FREEDOM VERSUS RESTLESSNESS

Seeking to grow closer to God, Martin Luther, a sixteenth century German monk and scholar, pilgrimaged to Rome to climb an ancient stone staircase on his knees—a common act of self-mortification at the time. Partway up, he recalled a verse: “The just shall live by faith” (Rom. 1:17). He bolted to his feet as he realized exactly what that means: he didn't need to try to earn salvation through actions! Luther later became God's messenger to Europe, the leading voice of the Protestant Reformation. His teachings helped free millions from unbiblical teachings like indulgences, priestly confessionals, penances, sacraments, and papal infallibility. There’s truly nothing more liberating than personally encountering Christ.

Luther’s German translation of the Bible was the first to be based on the original Greek and Hebrew. People are freed wherever Scripture is published in their language, often to the dismay of those who’ve kept their power by restricting knowledge. Luther also stood against fanatics like Thomas Müntzer who sought to spread counterfeit liberties. They attracted large groups that were openly hostile toward the civil government. For Luther, “The opposition of the pope and the emperor had not caused him so great perplexity and distress as he now experienced. From the professed friends of the Reformation had risen its worst enemies. The very truths which had brought him so great joy and consolation were being employed to stir up strife and create confusion in the church” (Ellen White, *The Great Controversy* [1911], 187). This week's lesson explores the freedom Jesus offers and the reason many reject it in favor of counterfeits.
Write out John 8:31–47 from the translation of your choice. If you’re pressed for time, write out verses 31–38. You may also rewrite the passage in your own words, or outline or mind-map the passage.
Go back to your scribed text and study the passage.

**Circle** repeated words/ideas

**Underline** words/phrases that are important and have meaning to you

Draw **Arrows** to connect words/phrases to other associated or related words/phrases

What special insights do your marks seem overall to point to?

Memorize your favorite verse. Write it out multiple times to help with memorization.

How does truth set people free?

What are some common examples of bondage we see today?

Read more at www.inversebible.org/RL04-3
After looking at your scribed and annotated text, what special insights do your marks overall seem to point to?

What questions emerge after studying this passage? What parts are difficult?

What other principles and conclusions do you find?

Why does God give us restrictions? In what sense does true freedom involve submitting to restrictions?

Read more at www.inversebible.org/RL04-4
What relationship do the following verses have with John 8:31–47?

Mark 5:1–20
Luke 4:18
Romans 6:6–22
Romans 8:21
2 Corinthians 3:17, 18
Galatians 5:1, 13
James 1:25
1 Peter 2:11–25

What other verses come to mind in connection with the primary passage?

Review your memorized verse from John 8:31–47.
Meditate on the primary passage again and look for where Jesus is.

How does the freedom Jesus offers compare to the freedom the world offers?

What is Jesus saying to you through these texts?

How do you see Jesus differently or see Him again?

Prayer Response:
Review the memory verse. How does it apply to your life this week?

After this week’s study, what are some personal applications you are convicted of in your life?

What are some practical applications you must make in your school, family, workplace, and church life?

Read more inSight from the Spirit of Prophecy at www.inversebible.org/RL04-7
Share insights from this week’s memory verse and Bible study as well as any discoveries, observations, and questions with your Sabbath School class (or Bible study group). Consider these discussion questions with the rest of the group.

What is true freedom? What does it look like in everyday life?

How can we identify counterfeit freedoms?

What are the behavioral issues that enslave young people today and how can we help them?

Why didn’t Jesus prioritize freeing the Jews from the Roman oppression?

How is the devil using big problems in the world to distract us from dealing with the sin in our hearts?

What’s wrong with doing whatever we please?

How can we help our friends accept the freedom Christ gives over the freedom the world offers?

What does the story of Satan deceiving Eve teach us about Satan’s tactics?

In a world that says there is no absolute truth, truth is relative. What does John 14:6 mean to you in this context?