

# Reformation Sunday – Epistle

**FREE@LAST**

**John 8:31-38**

**Reformation Sunday**

**Analysis by Marcus Felde**

31 Then Jesus said to the Jews [sic; should read “Judeans”] 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 They answered him, “We are descendants of Abraham and have never been slaves to anyone. What do you mean by saying, ‘You will be made free’?” 34 Jesus answered them, “Very truly, I tell you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin. 35 The slave does not have a permanent place in the household; the son has a place there forever. 36 So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed. 37 I know that you are descendants of Abraham; yet you look for an opportunity to kill me, because there is no place in you for my word. 38 I declare what I have seen in the Father’s presence; as for you, you should do what you have heard from the Father.”

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## **DIAGNOSIS:**

**Step 1: Initial Diagnosis (External Problem)** – *Free@first*

These Judeans speak for all who kinda think there is something about Jesus, but fail to abide in his Word. Only paragraphs after our text, they try to stone Jesus (v. 59)! They call themselves “free” because of their origin. They are “children of Abraham.” But such freedom is a charade, Jesus says, if they continue in sin (v. 34).

## **Step 2: Advanced Diagnosis (Internal Problem) – Full o' self**

Jesus says that what makes them want to kill him is the fact that there is no room in them for his Word. "Disk is full, or write-protected!" Self-absorbed, they cannot absorb Jesus.

## **Step 3: Final Diagnosis (Eternal Problem) – Permalost**

In consequence of not having the truth in them, they are and will remain forever unfree. Irony: they had not known that they were unfree, until Jesus told them they could become free. They fail to catch this wave, and drown. (Serf's down!)

## **PROGNOSIS:**

### **Step 4: Initial Prognosis (Eternal Solution) – Truth@work**

Truth will. Truth will make. Truth will make free. Notice it's not "knowing the truth," but "the truth" that will make us free. (Nor is it work that makes us free, as per the Auschwitz slogan "Arbeit macht frei.") The truth, we find out in v. 36 (and also in 14:6), is the Son. The Son makes free. Makes us free.

### **Step 5: Advanced Prognosis (Advanced Solution) – Full o' Word**

The Son does his work in us, as we abide in his Word. Repentance clears a "place" in us for his Word. Perhaps the next verse, v. 38a, describes how the Word does that work in our hearts: by declaring "what I have seen in the Father's presence." And declaring it again. And again. "If" (v. 31) we hang our hearts on this, we are his disciples, and we will know the truth, and . . .

### **Step 6: Final Prognosis (External Solution) – Free@last**

We began in bondage to sin (unable to free ourselves), but the Son has given us a permanent place like his own, in the household where to be is to be free. "Thank God almighty, I'm free at last!"