

Marks of Genuine Disciples

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[0 : 00] So, Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.

They answered him, We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say you will become free? Jesus answered them, Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin.

The slave does not remain in the house forever. The son remains forever. So if the son sets you free, you are free indeed. I know that you are offspring of Abraham, yet you seek to kill me because my words find no place in you.

I speak of what I have seen with my father, and yet you do what you have heard from your father. May God add a blessing to the reading of his word. Would you please be seated? How many of you are familiar with the game show, To Tell the Truth?

You know that show? Well, I was interested to learn, intrigued to learn, that it's been around since 1956. There's been six reiterations of this show, and in fact, it's still on today.

[1 : 30] Okay, so the show goes like this. There's a panel comprised of four celebrities who are presented with three contestants, and they must identify which of those three is telling the truth.

The game begins with the host reading aloud a description that matches only one of those three contestants. And typically it has to do with some kind of unusual occupation that the person has, or an experience that they have had before.

And so the other two contestants then are to act as imposters, to lie when asked the question in order to try to trick the panel into thinking that they are the one telling the truth.

And so the panel asks a series of questions. And from their questions that they ask and how the contestants answer, they try to determine which of you is genuine, which of you is telling the truth. You know, as I've watched that show, and as you've watched it too, you realize that people are pretty good at lying, aren't they? People are pretty good liars.

[2 : 52] It's often hard to tell, as you're watching that show, which one of them is actually telling the truth. And the panel of celebrities is often shocked when they find out that they were wrong, that someone was such a good imposter, that they fooled them into believing they were the genuine article.

And you know, we encounter imposters today, just about every day it seems like, don't we? We have people calling us, or maybe they send you emails saying that they are a lawyer of a long-lost relative from some distant country who has left you with an inheritance, and if you would just send them a little bit of money, they will be able to send you this large lump sum.

And if that's ever been something that you've been presented with or asked, please don't follow along with that. It is a lie. They are imposters. Or we've seen it with Facebook as well, haven't we? People who will duplicate your account and pose to be you, or they will create a false account with a different name and a different picture than their own because they don't have the guts to comment on things or say things that they would under their own name.

And so they use a fake account, and they are being an imposter. Some imposters are better at passing for the genuine article than others. However, I believe that the greatest imposter of all time, humanly speaking, the greatest imposter of all time is Satan, but humanly speaking, the greatest human imposter of all time, I believe, was Judas Iscariot.

[4 : 30] Matthew 26, 20 through 25, Jesus is meeting with his disciples. He's soon going to go to the cross, and he's going to drop this bombshell on them that one of these 12 disciples will be the one who will betray him.

One of them all along has been an imposter. When it was evening, he reclined at the table with the 12. And as they were eating, he said, Truly, truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me.

And they were sorrowful. And they began to say to him and to one another, Is it I, Lord? He answered, He who has dipped his hand in this dish with me will betray me.

The Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed. It would have been better for that man if he had never been born. Judas, who would betray him, answered, Is it I, Rabbi?

He said to him, You have said so. You see, Judas had every one fold. They believed that he was a genuine disciple, a true follower of Jesus Christ.

[5 : 51] Even the other disciples had no idea that Judas was an imposter. It appears that Judas, like the rest of them, left everything behind to follow Jesus.

He was present. It appears. It appears. For all of the miracles of Jesus. From what we know, he would have been one of those whom Jesus sent out before him to share the gospel and prepare for his coming into that town to preach and to teach.

He looked like a disciple. He spoke like a disciple. He walked the walk. He talked the talk.

But he was an imposter. And the only one who knew it, and who knew it all along, was Jesus Christ.

Judas reminds us and serves as a warning to us of just how close someone can get to Jesus.

How closely someone can be associated with Jesus and still not be saved. He was a false disciple.

He was a false disciple. An imposter.

[7 : 16] And you know, throughout the history of the church, there are many examples of men and women like Judas who professed Christ as their Savior, but who did not possess genuine saving faith, having never been truly born again.

