

## Are you an unwitting captive to sin?

As Jesus speaks to Jews, some open to believing in Him, He introduces a concept they were unaware of – they were slaves to sin!

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. (John 8:33-34, ESV)

Jesus implies that freedom is an illusion without God; true freedom is freedom from sin, which is only possible through His Son.

1. Throughout the Old Testament, prophets confront the nation of Israel for their failure in remaining faithful to God and forsaking their covenant commitments. Carefully examine the following passages and discuss what you observe about the human condition.

Their tongue is a deadly arrow;  
it speaks **deceitfully**;  
with his mouth each speaks peace to his neighbor,  
but in his heart he plans an ambush for him. (Jer 9:8, ESV)

The heart is **deceitful** above all things,  
and desperately sick;  
who can understand it? (Jer 17:9, ESV)

And others are the ones sown among thorns. They are those who hear the word, but the cares of the world and the **deceitfulness** of riches and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it proves unfruitful. (Mark 4:18-19, ESV)

2. What do you observe of these biblical passages?

The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. (1 Cor 2:14, ESV)

But that is not the way you learned Christ!— assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through **deceitful** desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness. (Eph 4:20-24, ESV)

3. What is Jesus saying here about us?

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.” (Mark 1:14-15, ESV)

And Jesus answered them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.” (Luke 5:31-32, ESV)

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### Teacher Notes

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Ask the student: what does the word enslave mean? Discuss what this means to the individual.

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Ask and have the class discuss: how do we deceive ourselves? How do we deceive others?

A biblical example: do you remember Eve and how she thought about the forbidden fruit? Details matter!

So when the woman saw that **the tree was good for food**, and that **it was a delight to the eyes**, and that **the tree was to be desired to make one wise**, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. (Gen 3:6, ESV)

A cultural example: culture says that man is inherently good. Without God’s word, would you know otherwise?

Ask and have the class discuss: what does Jeremiah say about our ability to be aware of our deceit? Agree or disagree?

Ask and have the class discuss: how are we a slave to sin?

## 2. What do you observe of these biblical passages?

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Ask the student: what is spiritual discernment??

Spiritual discernment is the ability to perceive / recognize life from God's perspective. This requires the knowledge of God's word (Bible). Through this, you can recognize the desires of the natural man and the contrast with the godly man.

Ask the student: what is the renewing of your mind for Christians?

In recognizing that God is a real living Being and placing a faith in His Son Jesus Christ, renewing one's mind refers to learning what sin is and how to be holy as God is holy in obedience to His word.

By learning God's word, Believers begin to learn a new moral standard to live by.

## 3. What is Jesus saying here about us?

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Ask the student: what does repentance mean?

Jesus is saying not only is recognizing the truth of God and His Son necessary for Believers, but also the truth about ourselves.