

# **John 08 - Woman Caught in Adultery; I AM the Light of the World; Argument with Pharisees; I AM**

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Many people will try to convince you that the story (beginning in 7:53 and continuing through 8:11) didn't take place. See [Problem Passage: John 7:53—8:11](#) for information on Textual Criticism and why it's highly likely that this story is true and belongs in the canon of Scripture.

## **John 8**

(15) Woman Caught in Adultery (8:1-11)

(A) Context (8:1-2)

(a) Mount of Olives (8:1)

**1** But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.

1 But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.

1 Jesus, however, went to the Mount of Olives.

1 Jesus went unto the mount of Olives.

- Maybe this is where He slept that night (Cf. 7:53)

— He did spend the night on the Mount of Olives during His final Passover celebration (Luke 21:37)

#### (b) Temple (8:2)

2 And **early in the morning** He came again into the **templearea**, and all the people were coming to Him; and **He sat down** and *began* teaching them.

2 Early in the morning He came again into the temple, and all the people were coming to Him; and He sat down and *began* to teach them.

2 At daybreak he appeared again in the Temple, and all the people came to him. So he sat down and began to teach them.

2 And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them.

- The Feast of Tabernacles had ended, but Jesus took advantage of the opportunity to minister to the pilgrims in the temple.

- "...early in the morning" - *orthrou*, before sunrise

- "...temple" - *hieron*, the general temple area (as opposed to *naos*, the Holy Place and Holy of Holies); likely this took place in the Court of the Women, also called the "Treasury"

- "...He sat down" - in those days, the teacher sat and the listeners stood: at the well (Matt 4:6); at the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5:1); in the Upper Room (Matt 13:12)

#### (B) Condemnation (8:3-4)

##### (a) Accusers (8:3a)

##### (b) Accused (8:3b-4)

3 Now **thescribes and the Pharisees** \*brought a woman caught in the act of adultery, and after placing her in the center *of the courtyard*,

3 The scribes and the Pharisees \*brought a woman caught in adultery, and having set her in the center *of the court*,

3 But the scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery. After setting her before them,

3 And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst,

- "...the scribes and the Pharisees" - normally these two groups are not mentioned together in the Scriptures, but here they came together in collusion against Jesus Christ

- These two religious groups did not really get along with each other (Luke 23:12) except when it came to their hatred of Christ
- Here, they use a woman caught in the act of adultery as a pawn in order to bring an accusation against Jesus. They didn't care one bit about this woman or her restoration.

4 they \*said to Him, "Teacher, **this woman** has been **caught in the very act** of committing adultery.

4 they \*said to Him, "Teacher, this woman has been caught in adultery, in the very act.

4 they told him, "Teacher, this woman has been caught in the very act of adultery.

4 They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act.

- "...this woman" - where is the man who was involved in the adultery with her?

— The punishment in the Law for adultery, for *both* parties, was stoning (Lev 20:10; Deut 22:22)

— This demonstrates the sexism of the culture during Jesus' day. Women during that time were treated like absolute dirt.

— The Pharisees at that time had a saying that was supposedly a praise to God: *Blessed are You for not making me a Gentile, and woman, or a slave*. Everyday a Pharisee would wake up and repeat this saying, which illustrates the bias against women during that time period

- "...caught in the very act" - this was during the Feast of Tabernacles (Booths), located outside of Jerusalem; it was a camp atmosphere, so it's possible this woman was some sort of "prostitute" moving from booth to booth

### (C) Chicanery (Trickery) (8:5-6a)

#### (a) Accusation (8:5)

5 Now in the Law, Moses commanded us to stone such women; what then do You say?"

5 Now in the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women; what then do You say?"

5 Now in the Law, Moses commanded us to stone such women to death. What do you say?"

5 Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?

- The Pharisees who caught and brought this woman argued that she had violated the Mosaic Law and thus should be stoned (Cf. Lev 20:10; Deut 22:22-24). Both passages state that both the man and the woman involved in the adultery shall be put to death.

— They are misusing the Law because the man is not present. Now they want to hear what Jesus thinks about this situation.

#### (b) Motive (8:6a)

(D) Challenge (8:6b-8)

(a) Writes (8:6b)

6 Now they were saying this to **testHim**, so that they might have *grounds for* accusing Him. But Jesus stooped down and with His finger **wrote on the ground**.

6 They were saying this, testing Him, so that they might have grounds for accusing Him. But Jesus stooped down and with His finger wrote on the ground.

6 They said this to test him, so that they might have a charge against him. But Jesus bent down and began to write on the ground with his finger.