We go back to the early days of the church in 1 John 2.19, and we see that this was an issue. It continues to be today. John, speaking of those who were imposters, who professed Christ, but did not possess genuine saving faith, he said, they went out from us, but they were not of us.

For if they had been of us, they would have continued with us, but they went out, so that it might become plain that they are not of us.

They're imposters. The example of Judas, the example of false converts in Scripture should remind us that we in the church must continually preach the gospel.

We can't be of the mind that just because somebody has professed Christ here, that that means that they are genuinely a disciple. Now, that doesn't mean that we should go around doubting everyone's salvation, but it should mean that we need to make sure that we are preaching the gospel all the time, whether we are of the mind that everyone who is listening to us is a believer or not.

[8 : 39] In any ways, we need to be reminded of it consistently, don't we? Of our great Lord who has saved us. And so we must give these warnings that unless you believe in Christ, a day will come when you will hear Him say, Depart from Me, for I never knew you.

You know, the Bible tells us that we should be consistently, as disciples of Christ, examining ourselves.

whether or not we are truly in the faith. Let me read some of those Scriptures to you or with you. 2 Corinthians 13, 5-6.

Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves that Jesus Christ is in you?

Unless indeed you fail to meet the test. I hope you will find out that we have not failed the test. 2 Peter 1.10.

[9 : 51] Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election. For if you practice these qualities, you will never fall.

Philippians 2, 12-13. Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence, but much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling.

For it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure. Scripture teaches that a person who is genuinely saved, truly saved, can never lose their salvation.

salvation. So these Scriptures are meant for a believer to confirm that the faith that they profess is a faith that they possess in Jesus Christ.

That affirmation comes as a result of their being indwelt by the Holy Spirit of God who caused your new birth and who is transforming you from the inside out, influencing your good works, convicting

you of sin, encouraging you, and making you more like Christ through the process of sanctification. [11:07] But conversely, these Scriptures and today's Scripture serve also in a way to remove whatever false sense of security those who profess Christ but do not possess saving faith may have to remove it with the hope being that they would see they're not saved but need to be.

So here's the main idea for this morning's message. Genuine disciples of Jesus Christ profess and possess saving faith in Him.

genuine disciples of Jesus Christ profess and possess saving faith in Him. If you look at verse 31 in chapter 8 there John tells us so Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in Him.

Now there is some discussion amongst theologians as to who these believers were whether or not they were genuine or imposters.

And certainly we can recall not long ago when we were in John chapter 6 that many who professed to be disciples of Jesus Christ departed from Him soon afterward when they realized that He was not going to be the kind of Messiah that they wanted Him to be.

[12:42] And so it could be the case yet again that these believers whom Jesus is addressing in verse 31 were professing to believe but weren't truly saved.

Or maybe not. Or maybe it was a combination of both. In that group some truly believed some were professing but they hadn't been truly saved.

Whatever the case may have been the point here is that Jesus lays down exactly what separates imposters from those who are genuine followers.

of His. He explains what separates here the faithful from the fickle. And He lays out in doing so four marks of a genuine disciple.

Someone who professes and possesses saving faith in Jesus Christ. today the Lord calls each of us here to examine ourselves.

[13:52] For you to examine yourself. Do these marks characterize you? Are you fickle or are you faithful?

Are you genuine or are you an imposter? R.C. Sproul said it is important that we understand the difference between saving faith, which is the possession of the true believer, and the mere profession of faith.

Many people mistakenly think that they enter into the kingdom of God simply by making a profession of faith. They say, but preacher, I went to an evangelistic meeting, I raised my hand, I answered the altar call, I prayed the sinner's prayer, I signed the card.

Doesn't that make me a Christian? The only answer R.C. Sproul says that I can give is maybe. It's not the profession that gets you into the kingdom, he says and concludes, it's the possession.

We must possess what we profess. So if you're a believer listening to this sermon, and as we go through these marks, I hope that it encourages you as we do so.

[15:01] I hope that God reassures you through this time, confirms to you what you already know, that I am a follower of Jesus Christ, that I have been born again, and that this would excite you and encourage you.

