

**FREE AT LAST!**

**LIBERTY IN JESUS' FOOTSTEPS (John 8:30-32)**

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[www.mol316.com] Presented at GES Conference: 25 Apr 2013:

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**Introduction**

John 8:20 says Jesus taught crowds. Underline = taught people. Bold = teaching content

<sup>2</sup> Now at dawn Jesus again entered the temple courts, and all the people came to Him. And after sitting, He kept teaching them... <sup>3</sup> ...Pharisees led a woman caught in adultery and stood her in the midst [of the crowd]... <sup>7b</sup> **“Let the sinless one of you cast a stone at her first.”** <sup>9</sup> Now those hearing left... And Jesus alone was left, the woman being in the midst [of the crowd]... <sup>12</sup> Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, “I am the Light of the world. He who follows Me never will walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” [Follow Me] <sup>13</sup> Then Pharisees said... <sup>20a-b</sup> Jesus said these words in the Treasury, while teaching [the crowd] in the temple courts... <sup>30</sup> While saying these words many [among the crowd] believed in Him. <sup>31</sup> Then Jesus told Judeans who believed Him, “If you abide in My word, truly you are My disciples [e.g., you follow Me]. <sup>32</sup> **And you shall know the truth and the truth shall free you.**” [JHN]

At least three groups were present. Each responded differently to Jesus:

1. Scribes and Pharisees who brought the adulteress chose **flight** (8:9)
2. Other Pharisees (who were already present) chose to **fight** (8:13ff)
3. Crowds came to the **Light** and many believed (8:12 and 30)

**Body:**

	<b>A. Is 8:30-33 Continuous?</b>	<b>B. Are those of 8:30-32 secure?</b>	<b>Advocates</b>
<b>View 1</b>	Yes. ( <u>8:30-33</u> )	No, they are unbelievers	Most perseverantists
<b>View 2</b>	No. ( <u>8:30-32</u>   <u>8:33</u> )	No, they are <i>provisional believers</i>	Augustine, Calvin, etc.
<b>View 3</b>	No. ( <u>8:30-32</u>   <u>8:33</u> )	Yes. Believers are secure	Faith-alone proponents

**A. Is John 8:30-33: Continuous (8:30-33) or Disrupted (8:30-32 | 8:33)?**

**Those Seeing 8:30-33 as Continuous (8:30-33): View 1**

William Hendriksen states View 1’s main issue: John 8:30ff does not distinguish groups,

“The entire section [8:30-59] is an uninterrupted story... neither of these verses [33 or 37] indicates a transition *from one group to another group*. Verse 33 begins with the words, ‘They answered him.’ Naturally, the ‘they’ refers to the people addressed in verse [31 and] 32.”<sup>1</sup>

Proponents of view 3 have ignored Hendriksen; instead, raising four problems with view 1:

1. Biblical theology: John’s Gospel does not call unbelievers *believers*,
2. Clearer-antecedents sometimes supercede nearer-antecedents in John,
3. Logic: John cannot say new believers attack Him *immediately* after believing,
4. People here do not merely *claim* to believe; God’s word *testifies* that they believe.

This tacitly concedes Hendriksen’s argument. Do 8:30-33’s words signal a transition between groups?

<sup>30</sup> While saying these <u>many believed</u> in Him <sup>31</sup> Jesus told <u>Judeans who believed Him...</u> <sup>33</sup> <u>They replied to Him...</u>	<sup>30</sup> <i>Taûta autoû laloûntos, polloi episteusan eis auton.</i> <sup>31</sup> <i>Élegen...ho Iêsoûs pròs toûs pepisteukótas autô loudaious...</i> <sup>33</sup> <i>Apekríthēsan autô...</i>
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<sup>1</sup> William Hendriksen, *Exposition of the Gospel according to John*, 2:51f.

**Might John's Greek Actually Make a Transition ( 8:30-32 | 8:33 )?**

**Verbs Introducing/Re-Introducing Speakers (VIRIS)**

John uses speaking verbs to introduce new speakers and to re-introduce previously introduced ones. Examples include: he says, Jesus answered, Judeans asked. John's Gospel prefers explicit noun designations for speakers (over implicit ones). Each of seven times the Samaritan woman speaks (4:9, 11, 15, 17, 19, 25, and 28) *woman* is the subject; not once does John have *she* as subject.

John's 353 uses of VIRIS appear in the appendix. John sometimes uses a shorter formula. His seventy-eight uses of VIRIS without explicit subject-words appear in this paper's appendix.

**An Illustration.** We must identify the *they* of the last line:

*Jim was teaching John 1:1 to his two sons, Bob and Ed, in the living room. They (like sponges) absorbed all that Jim taught that day.*

*The doorbell rang. Two Jehovah's Witnesses told Jim, "Hi, we are Bible students." Jim told his sons, "Later, we will return to John 1:1—that calls Jesus eternal-God, part of the Trinity."*

*They replied [Apokrithēsan], "Jesus is not eternal God. He is created. The Trinity is nonsense."*

Three reasons exist for identifying the speakers as the two Jehovah's Witnesses:

1. The last line agrees with Watchtower theology, so they are the likely speakers,
2. Bob and Ed were *like sponges*: they *absorbed all that Jim taught that day*.
3. Using *they* with a VIRIS verb normally re-introduces already-introduced speakers.