6 This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not.

- John includes a parenthetical statement here to provide insight into the motivation of the Pharisees bringing this woman to Jesus

— In the minds of the Pharisees, they believed that they had Jesus intellectually trapped...

- "...test Him" - the leaders wanted to trap Jesus into saying something they could use against Him (Cf. Matt 22:15-22; Mark 12:13-17; Luke 20:20-26)

— If Jesus told them to execute her, according to the Law of Moses, they would call Him unloving, harsh, unjust (what about the man?), etc. He would've also been in trouble with Rome because the Romans had come in and removed the authority for the Jews to execute nearly anyone (Cf. 18:31).

— If Jesus told them to not execute her, then they could accuse Him of not respecting the Mosaic Law, which would discredit Him in the eyes of the entire nation, as well as the crowd that Jesus was teaching

— They appear to have wanted Jesus' executed more than the woman

- "...wrote on the ground" - the only documented time in Scripture where Jesus wrote something

— Everyone seems to have an opinion of what Jesus wrote on the ground, but no one really knows for sure because the Bible doesn't tell us what He wrote. Here are some conjectures:

1. Jer 17:13, which talks about how those who walk away from God will be written down
2. Ex 31:18, which says that God wrote the Law with His own finger
3. He wrote the specific sins that the Pharisees themselves were committing
4. Ex 23:1, do not bear a false report and do not join with a wicked man to be a malicious witness
5. Deut 19:16-19, warnings against a malicious witness

- What you have to understand is that in the Mosaic Law, there are procedural safeguards to protect the accused. We have the same sort of laws in the United States.

— At the same time the Pharisees are priding themselves on following the Law, they are violating the legal and procedural safeguards for the accused

— Some of these safeguards include:

1. Both parties must be present (Lev 20:10; Deut 22:22-24)
2. There must be at least 2-3 witnesses for a capital crime (Lev 24:14)
3. The primary accuser must cast the first stone in the accused's execution (Deut 13:9; 17:7)

— Jesus is trying to alert these accusers that the Law that they believe so much in is not being followed

Jer 17:13: LORD, the hope of Israel, All who abandon You will be put to shame. Those who turn away on earth will be written down, Because they have forsaken the fountain of living water, *that is* the LORD.

Ex 31:18: When He had finished speaking with him on Mount Sinai, He gave Moses the two tablets of the testimony, tablets of stone, written by the finger of God.

Ex 23:1: "You shall not give a false report; do not join your hand with a wicked person to be a malicious witness.

Deut 19:16-19:

- 16 If a malicious witness rises up against a person to testify against him of wrongdoing,
- 17 then both people who have the dispute shall stand before the LORD, before the priests and the judges who will be *in office* in those days.
- 18 And the judges shall investigate thoroughly, and if the witness is a false witness *and* he has testified against his brother falsely,
- 19 then you shall do to him just as he had planned to do to his brother. So you shall eliminate the evil from among you.

(b) Speaks (8:7)

7 When they persisted in asking Him, He straightened up and said to them, "**He who is without sin among you, let him *be the first to throw a stone at her.***"

7 But when they persisted in asking Him, He straightened up, and said to them, "**He who is without sin among you, let him *be the first to throw a stone at her.***"

7 When they persisted in questioning him, he straightened up and told them, "**Let the person among you who is without sin *be the first to throw a stone at her.***"

**7** So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, **He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.**

- Jesus took the place of the woman's "defense attorney" as well as her "judge" (Cf. 1 John 2:1)

- People misunderstand this verse to mean that you had to be sinless in order to stone/execute someone. But that's not accurate (see the three safeguards in v6). The

primary accuser must cast the first stone (Cf. Deut 17:7).

— The Law did not require that the accusers be sinless, only that they had to be innocent of the particular sin of the accused (in this case, adultery, or at least free of complicity in prearranging this woman's adultery)

— Jesus had tremendous respect for the Mosaic Law. He was born into the world under the Law (Gal 4:4; Matt 5:17). What Jesus didn't respect, and what He spent most of His ministry trying to overturn, were the manmade distortions of the Law; people using the Law to forward their personal agendas, and in the process losing the entire intent of the Law (Cf. Mark 7:13).

— This is why most of Jesus' run-ins with the Pharisees had to do with Sabbath day "violations" because they completely misunderstood the Sabbath. Here, they completely misunderstand basic criminal procedure.

