***John 8:34-36 Jesus answered them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. 35 And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. 36 Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.***

 July 4th - Independence Day – a day that we celebrate our declaration of independence from British Rule. The Declaration of Independence was signed in 1776, but the war for independence started in 1775 and officially ended with the signing of the Treaty of Paris in 1783. Declaring freedom doesn’t mean that the enemy gives up and all hostilities cease. No. In fact, declaring freedom fans the flames. It was true with the tyranny of England. It’s true of Satan when we find our freedom in Jesus Christ.

 In John 8:31-32 we read - *Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”* Jesus is speaking about spiritual freedom not national affiliation. In spirit, we are either darkness or light. Jesus makes it clear that, when we believe on Him, we undergo a fundamental change. Jesus says I Am the Way, the Truth, and the Life and, when we know His Truth, that Truth makes us free.

 Verse 34 - *Jesus answered them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin.* The Greek carries the idea of continuing in sin – this person becomes the lowest, most disrespected slave imaginable. Completely degraded! This is very strongly worded by Jesus. Matthew 5:28 makes clear that sin is rooted in thought. Luke 6:45 says that what we bring forth springs from what is in the heart. Notice that Jesus doesn’t spend any time at all bucketizing sin – No wink and a nod with God. Whoever commits sin - this carries the idea making or doing sin, but also the idea of agreeing with sin is a bondservant of sin. How often we make peace with sin… Jesus says – when you make peace with sin, you are a slave of sin. We become enslaved by sin, serving what will cause our death with all the energy of our life. Without Christ, we seal ourselves tightly with sin, serving what will cause death.

 Verse 35 *And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever*. The slave does not abide or continue with God. The slave has embraced sin, which has nothing to do with God. God promises an eternal home, but we must be sons and daughters to abide in that home. Romans 8:16-17 *The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.* A lover of sin is a bondservant of Satan and is a disrespected possession of Satan. A child of God is a cherished possession of God. Satan gives no freedom, no truth, no hope. Jesus offers eternal freedom, eternal hope, and eternal life

 Verse 36 *Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.* The Son alone has the authority to free us from sin. The Son alone has the power to snatch us from Satan’s slave quarters and move us into the Master’s House. But we must believe. When we are free in Jesus, we are free in reality! If you owe a debt and I ball up the bill and throw it away, you still owe the debt. If I pay that debt in full, it is paid indeed. Jesus frees us in reality. In John 11:26, Jesus asks a question of Martha - *And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?* Jesus asks that same question of each of us. Those that believe are made free indeed – in reality. Those that do not believe remain in bondage. It’s a choice made in faith. Does this mean that the attacks of sin are over? No. Does this mean that we magically never sin again and have nothing but wholesome thoughts the rest of our time on earth? No. It means that Satan and all his forces will attack at every opportunity. He will seek to discourage and disillusion at every turn. He’ll seek to destroy what he cannot possess. And Jesus will protect His precious child – freeing us from the wages of sin - eternal death. He has exempted us from what we owed!

 This week, let’s take stock of how we are living as heirs of the King. How are we treasuring the freedom that Christ gives? How are we embracing the Truth that has set us free? We moved out of the slave’s quarters and we are heading for the Master’s House. Is our life reflecting and honoring to our new status as sons and daughters of the King? He/she that the Son sets free is free indeed – in reality. May we abide in His word, know His truth, throw off the shackles of this world, and live free in service to our God.