**Applying the Illustration to Hendriksen's Challenge.** Impact of starting section at 8:12 or 21.

<p><b><u>Unbelieving Hecklers Were Vocal</u></b></p> <p>{          13 <u>Pharisees told</u> Him...          19 <u>They told</u> Him...          20a Jesus told [Pharisees] these sayings...          {          22 <b><u>Judeans said...</u></b>          25a <b><u>They told</u></b> Him...          25b He told them...          28 Jesus told them...          {          {          33 <b><u>They replied</u></b> to Him...          39 <b><u>They replied and told</u></b> Him...          41b <b><u>They told</u></b> Him,          48 <b><u>Judeans replied and told</u></b> Him...          52 <b><u>Judeans replied and told</u></b> Him...          57 <b><u>Judeans replied and told</u></b> Him...</p>	<p align="center"><b><u>Silent Crowds Were Taught</u></b></p> <p>while teaching [<u>crowds</u>]...</p> <p>↙ ↘</p> <p>30 While saying these words <u>many</u> believed in Him.          31 Then Jesus told <u>Judeans who believed</u>...</p>
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George Beasley-Murray argues well from repeated references to Jews [Judeans].

After the depiction of people becoming believers in vv 30-32, the entire passage is punctuated by objections to faith in Jesus—vv 33, [39,] 41, 48, 53, 57. *Since the objectors in the last three passages are termed "the Jews [Judeans]," i.e., Jewish [Judean] opponents of Jesus, it is reasonable to assume that they are the protesters also in vv 33[ 39] and 41.* In that case, we are presented in 8:30-59 with a typical statement of Jews [Judeans] coming to faith in Jesus; they are instructed by him as to what true discipleship means, and there follows a mass of typical Jewish [Judean] propaganda calculated to destroy faith in Jesus<sup>2</sup> [Emphasis mine].

Something else is crucial. Judean hecklers are the only group introduced *as speakers*.

***Apokrithēsan* (they replied) re-introduces prior speakers. It lacks an explicit subject-word.**

<sup>2</sup> George R. Beasley-Murray, *John*, rev. ed., WBC, 133.

**Parallelism between 8:12f and 8:31f.** Who objects to Jesus claiming to enlighten His followers? Pharisees object, not the crowds. Compare 8:12 with 8:31f.

*One following the Light of the world does not walk in darkness, but has the light of life.*

*One abiding in His word as an in-His-footsteps disciple will know truth that will free him.*

**Summary**

	Is 8:30-33 Continuous?	Are the people of 8:30-32 secure?
<b>View 1</b>	Yes. ( 8:30-33 )	No. They did not <i>really</i> believe.
<b>View 2</b>	No. ( 8:30-32   8:33 )	No. They <i>started</i> believing, but must persevere to the end.
<b>View 3</b>	No. ( 8:30-32   8:33 )	Yes. Jesus <i>guarantees</i> eternal life to <i>all</i> believers.

*Apokríthēsan* (they replied) lacks an explicit subject-word in 8:33. Judean hecklers again speak.

**John 8:31f Exhorts Eternally Secure Believers**

Views 2-3 agree that 8:31’s new believers are believers, but view 2 denies that they are eternally-secure. Both Arminians and Reformed affirm the following syllogism:

**Major Premise:** *Only believers persevering to the end in faith and works get eternal life,*

**Minor Premise:** *None can know if he/she will persevere to the end in faith and works,*

**Conclusion:** *Therefore, no believer can predict if he/she will get eternal life.*

**Abiding Is Distinct from Believing/Disciple Is Distinct from Believing**

15<sup>7</sup> *If you abide in Me and [if] My words abide in you, you will ask whatever you wish, and it shall come to be for you.* 8 *My Father is glorified by this: that you may bear much fruit; and you will become My disciples.* 9 *“Just as the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love.* 10 *If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love.”*

13<sup>7</sup> *And [John’s] two disciples [mathētēs] heard Him speak, and followed Jesus.* 38 *Now, turning and seeing them following, Jesus told them, “What do you seek?” And they told Him, “Rabbi” (which is translated Teacher), “Where are you abiding [ménō]?”* 39a *He told them, “Come and see.” They went and saw where He abode [ménō], and abode [ménō] with Him that day...* 43 *The next day Jesus wanted to leave for Galilee. So He found Philip and told him, “Follow Me!”*

13<sup>36</sup> *Simon Peter told Him, “Lord, where are You going?” Jesus answered him, “Where I am going you cannot follow Me now; but later you will follow Me.”* 37 *Peter told Him, “Lord, why can I not follow You now? I will lay down my life [psuché] for You!”* [JHN]

21<sup>18</sup> *“Amen amen, I tell you: When you were younger you girded yourself and walked wherever you wished. But when you grow old you will stretch out your hands and someone else will gird you and carry you where you do not wish.”* 19 *He said this, signifying by which kind of death he will glorify God. After saying this, He told him, “Follow Me!”*

	Disciple (by interp./by applic.)	Non-Disciple (by interp./by applic.)
<b>Believer</b>	A possibility (cf. John 8:31)	A possibility (cf. John 8:31)
<b>Unbeliever</b>	Judas illustrates this	A possibility (John 6:60-64)
	One who Abides (Then or Now)	One who Does Not Abide (Then or Now)
<b>Believer</b>	A possibility (cf. John 8:31)	A possibility (cf. John 8:31)
<b>Unbeliever</b>	Does Not Apply	Unbelievers cannot abide

**Overall Conclusion**