But if you're an unbeliever, I pray that this message would strip away any false sense of security that you have that you're trusting in for your salvation.

And that with that, my hope, and my prayer would be that the Lord would draw you and call you to saving faith in Jesus Christ.

That you may have walked into this sanctuary this morning, you may be watching online this morning at home, and you came into this place, or into this service, as an imposter, my hope and prayer for you is that you will leave, or you will turn off your computer or your phone or whatever, as a genuine disciple of Jesus Christ.

that these marks would mark you the rest of your life. So the first mark that we see here laid out by our Lord is that genuine disciples abide in the Lord's word.

[16:18] Genuine disciples abide in the Lord's word. Look at verse 32. Jesus says to these believers, believers, if you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.

The marker test that Jesus put before the people here was the test of abiding, the test of staying power, of remaining true.

Abiding in the Lord's word means that you first must be abiding in Christ. You're not going to abide in his word unless you are first abiding in Christ. This refers to our union with him, our being grafted

into the vine, our being placed within the body of Christ, his church of which he is the head. Abiding in the Lord means knowing that to be true, understanding that it is God who has saved you by his grace. It means that you confidently affirm that his word is true.

You have a desire to obey his word and appropriate it to yourself, to the way that you live. You apply its instruction to your life.

[17 : 44] In a nutshell, abiding in Christ means allowing his word to fill your mind, to direct your will, to transform your affections. In other words, our relationship to Christ is intimately connected to what we do with our Bibles.

Then, of course, as Christ's words dwell in you and the Spirit fills you, you will begin to pray in a way that is consistent with his will.

We know that God's love has set us free from sin's consequences, from sin's penalty, because at the cross, we know we've been set free by the one who knew no sin, who became sin, that we might become the righteousness of Christ, that he was willing to take our place, that he was willing to endure God's wrath for the sins that we've committed against him, that he has purchased our freedom through his life and his death and his resurrection.

Jesus says elsewhere that abiding in him, in his word, involves continually submitting to the pruning knife of God and the providence by which he cuts away your sin, your disloyalty, all the things that truly aren't important that we make priority in our life.

And he does so in order that we might remain in Christ wholeheartedly. Jesus spoke of this in John chapter 15, verses 1 through 11, using the illustration of a vine and branches.

[19 : 30] He said, I am the true vine and my father is the vine dresser, the one who prunes. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit, he takes away. Every branch that does bear fruit, he prunes, that it may bear more fruit.

already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me.

I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in me, an imposter, he is thrown away like a branch and withers and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire and burned.

If you abide in me and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish and it will be done for you. By this my father is glorified that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.

As the father has loved me, so I have loved you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love just as I have kept my father's commandments and abide in his love.

[20 : 55] These things I have spoken to you that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be full. Amy Carmichael was a missionary who served in India for 55 years.

And I love her comment about this text that I've just read. And it's a prayer. And this is what she prayed. Rid me, good Lord, of every diverting thing.

What prodigal waste it appears to be, to be scattered on the floor, the bright green leaves and the bare stem, bleeding in a hundred places from the sharp steel. But with a tried and trusted husband's men, pruner, there is not a random stroke in it at all.

Nothing cut away which would have been lost to keep and gain to lose. So abiding in the Lord's word means trusting in the one whose hand holds the pruning knife.

Trusting in the hand of the one, the knife that prunes and cuts away sin. That makes us more fruitful. That makes us more like Christ.

[22 : 22] Trusting in Him who was pierced for you. Trusting in Him who was cut, who has cut you away from sin's enslavement.

And who continues to cut sin away from you. As His Spirit, working in conjunction with His word, shapes you evermore into the image of Jesus Christ.

Now let's not, let's not be imposters when we're talking about this, right? Let's be genuine. This hurts. This can be a painful process.

The vine will bleed, but it will heal. And it will be made stronger with that. It will be made more fruitful because of that.

And you know, one of the ways that you know that you are abiding in the Lord's word is that His word has cut you before. But it's also with that healed you.

