



Discussion Questions Set #1

““To the Jews who had believed him, 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.” They answered him, “We are Abraham’s descendants and have never been slaves of anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?” Jesus replied, “Very truly I tell you, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

1. Our passage suggests that shortly after the mass exodus of disciples following the whole “eat my flesh and drink my blood” experience, the number of individuals following Christ increased once again. What does this waxing and waning of the number of those following Jesus suggest to us about discipleship and the nature of true discipleship?
2. Discuss the crucial role of the following three practices in “really” being a disciple of Jesus:
 - a. Growing in knowledge of Christ’s teachings
 - b. Knowing Jesus as the truth more fully
 - c. Going in the truth – living in freedom
3. Why is it significant that Jesus came to “be” the truth and not just to dispense truth? What difference does this make in our following of Jesus?
4. The Jews in this passage are either ignorant of, blind to or lying about their slavery to sin. Do you think this tendency is unique to these first century Jewish followers of Jesus? How might you see a similar attitude at work in our world today?
5. How do you understand the idea that Jesus proposes here that commission of sin indicates slavery to sin? How might we understand this in light of the freedom Christ provides those who believe in Him?
6. What do you think Jesus means by the phrase “free indeed”?

Discussion Questions Set #2

“I know that you are Abraham’s descendants. Yet you are looking for a way to kill me, because you have no room for my word ... If you were Abraham’s children,” said Jesus, “then you would do what Abraham did. As it is, you are looking for a way to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. Abraham did not do such things. You are doing the works of your own father ... You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father’s desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies... The reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God” (John 8:37, 39-41, 44, and 47)

“Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.” (Psalm 119:105)

“Why do you call me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say? As for everyone who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into practice, I will show you what they are like. They are like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built. But the one who hears my words and does not put them into practice is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. The moment the torrent struck that house, it collapsed and its destruction was complete.” (Luke 6:46-49)

“Make a tree good ... its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for a tree is recognized by its fruit.” (Matthew 12:33)

1. Discuss the significance of Christ’s word to one’s following of Jesus? What role does room for Christ’s word play in our coming to faith or our understanding of Jesus as the truth?
2. Discuss the importance of Jesus’ statement that “the reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God”. What does this suggest about an ongoing nature of our faith/following of Jesus?
3. How is “making room for Christ’s word” related to one’s discernible actions?
4. Discuss the relationship between hearing and doing as related to one’s “sonship” to either God or Satan.
5. How does the tree/fruit imagery of Matthew 12:33 help us to evaluate our following of Jesus? How might it assist us in understanding our standing in Jesus?