John 8:31-36 Daily Devotions

❑ Monday - True Disciples Continue in Christ's Word. John 8:31

"So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, 'If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine'" (John 8:31-32). As pictured in Jesus' parable of the four types of soil (Mt. 13:3-9, 18-23), there are those who rise up quickly in the Christian church but disappear just as quickly. Continuing devotion to Christ's teaching is the surest proof that we are true disciples. Authentic Christianity is measured, not by who starts the race, but by who finishes. Read 1 John 2:19; Hebrews 12:1-3

❑ Tuesday - Not a Slave of Sin, So Stop Acting Like One. John 8:34

"Jesus answered them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who *commits* sin is the slave of sin'" (John 8:34; cf. 2 Pet. 2:19). In Greek, the word translated "commits" is a present active participle, referring to the continuous habit or practice of sin (cf. 1 John 3:8). It is the condition that Paul calls "the mind set on the flesh" (Rom. 8:6), i.e. an unregenerate life (2 Cor. 5:17). But even if the Christian is no longer a slave of sin he may still act like a slave and even submit to his old master (Rom. 7:14-15). And in such a state the backslidden Christian is difficult to distinguish from the unbeliever. Therefore, Christian, "Do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness … For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace" (Rom. 6:12-14). Read Romans, chapter 6

❑ Wednesday - The Christian's Free Will. John 8:31-36

As we have seen, the unbeliever has no moral free-will because he is a slave of sin (Read Martin Luther's *Bondage of the Will*). He makes hundreds of decisions every day, but none to glorify God. The apostle Paul describes the unbeliever's condition this way: "The mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is *not even able* to do so, and those who are in the flesh *cannot* please God" (Rom. 8:7-8). So we see that the unbeliever is *unable* to obey or please God because he is a slave of sin. But Christ came to set us free from slavery to our sinful desires (John 8:31-36). The Christian has been freed from slavery to sin and is the only person with a truly free will. Does that mean that the Christian does not sin anymore? No, it means that the Christian is free not to sin; it means that he is free now to decide, "Not my will, but Thy will be done, Lord." Read 1 Corinthians 10:13

❑ Thursday - Slave of Sin or Bond-Servant of God? John 8:34

Bob Dylan wrote a song in the 70's called *Gotta Serve Somebody* (1979). In it he says, "You're gonna have to serve somebody. Well, it may be the devil or it may be the Lord, but you're gonna have to serve somebody." The Bible declares that everyone is a servant of one thing or another. The one who practices sin is a servant of sin (John 8:34), and the one who believes in Jesus Christ is a "bond-servant" of the Lord (25x, NT). So then, every person on the face of this planet is either a slave of sin or a bond-servant of Jesus Christ. "Choose today whom you will serve…" (Josh. 24:15). Read Matthew 6:24

❑ Friday - True Freedom in Christ. John 8:36

Jesus said, "So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed" (John 8:36). But doesn't the Bible call the Christian a "bond-servant" of Jesus Christ (Greek: *doulos*, literally "slave")? Yes, twenty-five times in the New Testament the Christian is called a bond-servant. How then is being a bond-servant of Jesus Christ true freedom? To be the Lord's bond-servant is freedom: [1] from trying to keep the Law to be saved or stay saved (Gal. 5:1, 13); [2] from condemnation (Rom. 8:1); [3] from the penalty of sin (Rom. 8:2); [4] and from the power of sin to enslave us (Rom. 6:18). Yes, only the bond-servant of Jesus Christ is truly free! Read Romans 6:22; 1 Peter 2:16