptures. He has called us into the freedom that Christ provides and now desires for us to live daily as a people free from sin. Such freedom is not a call for us to do our own things but to submit daily to the power and wisdom of the Living God.

Join me as we study His word this week by reading **Deut.17-34, Proverbs 13-20,** and **John 11-15.** As you read these scriptures, let Jesus show you how much He loves you and what a great price He has paid to set you free from the slavery of sin.

Yours in Christ,

Larry Rice