#### (c) Writes (8:8)

8 And again He stooped down and wrote on the ground.

8 Again He stooped down and wrote on the ground.

8 Then he bent down again and continued writing on the ground.

8 And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground.

- Why did Jesus stoop down again and write on the ground? We don't know, but possibly to give her accusers time to think and reconsider.

— Before judgment comes, God always gives a window of grace so that the sinner may come to repentance (Cf. Gen 6:3; Rev 2:21 [see notes there])

#### (E) Convicted (8:9)

9 Now when they heard *this*, they *began* leaving, one by one, beginning with the older ones, and He was left alone, and the woman *where she was*, in the center of the courtyard.

9 When they heard it, they *began* to go out one by one, beginning with the older ones, and He was left alone, and the woman, where she was, in the center of the court.

9 When they heard this, they went away one by one, beginning with the oldest, and he was left alone with the woman standing there.

9 And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.

- All of the woman's accusers realized that they were violating their own Law, so they left one by one

— The older ones may have left first, having realized early that Jesus made valid points about how they had attempted to violate the Law

— Their departure is a public admission of guilt, of a rush to judgment scenario and malicious prosecution, and brought to light how they wanted to abuse and make an example of this woman for the sole purpose of tripping up Jesus so they could accuse Him

(F) Cleansed (8:10-11)

(a) No earthly condemnation (8:10)

10 And straightening up, Jesus said to her, "**Woman, where are they? Did no one condemn you?**"

10 Straightening up, Jesus said to her, "**Woman, where are they? Did no one condemn you?**"

10 Then Jesus stood up and asked her, "**Dear lady, where are your accusers? Hasn't anyone condemned you?**"

10 When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, **Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?**

- "...Woman" - not a term of disrespect (Cf 2:4; 19:26)

— Jesus asks the woman two questions which show that there was no earthly condemnation for her sin, because her accusers engaged in malicious prosecution and attempted to violate the procedural safeguards written into the Mosaic Law

(b) No heavenly condemnation (8:11)

11 She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said, "**I do not condemn you, either. Go. From now on do not sin any longer.**"

11 She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said, "**I do not condemn you, either. Go. From now on sin no more.**"

11 "No one, sir," she replied. Then Jesus said, "**I don't condemn you, either. Go home, and from now on don't sin anymore.**"

**11** She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, **Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.**

- Jesus, the Judge, dismisses her case due to prosecutorial misconduct

- "...I do not condemn you" - how could Jesus not condemn adultery? It's one of the 10 Commandments, yet He's letting her go without punishment?

— Jesus did not condemn her because of what He was about to do...become the sin-bearer for the entire world

- "...do not sin any longer" - Jesus didn't dismiss the case because the woman was innocent and never committed adultery. In fact, He made it clear to the woman to go and sin no more.

— Jesus didn't want the woman to believe that her getting off scot-free should give her some sort of license to sin. In fact, it was just the opposite.



What does John 8:1-11 teach us about Christ? See [John 37 Grace and Truth \(John 8:1-11\)](#) for a complete list.

(16) Light of the World Discourse (8:12-59)

(A) Christ's claims about Himself (8:12-20)

(a) Divine claim (8:12)

**12** Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, "I am **the** Light of the world; the one who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life."

**12** Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, "I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life."

**12** Later on, Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. The one who follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

**12** Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

- To better understand the context surrounding Jesus' discourse here, we need to understand that Jesus was speaking the day after the last (7th) day of the Feast of Tabernacles (Cf. 7:14)

— Part of the Feast of Tabernacles was the lamp lighting ceremony. Every evening during the feast a priest would light three huge torches on the menorah in the Women's Court or the Treasury of the Temple. These torches would illuminate the entire temple compound throughout the night. People would carry smaller torches into the temple precincts, light them, and sing and dance throughout the night. It was one of the happiest occasions during the Jewish year. [Constable]

— So this was the perfect occasion for Jesus to reveal Himself to the world as the Light of the World (Cf. 1:5,8-9; 1 John 1:5)

— In contrast to the Light, darkness also represents something throughout Scripture: ignorance, sin (Cf. 3:19)

- "...the" - notice the definite article...Jesus is not claiming to be "a" Light, but "the" Light of the World

— This is a radical claim, which will eventually get Him into a lot of trouble with the Pharisees: What Jesus is doing is making the claim that both spiritual "light" and truth reside in Him, not in the Pharisees.

— He is not one Light among many, but the only Light that can provide spiritual illumination

— The Pharisees were trying to make the Law and their traditions the "light" (Mark 7:13), but by Jesus claiming to be the "Light" He was taking the spotlight off of the Pharisees and putting it onto Himself. He is directing people away from the Pharisees, who made

themselves the source of light, and their manmade rules, and directing people to Himself for light and truth.

