

Truth is not merely something we can know intellectually; we also can experience truth in Christ! "You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free" (v. 32). But Jesus included a condition with that knowledge. We cannot exaggerate the importance of the word "if" in verse 31. We will only find freedom and be saved if we continue walking with Christ. It is not enough to know the truth in our mind. Truth is holistic; we must live it out.

Moral relativism falsely claims it is possible to live outside of defined truth and still be free. Actually, living outside of Jesus' truth and teaching confines us to a prison of our own making. We will know the truth and be set free only by consistently obeying God's Word and continually walking with Jesus. "You will know" means that as we pursue truth by following Christ, truth will be obvious.

The truth of Christ imparts great freedom! But from what exactly are we set free? Earlier, Jesus referred to sin and said twice that the religious leaders would die in their sins (John 8:21,24). We might also see this freedom in other ways in the Gospel of John: freedom from condemnation (5:24-29), freedom from darkness (12:46), freedom from the power of the evil one (17:15), and freedom from death (5:24).

QUESTION 4:

What are some ways you have experienced freedom through the truth of the gospel?

I have found the freedom and joy that comes from living in the truth. A few years ago, when my wife was expecting triplets, our maternal-fetal physician specialist told us, "I recommend a fetal reduction." Two of our triplets were sharing a placenta, a serious condition called Twin to Twin Transfusion Syndrome. But fetal reduction was nothing more than a euphemism for aborting one of our babies.

Years earlier we both had made the decision to follow Jesus and live by His truth. But what happens when that truth we've committed to live by is on a collision course with the truth of a dangerous situation? In our case, truth was a matter of life or death. It didn't matter. God's truth is absolute. My wife told the specialist, "We will trust God. There will not be a 'fetal reduction.'"

God lavished us with "grace upon grace." Three years later, our sons are in complete health. And Ryder James, the most high-risk of the triplets, has the most amazing ear-to-ear smile. What if Audrey and I had followed a different standard of truth and had ended his life? Instead, we chose to follow Jesus. The truth of Jesus set us free.

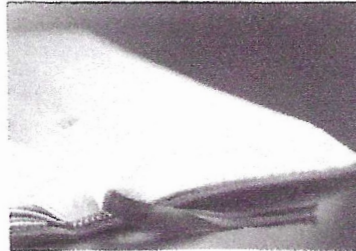
QUESTION 5:

How can the truth of our freedom in Christ help us lead others out of bondage?

ENGAGE

WHAT IS TRUTH?

Choose one of the following images that best represents truth. Then answer the questions.



Why does this image best represent truth for you?

What criteria do you use to determine truth?

"You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

JOHN 8:32

LIVE IT OUT

What will you do to point to the truth revealed in Jesus?
Choose one of the following applications:

- **Know.** Because the Bible teaches us how to live and points to the truth in Jesus, commit to read it through. Discover what it says about matters of faith, ethics, and morality.
- **Read.** Learn more about our need for truth in the book *Unimaginable: What Our World Would Be Like Without Christianity* by Jeremiah J. Johnston (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 2017).
- **Engage.** Talk with a friend who is not yet a believer. Listen to his or her views on absolute truth and share how you found the truth in Christ.

In referring to the gospel, mathematician Blaise Pascal said we should “make it attractive, make good men wish it were true, and then show that it is.”³ The scales of truth always tip in our favor as believers, but the responsibility does too. Let's share truth with others this week.

¹ David Grossman, “How Do NASA's Apollo Computers Stack up to an iPhone?” *Popular Mechanics*, March 13, 2017, <https://www.popularmechanics.com/space/moon-mars/a25655/nasa-computer-iphone-comparison/>.

² Christopher Riley, “The 400,000 Strong Backup Team,” *The Guardian*, July 1, 2009, <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2009/jul/02/apollo-11-back-up-team>.

³ Blaise Pascal, *Pascal's Pensées* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1958).

APRIL 19

Choose Kindness

"Do not judge, or you too will be judged."

MATTHEW 7:1 (NIV)

BEFORE YOU SPEAK, ask God to help you discern if your input will be helpful or hurtful. Fight the temptation to judge others and voice opposing opinions. Ask for His help to accept others and to choose your words with kindness.

Heavenly Father, open my heart to be more understanding and compassionate. Guide me to build others up and use words that please You.