[23 : 29] And strengthened you. And made you more fruitful as it's encouraged you and cleansed you. As the world's grip on you lessens.

And Christ's grip on you, excuse me, strengthens. You know, one of the, one of the most difficult times that I can remember experiencing, especially as a young person, and I've probably shared this story with you before.

Baseball was my life. My life. I went to church. I went to youth group when I could, but you know, I, I didn't want to sacrifice anything for baseball.

That was, that was my number one priority. And I love playing. I love playing for my high school. We had a really good baseball team on my high school.

And, and I remember my junior year. I'd made it freshman year. I'd made it sophomore year. And, and all throughout tryouts, you know, the coaches were using me as an example for everybody else. Like, hey Mike, come up here and show them how, how to do it.

[24 : 35] I'm like, yeah, no problem. Of course you'd ask me, right? Um, so you know where this is going, I think. The last day of tryouts.

Felt like the teams had pretty much been set. I had one of the worst days on the baseball field that I can ever remember. Balls going through my legs. Swinging and missing pitches that I, I should have hit.

It was a terrible day, but I felt like, you know, they know me better than, than how I played this day.

The next day, early in the morning, the teams were posted downstairs in our, in our gym area.

And a couple of my buddies who were on the football team were like, hey, hey, we're going to walk down there with you. And it kind of made this joke of, of it like, well, we'll be there just in case something happens, blah, blah, blah, just laughing about it.

And I got there with them and I read through the team that I felt like I should have been on and I wasn't there. Okay, maybe over on this team. Not there either.

[25 : 42] And man, it was like a knife was just plunged right into my heart. And I thought, this has to be a mistake. And I sought out my JV coach who worked at the school, taught at the school, and he saw my face and he just, his face just dropped.

And he said, come sit in my chair. And he told me about what had happened. He encouraged me that, you know, use this as motivation and come out next year.

But I wanted to quit. I was heartbroken. I got in my car and I left and I went home. And I was in tears. Because this was who I was.

This is my identity. This is how I'm known amongst my friends and in my school. I'm Mike, the guy who plays baseball and now that's gone. Who am I? I don't know who I am anymore.

Why, God, would you do this to me? Why would you take away something like this that I love so much? You know why? Because my identity was wrapped in something that wasn't Jesus Christ.

[26 : 46] And it could not give to me what He alone can give to me. That was a painful lesson. But a lesson here, now, 20 years later, or more that sticks with me.

A reminder. Do not make your identity about anything else but Jesus Christ. And I'm so thankful for that cut that has healed.

And that I believe that has made me stronger. And I'm sure that you can say the same. You've had something that you've gone through in life. You've picked up the Word and you've read it and you were so convicted it cuts you to the heart.

But it healed you. God used it to strengthen you. To make you less of this world. To make you more like His Son Jesus Christ. And I'm sure that we could spend all afternoon talking about those passages.

Yeah, this one cut me. And I'm so glad that it did because through it I have been made more like Jesus Christ. How do you know that you are abiding in the Lord's Word? Can you look back today at the moment when you were saved and recognize a difference?

[27 : 51] A genuine disciple abides in the Lord's Word because they know that it's true. They know that it's true because it set them free. They know that it set them free eternally from sin.

They don't trust in their truth or the world's truth but God's truth as defined and as explained in His Word.

The second mark of genuine disciples is that they trust only in Jesus Christ for their salvation. They trust only in Jesus Christ for their salvation.

Verse 33 They answered Him We are offspring of Abraham and you and have excuse me yet to be enslaved by anyone.

How is it that you say you will become free? So again while Jesus' comments were directed towards those who had believed in Him here the Pharisees once again feel like it's their job to interject themselves and are angry that the Lord would suggest that they were in bondage and in need of being liberated.

[29 : 02] They were indignant. They believed that they were already free. That they'd never been enslaved before. And now we know we have the Old Testament.

We know the history of Israel. We know that they've been enslaved many times throughout their history. The Egyptians the Assyrians the Babylonians the Medo-Persians the Greeks the Syrians and currently the Romans were in occupation of them and their land.

