

## Doctrine of Being Made Free

1. Jesus has promised that individuals shall know the truth and the truth would make them free.
  - *John 8:32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*
  
2. The word “make” in John 8:32 is in the Greek ἐλευθερώ [eleutheroo; el-yoo-ther-o'-o) and means “to liberate”, i.e. (figuratively) “to exempt” (from moral, ceremonial or mortal liability). It is translated in the KJV to “deliver”, or to “make free”.
  
3. Translators have rendered this verse as follows.
  - New International Version. *John 8:31 To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. 32 Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."*
  
  - New American Standard. (Updated) *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; 32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."*
  
  - English Standard Version. *John 8:31 So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, 32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."*
  
  - Revised Standard Version. *John 8:31 Jesus then said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, 32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." 33*
  
4. A question arises as to why some Greek and biblical scholars will translate the word ἐλευθερώ “make free” while other competent Greek and biblical scholars will translate the word to “set” free.
  
5. There are several possibilities.
  - The concept of being “made free” and being “set free” are the same in the mind of the translators. Therefore, the choice of words is discretionary.
  
  - One translation is more correct than another.
  
  - Both translations should be set aside in favor of a more precise word.

6. Some who prefer the word ἐλευθερώω to be translated “make free”, will argue that there is a difference in meaning between someone be “made free” and someone being “set free”. The argument is advanced that to set someone free is to place the person in a static state of spiritual existence while to make one free is to engage in a continuous action.
7. By parsing the word it is easier to see why one scholar would translate the passage one way and another scholar would prefer another translation.
8. The word ἐλευθερώω is a Greek verb in the third person singular, future active voice in the indicative mood.
  - Verb. This means that the subject is doing an action or that the subject (he/she/it) is in a state of being.
  - Person. In context the verb is in the third person which is used to designate the person who is being spoken about as the Actor: “He,” “She”, “It”, “They”.
  - Number. The singular number of this verb in context refers to only one person or thing (e.g., “I”, “you” [one person], “he, she it”.
  - Tense. The word is in the future tense.
  - Voice. The active voice says that the subject performs the action of the verb, or is the state described by the verb.
  - Mood. The verb is in the indicative mood which means the action or state of the subject is represented as certain or realized.
9. What all Christians, scholars and lay people alike, can agree upon is the certainty that gospel truth can be known and that truth shall liberate a person from the power, penalty, and pollution of sin and exempt them from moral, ceremonial, and mortal liability of the same.
10. If a person knows the truth then they are free indeed.
  - *John 8:36 If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.*

## Matthew Henry

### John 8:32

*The truth shall make you free; that is,*

*First,* The truth which Christ teaches tends to make men free, [Isaiah 61:1](#).

- *Isaiah 61:1 The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;*

Justification makes us free from the guilt of sin, by which we were *bound over* to the judgment of God, and *bound under* amazing fears; sanctification makes us free from the bondage of corruption, by which we were *restrained* from that service which is perfect freedom, and *constrained* to that which is perfect slavery.

Gospel truth frees us from the yoke of the ceremonial law, and the more grievous burdens of the traditions of the elders.

It makes us *free from* our spiritual enemies, free *in* the service of God, free *to* the privileges of sons, and free *of* the Jerusalem which is from above, which is free.

*Secondly,* The knowing, entertaining, and believing, of this truth does actually *make us free*, free from prejudices, mistakes, and false notions, than which nothing more *enslaves* and *entangles* the soul, free from the dominion of lust and passion; and restores the soul to the government of itself, by reducing it into obedience to its Creator.

The mind, by admitting the truth of Christ in the light and power, is vastly enlarged, and has scope and compass given it, is greatly elevated and raised above things of sense, and never acts with so true a liberty as when it acts under a divine command, [2 Corinthians 3:17](#).

The enemies of Christianity pretend to *free thinking*, whereas really those are the freest reasonings that are guided by faith, and those are men of *free thought* whose thoughts are captivated and brought into obedience to Christ.