

## Scripture Reading

### **A Reading of the Gospel According to John** (*John 8:31-32*) *The truth will set you free*

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." The Gospel of the Lord. R. Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ.

### Reflection – The Highest Form of Freedom

**If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed (John 8:36).** In the confused world of today, depending on the tastes and flavour of the day, there are many things proclaimed as truth. However, what is held as truth today may not be so tomorrow or in another situation and may not hold its own in a change in popular human opinion. The Eternal Truth, however, is unchanging and eternal. It withstands the test of time and circumstances, pays no respect to human opinion or tastes and remains unchanged whatever human opinion holds sway. The Eternal Truth is Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God. *Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me (John 14:6).*

**The highest form of freedom.** Freedom in its highest level is freedom from sin. It is impossible for us to wash away our sins by good works alone because sin is an offence against the infinite love and goodness of God. If we could be saved by our own good acts then we would be our own saviour! Scripture tells us we are saved only through faith by grace of Jesus Christ through His Cross, and this is a free gift from God to us (cf. Ephesians 2:8). No one can earn this grace nor is anyone worthy of it. It is pure gift from God, available to anyone who accepts Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. Thus, the price of our freedom is paid through the divine coin of infinite value - that is God's own Son, Jesus Christ. Only Jesus Christ can set us free from our sins. Through His Cross we are brought from the darkness and slavery of sin into a spiritual freedom that enables us to love and serve God and share His eternal life of grace, and thereafter enter into the glorious inheritance that God plans for each of us since the foundation of the earth.

**Freedom comes with responsibility.** Set free by the Truth which is Jesus Christ, we have to uphold the truths and values of our faith. We have to live our faith. In the upside-down world of today, good is not recognised as such but sin is often glorified and made a right of choice. For example, for the sake of convenience and right of choice, life in the womb which should be the safest place for a yet-to-be-born baby becomes subject to a decision. The right to life of an individual, a child of God has been taken away by another human being who has no authority to take the life of another. If we compromise the truth or let truth be compromised, we introduce corruption into our personal faith. We may compromise truth to protect reputations or titles or to maintain a false peace or for our own self-interests or to keep ourselves free from trouble. However, when truth is not upheld but suppressed, the door to evil is opened. In the process we weaken and undermine our faith, fall into temptation and contribute to strengthening the spirit of falsehood that is so rampant in the world of today where truth is ignored, suppressed or rejected due to personal interests arising out of disorderly self love.

**Jesus is crucified because He held on to the truth.** In His earthly life Jesus held on to the truth that He is the Messiah and Son of God (cf. Matthew 11:4-6, Matthew 26:53-54) even when people rejected Him and accused Him of blasphemy. Jesus shows us through His own example and not merely by words that Truth is worth dying for and that we should always uphold the truths and values of our faith. God is Truth and all that He stands for. Without truth, our love is shallow and cannot withstand the test of trials or persecution as it has no foundation. It will be like building our house on sand which will collapse once the storm and strong wind set in.

### Conversation with Jesus

Precious Lord, be exalted and praised above all forever! You called me by name even before my birth (cf. Isaiah 49:1) cared for me even when I was in my mother's womb (cf. Psalm 139:13). You crafted a wonderful plan for my life (cf. Jeremiah 29:11), a life that You have set free from slavery to sin. Purify my love for You and strengthen my faith and hope in You. Flood my soul with Your Spirit so that I may become a true disciple of Yours: one who is loyal, fearless and steadfast, always upholding and defending the truth. Help me understand that only in holy love and humility can I abide in the truth. Mary, my Mother of Salvation help me imitate You and give me Your holy boldness in upholding the truth so that the power of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth will be unencumbered to work in my life. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.