



## Discussion Guide

Date: 4/19/2026

Sermon Title: How do I know what is true?

Scripture: John 8:31-36

This discussion guide is a layout to be used with a group or class. We have included opening and closing prayers to start and end your group. The guide may be used for personal or family reflection as well.

### OPENING PRAYER

Gracious and loving God, in a world filled with voices, opinions, and endless information, we come seeking your truth. Open our hearts and minds to your Word. Help us to listen deeply, speak graciously, and discern wisely. Through your Spirit, guide us into truth that sets us free. Shape us as followers of Christ who live in love, humility, and grace. We pray this in the name of Jesus, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Amen.

### OPENING QUESTIONS: (Choose one to start with)

1. Where do you typically go first for news or information?
2. Have you ever believed something that later turned out not to be true? What did you learn?
3. Share about a time when you believed something you saw online or heard from someone, only to discover later it wasn't true. How did that make you feel?

### DIGGING INTO THE SCRIPTURE:

Read John 8:31-36 (NRSV). Using additional translations may be helpful for you in wrestling with the text.

#### *Observing the Text:*

1. What stands out to you most in this passage?
2. What does Jesus say is required to "know the truth"? (v.31)
3. What does Jesus say truth does? (v.32)
4. What do you think Jesus means by "everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin"? (v.34) What are some modern forms of slavery we might not recognize—things that hold us back from freedom? (addiction, materialism, approval-seeking, etc.)
5. What is the difference between being a "slave" and being part of the "household"? (v.35)
6. What does it mean to be "free indeed"? (v.36)

#### *Understanding Truth:*

7. According to this passage, how is truth different from simply having information?
8. What does it mean to "continue" or "abide" in Jesus' word?
9. How does following Jesus help us discern truth in today's world?

#### *Connecting to Our Lives (Information Age):*

10. What makes it difficult to know what is true today?

11. How does technology influence what we believe?
12. How do we practice discernment when reading news or social media?
13. What role does Christian community play in helping us find truth?
14. How can we ensure we are not just consuming information but forming wisdom?

**Supporting Scripture Discussion:**

John 14:6 (NRSV) *"I am the way, and the truth, and the life..."*

1. How does understanding Jesus as truth shape how we seek truth?

Philippians 4:8; James 1:5; 1 Thessalonians 5:21

2. What practical steps do these scriptures give us for discerning truth?

Philippians 4:8; James 1:5; 1 Thessalonians 5:21

3. What practical steps do these scriptures give us for discerning truth?

Galatians 5:1; Ephesians 4:25

4. How are truth and freedom connected in these passages?

**Wesleyan & Methodist Insight:**

John Wesley emphasized truth rooted in scripture, tradition, reason, and experience (Wesleyan Quadrilateral).

Wesley wrote: "Bring me plain scriptural proof for your assertion."

1. How does the Wesleyan Quadrilateral help us discern truth today?
2. Which of the four (Scripture, Tradition, Reason, Experience) do you lean on most?

**SERMON QUESTIONS:**

1. Pastor Clayton starts the sermon with sharing that the internet has lots of information, but it isn't always true or accurate. In an age of instant information and competing truth claims, how do you discern what is actually true versus what is simply viral or popular?
2. Pastor Clayton says, "We are drowning in information, but starving for truth". How do the algorithms and voices you listen to daily shape your worldview, and do they align with the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus?
3. The sermon mentions the Jewish followers claimed they had never been enslaved while living under Roman occupation. What uncomfortable realities might we be denying in our own lives or communities?
4. The sermon mentioned that "sometimes we don't want to look back at our history because it makes us uncomfortable." Why is facing truth; even uncomfortable truth; necessary for freedom?
5. Jesus gives us an invitation to follow him and move from just ideas to a person, a person of truth and love. How does putting your faith in the person of Jesus rather than just ideas about Jesus transform the way you live and make decisions?

**REFLECTION:**

1. In what ways are you currently being formed by information versus being formed by the teachings of Jesus, and how can you shift that balance?
2. What does it mean practically to move from knowing about Jesus to being formed and shaped by his message in your daily life?



3. How does viewing everything through the lens of God's love change the way you interpret news, social media, and information you encounter?
4. What would it look like to be so immersed in following Jesus that you become "one with" His message of love?

#### **CLOSING PRAYER:**

God of truth, thank you for the freedom we find in Jesus Christ. In a world filled with noise and competing voices, help us remain grounded in your Word. Give us wisdom to discern truth, courage to live faithfully, and grace to speak with love. May we be people who seek truth, live truth, and share truth — not for our sake, but for your kingdom. Guide us as we go from this place, trusting that your truth sets us free. In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.

#### **WAYS TO RESPOND:**

Choose ONE of the following practices to focus on this week:

1. Digital Detox & Truth Audit: Track your screen time this week. For every hour spent consuming digital information, spend 10 minutes in Scripture or prayer, allowing God's word to form you.
2. Comfort Zone Challenge: Identify one uncomfortable truth you've been avoiding (in your personal life, a relationship, or your past). Journal about it and pray for courage to face it and find freedom.
3. Lens Check: When you encounter information this week (news, social media, conversations), pause and ask: "How does the love of Jesus help me see this differently?" Write down your observations.
4. Abiding Practice: Choose one passage from John 8:31-47 to meditate on each day this week. Don't just read it; sit with it, memorize it, let it shape your thoughts.
5. Truth Anchor: Write down this truth: "God loves me" and post it where you'll see it daily. When negative messages come (internal or external), return to this anchor truth.

#### **GO FURTHER WITH MORE THAN SUNDAY PODCAST:**

This season explores the intersection of faith and technology and asks what it might look like to stay human in an increasingly digital world. [fumcr.com/morethansunday](http://fumcr.com/morethansunday) The new season launches a new episode each Wednesday and continues weekly through May 6.