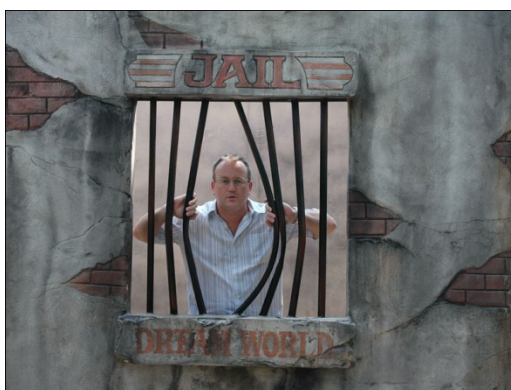


Mid-Week Devotion

The Truth Will Set You Free



Read John 8:31-38

"You will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." I remember being in class at seminary when one professor showed us a picture of a university advertisement with these words as the caption. Then he asked the class what they meant. Most of us understood these words in the advertisement to mean that education was the key to unlocking the mind and setting us free from ignorance, which would lead to a better society. Even today, most of us would agree that a college degree is the ticket to achieving our dreams and as such we place tremendous pressure on our youth to go to college. I recently had a high school senior explain that she was under a lot of pressure due to this very thing. She was struggling with trying to decide what college to attend, worrying that her College Board scores were not going to be high enough. She was worrying if all her credits were going to transfer from one college to the next as she sought that elusive PhD. And then, oh no... what if she didn't make it into college; that would be the end of her life she said, her dreams dashed against the rocks of life. The pressure was just too much to bear and as the tears streamed down her cheeks, I remember thinking, my goodness you are only seventeen!

After everyone in the class got a chance to weigh in with their answers, the professor then asked us to open our bibles and read John 8:31-38. Then he asked us if perhaps we wanted to rethink our earlier explanation. You see, when Jesus said those words, they had nothing to do with education. Rather, Jesus was explaining that only His death could free people from their slavery. Only the people he was speaking to just shrugged their shoulders, protesting that they were already free and slaves to nothing.

I suspect that most of us would make that same protest; after all, we are free to make our choices, and even if some of them are wrong, we are nonetheless still free to make them. However, nothing could be further from the truth, and you only need to look at the \$20 trillion a year we spend due to consumerism, to see this is so. The price we pay for believing that our choices will set us free, does not stop at the price tag however; it pervades our identities, as can be seen in the life of a girl who saw her life ending before it began, all because an ad took the words of Jesus out of context.

Most of us believe in freedom of choice, yet I suspect it only feeds our delusion that we can create the kind of life we want; this I call striving, Calvin called it depravity, and Jesus called it being a slave to sin. Our freedom is never determined by what or even how much we know, but rather whom we know. In other words, it is never your achievements that will set you free, but rather what the Savior has already achieved for you that will lead you to true freedom.

Pastor Ed