But you know I don't think I don't think that they were so blind to refute that fact. I don't think that they were so blind. I think they understood though more of what Jesus was talking about.

The freedom that he was referring to and that he was saying that they were enslaved and it was referring to a spiritual captivity. And that is what made them so indignant.

And they responded to Jesus much in the same way that others had responded to him and his suggestion that they were slaves to sin despite their religious upbringing and observances.

[30 : 10] Remember Luke chapter 4 16 through 21 as our Lord is truly beginning his earthly ministry it says there that he came to Nazareth his own hometown where he had been brought up and as was his custom he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day and stood up to read.

And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it is written speaking of himself. The spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind. To set at liberty those who are oppressed to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.

And he rolled up the scroll and he gave it back to the attendant and he sat down and the eyes of all of the synagogue were fixed on him. And he began to say to them today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.

This prophecy is about me and I'm here. And at first the crowd marveled with that. But then still we see some saying asking the question isn't this Joseph's son?

[31 : 38] Right? They're already casting doubt over Jesus' true identity. But then as Jesus continued to explain to them that unless they were willing to humble themselves acknowledge that they were spiritually bankrupt and blind and oppressed by sin and admitted their need to be saved by him that they would not be saved.

They could not be saved by their biology or by their religious observances. And remember how they responded to that? Okay Jesus we believe you.

No. What did they do? They chased him out. They chased him out of the city and they attempted to push him off a cliff to his death.

They like the Pharisees in this text thought they were saved by their biology and by their religious observances. Primarily among those observances was circumcision.

But salvation does not pass through the bloodstream and it does not result from good works. John 1 12-13 But to all who did receive him Jesus Christ who believed in his name he gave the right to become children of God who were born not of the blood didn't pass on through the bloodstream nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man but of God.

[33 : 09] It was God who did it. It is God who saves. Romans 2 28-29 For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly nor is circumcision outward and physical but a Jew is one inwardly and circumcision is a matter of the heart by the Spirit not by the letter not by keeping the law.

His praise is not from man but from God. The Pharisees objected to our Lord's claim to be the liberator of the soul by claiming that they were saved on the count of their biology saying we're descendants of Abraham.

Now to us today that excuse or that reasoning may not seem to make sense. It may sound strange to us today. We don't hear people making that argument very much anymore at least not in our context in our nation but I've heard many people make that argument and you probably have too just in different ways.

I had a student many many years ago in the church where I was serving as youth pastor and years after I left as they grew up and went to high school and then into college it became apparent that they were living a lifestyle that was in contradiction and incompatible with what the Bible says about the Christian life.

but they argued that it wasn't and so I remember sharing scripture I believe Danny did as well sharing scripture this is what the word says they're incompatible they don't match but you know tragically many of those who approved of this person's newfound lifestyle were people who were a part of that church and I remember this person came back at me back at us Danny and I with the claim that you know what I was baptized in the church and in this church we would go through confirmation classes in order to become a member of the church and so their argument was you brought me through that confirmation class you stood up before the church with me as I became a member of that congregation and so what are they saying what are they trusting in well I'm saved because look

[36 : 05] I've done all the other things that other saved believers do but I had to reiterate the point to them that baptism doesn't save you church membership confirmation of whatever sort doesn't save you participating in communion doesn't save you in your profession and my thought or the thought of others at the time when you were baptized or confirmed or whatever doesn't and didn't save you only Jesus saves only Jesus can save you and those who are saved trust in his word those who are saved when their thoughts or their opinions come in conflict with God's word understand that I am wrong and God's word is right because God is always right despite what my opinions or feelings may be those who are truly saved can discern truth from falsehood because the spirit of God resides within them they're not blind anymore now they see the freedom that Christ speaks of in this verse is not a freedom derived from your biology or your race or your religious identity no matter what the world might tell you you will die in your sins

