



To the Jews who believed in him Jesus said:

*If you make my word your home you will indeed be my disciples;
you will come to know the truth, and the truth will set you free.*

They answered, 'We are descended from Abraham and we have never been the slaves of anyone; what do you mean, "You will be set free?" ' Jesus replied:

*In all truth I tell you, everyone who commits sin is a slave.
Now a slave has no permanent standing in the household, but a son belongs to it for ever.
So if the Son sets you free, you will indeed be free.
I know that you are descended from Abraham;
but you want to kill me because my word finds no place in you.
What I speak of is what I have seen at my Father's side,
and you too put into action the lessons you have learnt from your father.
They repeated, 'Our father is Abraham.' Jesus said to them:
If you are Abraham's children, do as Abraham did.
As it is, you want to kill me, a man who has told you the truth
as I have learnt it from God; that is not what Abraham did.
You are doing your father's work.*

They replied, 'We were not born illegitimate, the only father we have is God.'

*Jesus answered: If God were your father, you would love me,
since I have my origin in God and have come from him;
I did not come of my own accord, but he sent me.
Why do you not understand what I say? Because you cannot bear to listen to my words.*

John 8:31-43

If you make my word your home you will indeed be my disciples

Thursday 3rd week in Lent

The key position here is one that remains key into our own day and very different challenges. It is impossible to argue or convince a challenger by intellectual means to accept the Christian perspective. Over the centuries, from the apostles to our own time, people have tried the paths of reasoned arguments and never succeeded. It is not even a matter of right teaching. The process of coming to faith is very different. It is worthwhile letting the image of, *make my word your home*, sink into our imagination. We could let ourselves follow a line of imagining around entering another's home and coming to know them in the depth and intimacy that only occurs in that environment. We discern that there is a world of difference between 'knowing a person' and 'knowing about a person'. In practice, the critical factor in coming to faith and sustaining a faith is in making our church our 'home'. This is why people who pick and choose or move around from church to church rarely achieve any depth of spirituality and faith. They have no home, even when home is, as homes often are, less than ideal.