### **Jesus' "I Am" Statements**

1. "I am the bread of life" (6:35)
- 2. "I am the light of the world" (8:12)**
3. "I am the door" (10:9)
4. "I am the good shepherd" (10:11)
5. "I am the resurrection, and the life" (11:25)
6. "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (14:6)
7. "I am the vine, ye are the branches" (15:5)

#### **(b) Pharisee's challenge & Christ's response (8:13-19)**

##### **(i) First round (8:13-18)**

##### **(a) Challenge (8:13)**

13 So the Pharisees said to Him, "You are testifying about Yourself; Your testimony is not true."

13 So the Pharisees said to Him, "You are testifying about Yourself; Your testimony is not true."

13 The Pharisees told him, "You're testifying about yourself. Your testimony isn't valid."

**13** The Pharisees therefore said unto him, Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true.

- So the Pharisees, angered by Jesus taking the spotlight off of them and putting it onto Himself, get angry...

— The Pharisees are essentially saying, Why should we believe your testimony because you only testify of Yourself

— In the Mosaic Law, you had to have 2-3 witnesses to confirm a testimony (Deut 17:6; 19:15)

— They may have also remembered what Jesus said about Himself, that if He alone testified about Himself, His testimony is not true (Cf. 5:31)

— So the Pharisees are challenging Jesus once again, based on the Mosaic Law and Jesus' own words, that require at least two witnesses to confirm a testimony or matter

##### **(b) Answer (8:14-18)**

##### **a. Christ's unique qualifications (8:14-15)**

14 Jesus answered and said to them, "Even if I am testifying about Myself, My testimony is true, because I know where I came from and where I am going; but you do not know where I come from or where I am going."

14 Jesus answered and said to them, "Even if I testify about Myself, My testimony is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going; but you do not know where I come from or where I am going.

14 Jesus answered them, "Even though I'm testifying about myself, my testimony is valid because I know where I've come from and where I'm going. But you don't know where I come from or where I'm going.

14 Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go.

- Jesus begins to describe His qualifications as a witness...He acknowledges that He is only one witness so far, but states that He is not an ordinary witness
- He is the only Person in human history who can testify about heavenly realities because He came from heaven
- And in fact, once I die on the cross and rise again, I'll go back to heaven, which is a place that you cannot go
- Jesus had a perspective that the Pharisees did not have; He had a comprehensive knowledge, a vantage point that they did not have. This is why Jesus was not an ordinary witness.
- Even if Jesus was the only witness of Himself, His testimony would still be true because He is the unique God-Man
- The Pharisees on the other hand had never been to heaven; they knew nothing of heavenly realities

15 You judge according to the **flesh; I am not judging anyone.**

15 You judge according to the flesh; I am not judging anyone.

15 You're judging by human standards, but I'm not judging anyone.

15 Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man.

- The Pharisees have no qualifications to talk about heavenly realities because they only judge by what they know, and they know nothing of heavenly things
- "...flesh" - *sarx*, usually speaks to our sin nature, but here it refers to the limits of human beings; they hadn't been to heaven, thus they knew nothing about heaven, so their perspective was limited
- "...I am not judging anyone" - a reference to Christ's first coming (Cf. 3:17)
- Jesus came into the world the first time not to judge it, but to pay its sin debt. The only Person judged at Jesus' first coming was Jesus Himself.

b. Christ's equality with the Father (8:16-18)

16 But even if I do judge, My judgment is true; for I am not alone *in it*, but I and the Father who sent Me.

16 But even if I do judge, My judgment is true; for I am not alone *in it*, but I and the Father who sent Me.

16 Yet even if I should judge, my judgment would be valid, because it is not I alone who judges, but I and the one who sent me.

16 And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.

- While Jesus didn't come into the world the first time to judge, He will come into the world a second time to do just that

— And when He does come back the second time, His judgment will be true/just because there is another witness who testifies of Him: the Father

— The Father has delegated the task of future judgment to the Son (Cf. 5:22,26-27)

— When Jesus returns again to execute judgment, He will be perfectly consistent in how He does it because He is in union with the Father. He functions completely upon what the Father has ordained for Him.