Jesus said unless you believe that I am he that I am God that I am your Lord and your Savior unless you humbly acknowledge your sin repent and turn to Christ as your only hope for salvation the Bible says you will die in your sin despite what other people might say but we've got to remember don't we what Paul reminds the Corinthian Christians in 1 Corinthians chapter 6 verses 9 through 11 or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God do not be deceived neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor men who practice homosexuality nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor revilers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God and we can't forget this part which we often do and such were some of you but you were washed you were sanctified you were justified in the name of the Lord

Jesus Christ in the spirit of our God you see we were there that's our past and we've been saved not because we've all of a sudden pulled ourselves up by our bootstraps and started doing a lot of really good things that doesn't save you and I want you to know that if that describes you the answer isn't well I gotta go clean myself up first no you come to Christ first and he will clean you he will cleanse you he will save you and so a genuine believer knows what they once were apart from Christ and they rejoice in the reality that that is not who they are anymore not because of them but because of Christ they know that they have been saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone the third mark of a genuine disciple is that genuine disciples strive to put sin to death genuine disciples strive to put sin to death look again at verse 34

Jesus answered them truly truly I say to you everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin despite the Pharisees objections Jesus reiterated his claim that they were slaves to sin they were not born again they like all of us were born sinful and their attempts to appear righteous while fooling others could not fool him and ultimately because he is God cannot fool the father either in an instance where Jesus reveals the hypocrisy of the Pharisees to them Matthew 23 27 through 28 he talks about this very thing woe to you and he sang it to their face with them present our Lord was was not a pansy woe to you scribes and Pharisees hypocrites for you are like whitewashed tombs which outwardly appear beautiful but within are full of dead people's bones and all uncleanness so you also outwardly appear righteous to others but within you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness and so you see what Jesus reveals here is that imposters will seek to cover up their sin and present themselves as if they are something that they are truly not while genuine believers who are controlled by the spirit humbly expose their sin to the

Lord and to one another in seminary my first time on campus in orientation one of our teachers stood up before us at the very beginning and he said and this is a piece of advice that has stuck

with me and will stick with me and you probably heard me say it before and get just get used to it I'll say it again because it man it's here it's stuck he said men I want you to know that if you have any sin in your life whatever it is whatever sinful habit you are a part of today is the day and now is the time for you to come to one of us and expose it because he said this if you expose your sin God will cover it up but if you try to cover up your sin

[42 : 33] God will expose it and so he said it's better for you if you expose it now God will cover it up don't let us find out later on when the Lord uncovers it what's been going on in your life you see genuine disciples now we're not perfect the sin nature remains and we struggle with this but genuine disciples mature believers don't pretend that they are without sin we don't pretend as if we were you know so worthy of being saved they don't attempt to cover up their sins with excuses this is just who I am it's a part of my biology I can't help it or I was put in this position it's not my fault it was the fault of other people they also don't call sin by a different name they call sin sin they confess it to

God they're willing to confess it to others in the church who are trustworthy because they have a desire within them to be rid of its influence in their lives thus they love the gospel they love to hear the gospel the good news that has saved them and they love to share it and they love to hear it preached and taught continually by uncovering our sin to God to each other by abiding in his word we seek to put sin to death again the sin nature remains we won't achieve perfection in this life but the genuine disciple has a desire to put sin to death within themselves because we see it the way that God sees it we understand that it was our sin who put Christ on the cross and so we sweep it under the rug and pretend as if it didn't happen but we know that it's something that must be killed Romans 8 12 through 13 talks about this very thing so then brothers we are debtors not to the flesh to live according to the flesh for if you live according to the flesh you will die but if by the spirit you put to death the deeds of the body you will live John Owen wrote a book a long time ago called the mortification of sin it's a great book it's one of those books that you can only read a page at a time and you'll reread that page and you'll reread that page and you'll reread that page so if you pick it up know that you're going to be reading it for a long time but he asked genuine disciples of Jesus Christ strive to put sin to death and then finally genuine disciples rejoice in their freedom in Christ genuine disciples rejoice in their freedom in Christ verse 35 through 36 Jesus says the slave does not remain in the house forever the son remains forever so if the son sets you free you will be free indeed and so what Jesus is saying here is true freedom comes from knowing him serving him possessing the fulfillment of what you have been created for by him to worship him to rejoice in the Lord to glorify in him and enjoy him as yours now and forever more the son has permanent rights to the household to the inheritance the servants of the house don't as Jesus rules over the father's house he has authority to release those who put their faith in him to set them free from sin's enslavement!

