

Bible Studies

What does it mean to be free?

Creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. Romans 8:21

Christians talk a lot about freedom and what it means to be free. There is always a danger that we start to use the jargon, without really knowing what it means. The object of this study is to begin to define what Christian freedom is all about.

*Free me from the trap that is set for me, for you are my refuge Psalm 31:4
In my anguish I cried to the LORD, and he answered by setting me free. Psalm 118:5*

Read John 8v31-36

What did Jesus set as a condition of knowing and being set free by the truth?

This same idea is found in the Psalms:

*I run in the path of your commands, for you have set my heart free. Psalm 119:32
I will walk about in freedom, for I have sought out your precepts. Psalm 119:45*

This immediately gives us a view of freedom that is contrary to our normal ideas. Freedom is found in “continuing in Jesus teachings”. I.e. obeying His command. We think of freedom as doing whatever we want. But the Bible here says that freedom is found in relationship and obedience, not disobedience.

The same is true in New Zealand, if you break the law it does not bring freedom, it brings jail instead. Romans 13:3

Most of the messes we get ourselves into come from disobeying Christ’s command. This disobedience brings bondage.

What does it mean to 'know the truth?'

Perhaps it can mean several things;

The Truth about Jesus, ourselves, sin, salvation etc.

It’s main meaning has to be that knowing Jesus is the only way to find freedom.

It also means that unless we acknowledge the truth about ourselves, we can never be free. This is a foundation block of any of the 12 step programs. It is also fundamental to salvation. There is no way you can be saved, until you admit you are a sinner.

To me this verse implies that “knowing the truth” is not an intellectual exercise but a practical one. You only know the truth, when you continue in Jesus teaching. I.e. you must do, to know.

Did those who heard Jesus words acknowledge the truth about themselves? V33

What was Jesus promising to set them free from? v34

What does verse 35 imply?

God is not looking for slaves, He is looking for sons.

Being set free means we were once bound

Jesus came to, *free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness.* Isaiah 42:7

Set me free from my prison, that I may praise your name. Then the righteous will gather about me because of your goodness to me. Psalms 142:7

O LORD, truly I am your servant; I am your servant, the son of your maidservant ; you have freed me from my chains. Psalms 116:16

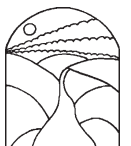
What does the Psalmist say 'My prison', 'My chains?'

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What has Christ set us free from?

For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace. Romans 6:14

What does it mean to be free from the law?

Cf. 1 Corrinthians 9v20-21, Romans 6:15.

What has Christ set you free from?

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What are the limits of our freedom?

<i>Galatians 5:13</i>
<i>1 Corinthisans 8v9</i>

Another way of saying this, is to ask, what hasn't God set us free from?

Has God set us free from our responsibilities?

Galatians 5v13 implies that we are not only free from, we are free to:

What are we free to do?

How do you get free?

So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. John 8:36

Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. 2 Cor 3:17

Does just being a Christian automatically make you free?

Live as free men, 1 Peter 2:16

How do you live as free men?

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Bible Studies

What does it mean to be mature?

Jesus warned in the parable of the sower that some of the seed would fail to reach maturity. It was choked by the weeds, life's worries, riches and pleasures, and consequently they do not mature.

It must be the aim of all believers to be mature in Christ.

When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. 1 Corinthians 13:11

Brothers, stop thinking like children. In regard to evil be infants, but in your thinking be adults. 1 Corinthians 14:20

Read James 1v2-4

What marks Maturity

What marks immaturity?

Read Ephesians 4v11-16

What marks Maturity

What marks immaturity?

Read Hebrews 5v11-14

What marks Maturity

What marks immaturity?

Twice the metaphor of a wave of the sea, or a boat driven by the waves, has been used to describe an immature believer.

In what way is an immature Christian like a wave of the sea?

Instability, unreliability and changability seem to be the ideas the Bible is trying to portray.

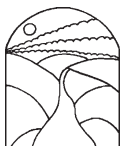
but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits. Daniel 11:32:

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Bible Studies

What does it mean to be spiritual?

There are some funny ideas out there about what it means to be spiritual. They use a special language, they have visions and great revelations of God, they always seem to have just heard from God and ooze holiness. They usually intimidate the rest of us into thinking we are second rate Christians. **Will anyone tell me what does it really mean to be spiritual?**

Brothers, I could not address you as spiritual but as worldly—mere infants in Christ. You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere men? 1 Corinthians 3:1 & 3

What is the opposite of being Spiritual?

Is someone who is spiritual by nature not able to do practical things?

Is Worldly minded and practically minded the same.

What do you think of the phrase, “so heavenly minded they are no earthly use”?

Do you think it is up to us to judge who is Spiritual?

Whose spirituality should be our concern?

Spiritual Gifts

One of the words used in Corinthians for the Gifts of the Spirit literally translated is “spirituals” eg 1 Cor 12:1 Now about spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be ignorant. (Lit Now about spirituals, brothers...)

Did exercising the Gifts of the Spirit prove that a person is spiritual?

Cf 1 Corinthians 1v7 & 1 Corinthians 3v1

Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?’ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’ Matthew 7:22-23

Hypocrisy

To the people of Jesus day the Pharisees seemed spiritual. They knew all the right moves and strange as it might seem to us, by and large, the people respected them. Jesus was not impressed by their spirituality he said it was all to do with externals. They were much too worried about how they looked in public and not nearly worried enough how God saw them. Matthew 6v2,5,16

“Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of dead men’s bones and everything unclean”. Matthew 23:27

What is a hypocrite?

A hypocrite is a person who proclaims one thing publicly but does something quite different privately? The Enemy has his own definition of Hypocrisy. He will tell you it is hypocritical to go to Church if you have not lived up to the Christian ideal his week, this is kind of like saying it is hypocritical to eat if you are hungry.

Can you be Spiritual and a hypocrite?

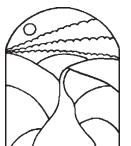
Does spirituality have anything to do with how you look?

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There was a time when the height of spirituality was to become a hermit - Just you and God alone in some desert. **Is this Spirituality?**

There was a time when Mystics were considered spiritual people Is there any place for Mysticism in today's church.

What do you think mark a Spiritual person?

<i>Spiritual</i>	<i>Unspiritual</i>

Is being Spiritual the same as being mature?

Is it more spiritual to spend an hour in prayer, or an hour helping someone in need?

I want to suggest some things which demonstrate that a person is spiritual.

The Fruit of the Spirit is the Hall Mark of Spirituality. There can be no confussing the issue If you show the fruit of the Spirit in your life, you have a claim on the word spiritual. If there is precious little fruit of the Spirit in you, then however much you prophesy, however long you pray, however good you are at talking the talk, you have no claim on the Word Spiritual.

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing. 1 Corinthians 13:1-3

Seeing things from a Spiritual perspective

This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words. The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. 1 Corinthians 2:14 (or teaching spiritual truths to spiritual people)

Seeing things from a spiritual perspective really means seeing things from God's perspective. By definition being spiritual means being aware to spiritual things.

When you look at other people how do you see them?

When you look at a problem how do you see it?

When you have to make a decision what do you take into account?

Being Spiritual means being Holy

To be spiritual means to have a close relationship with God. To be on speaking terms. Having open fellowship with God.