

4.22.18 ~ John 8:33-47, "Children of God vs Children of Satan?"

Last week we read Jesus saying (**John 8:32**), "*you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.*" His declaration here brought clarity to **John 8:24**, "*unless you believe that I am (the one I claim to be), you will indeed die in your sins.*" To die in your sins means to die apart from the salvation that has come through Jesus Christ.

Most likely we will all die one day, the most important thing we can do in this life is to believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, for in doing so, we receive forgiveness for sins and eternal life, meaning, we won't "die in [our] sins." Jesus would later proclaim (**John 11:25-26**), "*I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in Me will never die.*"

Read John 8:33-34... What an odd response to Jesus' proclamation that those who believe in and follow Him will know the truth [of God] and will therefore be free. As I mentioned, in my opening refresher on last week's lesson, Jesus is talking about being set free from sin's penalty, by believing that He is the Messiah and receiving Him as God's Son, Savior.

The Jews answer Him by saying that as Abraham's descendants they are free and have never been enslaved, so why would they need to be free.

But their protest is simply not true, for they have been enslaved by Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Syria and now Rome, so they must not be referring to political slavery [i.e., occupation by a Gentile nation] but it would seem they are talking about spiritual slavery [serving pagan gods], because as Abraham's descendants they claim to serve the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Jews believed their religious rituals and relationship to Abraham made them acceptable, even united with God; but they are sinners in need of the Savior's forgiveness just like the Gentiles who aren't descendants of Abraham.

Jesus' response (verse 34) is classic: Everyone who sin's is a slave to sin, and as the Scriptures repeatedly state, everyone is guilty of sin, no one is acceptable to God on their own merit (cf. Romans 3:10-12; 3:23; 6:23).

The only way for sinners to be released from their slavery to sin and it's curse, is to be united with God through Christ's death and resurrection (see **Romans 6:1-7, 11-14**); only through Christ can a person become spiritually and eternally free from the condemnation of sin. The reality is, every conscious person is either serving sin, and is controlled by the flesh; or they are serving God, and are controlled by God's Spirit.

Read John 8:35-36... The Israelites would no doubt consider themselves to be sons in the house of God, not slaves. Sons have permanent rights in the house of their father, where as slaves do not, unless of course they are adopted into the family and granted the rights of sonship.

Do you see? It is through the Son of God that one moves from slavery to sin, which brings condemnation, to sonship, adoption into God's household, which brings reward and inheritance (see **Romans 8:1-2, 6-9, 15-16**).

The truth is, it is only those who believe in, confess and follow Jesus Christ as the Son of God who are genuine sons of God; it doesn't matter, quite frankly, whether or not one descended from Abraham.

See Matthew 12:46-50... Only those who do the Father's will are truly children of God, believers, followers and servants of the Lord Jesus Christ (see **John 6:28-29; 20:29-31; 1John 5:1-5**).

Read John 8:37-38... Jesus continues to unveil the truth concerning the Jews relationship with God, clearly Jesus says they cannot assume that as biological descendants of Abraham they are guaranteed sonship in God's kingdom; after all, they not only reject, but are seeking to kill God's Son.

Ancestral descent from Abraham and physical circumcision through the covenant God made with Abraham does not make one right with God (see **Romans 2:17-18, 23-29; 9:6, 27; Galatians 3:6-14**).

The Jews speaking to Christ in John 8 clearly reject the teaching Jesus is giving them; instead of receiving Him and obeying Him as Abraham did, they reject Him and His message. These Jews are not children of God, they don't really know God, neither are they willing to believe in and receive God's Only Son.

John 8:19, *"They asked Jesus, 'Where is your father?' 'You do not know Me or My Father,' Jesus replied. 'If you knew Me, you would know My Father also.'"*

Read John 8:39-41a... Abraham was a man of faith (**Genesis 15:6**), *"Abram believed the LORD, and He credited it to him as righteousness,"* (**Genesis 26:5**), *"Abraham obeyed Me and kept My requirements, My commands, My decrees and My laws."*

Being made acceptable to a Holy God, cannot be ascertained through religious rituals, moral goodness or ancestral inheritance; but only through Christ (cf. Acts 2:21; 4:12; John 14:6; see **Galatians 3:26-29**).

Instead of believing in and obeying God, as Abraham had, these Jews show, by their words and deeds, that they are not sons of either Abraham or God, for they not only reject God's Son, they want to kill Him (cf. John 5:18; 7:19; 8:37).

Read John 8:41b-47... These Jews respond harshly to Jesus' statement that they are not sons of Abraham, they vehemently remark that they were not conceived through some sinful act of fornication, but their father is God!

Note: It would seem that their indignation at Jesus remark brings a retaliatory implying that Jesus' birth, unlike their own, was illegitimate [i.e., no earthy father, born to a virgin] (cf. 8:48).

Jesus now (**verse 42**) removes all doubt from what He earlier implied in **John 8:38, 41**. Jesus came from the Father in heaven to show and to speak what the Father has given Him to speak. They do not understand what He is saying, because their Father the devil, was a murderer and liar from the beginning (see **John 8:43-44**).

Jesus is speaking here about the Garden of Eden, in the very beginning, when Satan tempted Adam and Eve through lies and deception (cf. Genesis 3:1-7), saying that God had lied to them, that they would not die when they disobeyed and they ate the fruit, but instead, they would be like God, knowing good and evil. And so the curse of sin entered our world.

Satan is the father of lies, the Jews show themselves to be his children; the devil's native language is lying; no wonder the Jews can't understand nor accept what Jesus is telling them, for He speaks the truth (see **John 8:45**).

The Son of God only speaks the truth, He is the truth; there is nothing false or deceitful in Him, He is sinless. In **John 8:46**, Jesus' challenges them to prove Him guilty of any sin, which of course they cannot do.

2Corinthians 5:21 says Jesus "had no sin," **Hebrews 4:15** says He was "without sin," **Hebrews 7:26** says Jesus was "holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners," and **1Peter 2:22** says He "committed no sin."

The Jews couldn't prove Jesus guilty of anything, yet they still wouldn't believe Him [Gk. *Jesus*, Heb. *Yeshua = God's Salvation*]; therefore, as Jesus earlier told them, they would indeed die in their sins because of unbelief.

Back in **John 5:25**, Jesus declared to them, "*I tell you the truth, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live.*" Spiritual deafness among the Jews was rampant and the ultimate consequence is (**John 8:47**), "He who belongs to God hears what God says. The reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God."

Children of God spend eternity with God in heaven. Children of Satan spend eternity with Satan in hell. Where you spend eternity, is determined by how you respond to Jesus Christ, God's Son, Lord and Savior.

1John 5:11-13, "And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life."

Pastor Mike

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