Thus he's declaring here I have the ability to declare you to be sons of God but as we've seen it's not because of your biology it's not because of your good works but because you have been adopted by him you have been adopted by him Romans 8 14 through 17 for all who are led by the spirit of God are sons of God you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear but you have received the spirit of adoption as sons by whom we cry Abba Father the spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God and if children then heirs heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him you have been adopted by the

[47 : 56] Lord if you are a genuine disciple not because you earned it not because you were so worthy because of your good deeds but because God is gracious to love you and save you I had a really touching story from a pastor friend of mine who he's got a few kids with his wife and they're his biological sons and daughters but they also adopted a little boy from a really difficult situation adopted him when he was young and now the boy is still a young boy but came to the realization that he was adopted and he was asking his dad and you know thinking through these things as a little boy he wondered if his dad loved his biological children more than him the adopted son and so he asked my friend dad do you love my brothers and sisters more than me because they're and I don't think he said biological because he probably couldn't say it but you know he was saying because they're they're from you and mommy and

I love my friend's response he said! I was stuck with those ones you know I didn't have a choice in that but he said I chose you I chose you to be my son and I'm so thankful that you are and no I don't

love you any bit less obviously my friend loved his other kids too but he was trying to communicate in a way to his son that his son would realize this is my dad who chose to love me and that's what he's done for you brother and sister in Christ you aren't worthy of the salvation that you received but God has saved you and so you have reason to rejoice in God every day of your life that you are saved that you are his that you have received something tremendous that nothing in this world can take away from you and so we should live our lives as genuine believers rejoicing in the Lord of our salvation not seeking to be using Jesus but wanting and desiring to be used by him and so if you've heard this message this morning and you realize you're an imposter I want you to know that God wants you to be the genuine article you must come to him you must repent of your sins and turn from them to him trust in him as your Lord and savior that you could not be saved based upon who you are or your good works or anything else but through Jesus and his life and his death and his resurrection on the cross and if you turn to him and you trust in him as your Lord and savior you will be saved and my hope and my prayer is that you would profess and that you would know that you possess Jesus Christ please get a hold of me

I'd love to talk to you more anytime let's look at our application questions and then we'll pray very basic we don't have church tonight so I encourage you to just think about these later today later this week do the marks of a genuine disciple mark you this is individual you look at these marks you look at this scripture and you along with the Holy Spirit do some work do these marks mark me now you may be falling short in some areas but God is gracious to help you and if you realize that I think that's an indication that you are truly saved because you're like you know what I know that I'm a little bit short and I need to be doing better and you have that desire because God has the spirit living in you Christ and if the answer to the first question is no and if the answer to the second question is no would you please come and find me

I would love to share more about Jesus with you and if yes then praise the Lord amen let's pray God we're thankful for you we're thankful for this time that we've had together Lord thankful to know that Jesus Christ is the way the truth and the life to know that through Christ there is freedom from sin there is freedom from sin's consequences there is freedom in knowing that Jesus paid it all in living the rest of our life knowing that all to him we owe that Jesus is unlike any other willing to come willing to die willing to give his life that we might be saved God I pray for those who realize this morning as we've gone through this text that these marks do not mark them that they've had a profession but they know that they do not possess your spirit they do not possess salvation [53 : 58] God I pray that you would draw them to yourself and that they would know that they would be saved and they would know that they possess what they thought they had what they were professing and for the rest of us Lord who are true genuine disciples I pray that we would continue Lord to strive to put sin to death in our life to be in your word to be committed followers of yours disciples who make disciples God we pray that the result of that would bring you honor and glory would be pleasing in your sight we ask these things in Jesus name Amen Thank you.