— So Jesus is telling the Pharisees that even though He doesn't need a second witness, He has one: the Father

17 Even in **your Law** it has been written that the testimony of two people is true.

17 Even in your law it has been written that the testimony of two men is true.

17 In your own Law it is written that the testimony of two people is valid.

17 It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true.

- Jesus directs them back to their own Law, which states that the testimony of at least two people is required to confirm a testimony or matter (Deut 17:6, 19:15; Num 35:30)

— He says...I have two witnesses: (1) Me, and (2) the Father (Cf. 5:37)

- "...your Law" - unusual classification, since it was actually "His Law." However, Jesus was in the process of setting aside the Mosaic Law, as the revelation He brought superseded it. So in that sense, it belonged to the Pharisees but not to Him.

18 I am He who testifies about Myself, and the Father who sent Me testifies about Me."

18 I am He who testifies about Myself, and the Father who sent Me testifies about Me."

18 I'm testifying about myself, and the Father who sent me is testifying about me."

18 I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me.

(ii) Second round (8:19)

(a) Challenge (8:19a)

(b) Answer (8:19b)

19 So they were saying to Him, "**Where is Your Father?**" Jesus answered, "**You know neither Me nor My Father; if you knew Me, you would know My Father also.**"

19 So they were saying to Him, "Where is Your Father?" Jesus answered, "**You know neither Me nor My Father; if you knew Me, you would know My Father also.**"

19 Then they asked him, "Where is this Father of yours?"

Jesus replied, "**You don't know me or my Father. If you had known me, you would've known my Father, too.**"

**19** Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, **Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also.**

- "...Where is Your Father?" - another example of Jesus' listeners misunderstanding what Jesus is talking about

— Many times throughout His ministry, especially highlighted in John's Gospel, Jesus would speak in spiritual terms or use spiritual metaphors, and the Pharisees did not understand Him because they did not have a heavenly perspective (Cf. 2:19-20; 3:3-4; 4:10-11; 6:32-35)

— Here Jesus is speaking about His relationship with the heavenly Father, but the Pharisees are asking Him where His earthly father was (Joseph)

— All the way through Jesus' entire ministry and throughout John's Gospel it really irritated the Pharisees that Jesus spoke as if He had a close relationship with the Father. It really blew their minds because no one had ever spoken like that before (Cf. 5:18).

- In Jesus' day, to question a man's paternity was a slur on His legitimacy

— The Pharisees understood a bit of background on Jesus' upbringing, and they begin to use this to attack Christ on the fact that He was an illegitimate child, not understanding the ramifications of the virgin birth (Cf. v41)

— So here they are aggressively attacking Jesus by asking for Him to show them His father, and if He couldn't, they would label Him as an illegitimate child

- "...if you knew Me, you would know My Father also" - Jesus is telling them that if they knew who He was, they would automatically know who His Father was; the exclusive way to know His Father was to know Him

— Jesus is saying that it is a package deal: if you have Me, you have the Father, but if you don't know Me you can't know the Father (Cf. 14:6)

(c) Conclusion (8:20)

20 These words He spoke in the treasury, as He taught in the temple *area*; and no one arrested Him, because **His hour had not yet come.**

20 These words He spoke in the treasury, as He taught in the temple; and no one seized Him, because His hour had not yet come.

20 He spoke these words in the treasury, while he was teaching in the Temple. Yet no one arrested him, because his hour had not yet come.

**20** These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as he taught in the temple: and no man laid hands on him; for his hour was not yet come.

- "...His hour had not yet come" - a prominent statement in John's Gospel (2:4; 7:6,30)

— Jesus lived His life on a divine time schedule. When people tried to force Him to do something that would lead to His arrest and/or murder, He (or John) always say that "His hour has not yet come."

— Jesus would sacrifice Himself for the sins of the world on His own time schedule, not someone else's (Cf. 10:18)

— It's a shocking thing to think about the sovereignty of God, that He even laid down His life on His own time schedule. He was sovereign in orchestrating His own death. This is how powerful Christ is. Until His divine time had come, His life was miraculously spared over and over again.

#### (B) Christ's claims of His origin (8:21-30)

##### (a) Claim (8:21)

21 Then He said again to them, **"I am going away, and you will look for Me, and will die in your sin; where I am going, you cannot come."**

21 Then He said again to them, **"I go away, and you will seek Me, and will die in your sin; where I am going, you cannot come."**

21 Later on, he told them again, **"I'm going away, and you'll look for me, but you will die in your sin. You cannot come where I'm going."**

**21** Then said Jesus again unto them, **I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come.**

- "...I am going away" - a reference to Jesus' ascension and return to heaven to sit at the right hand of the Father

- "...sin" - *hamartia*, singular; there is a single sin that prevents someone from going to heaven. That sin is unbelief.

- "...you cannot come" - the reason these Pharisees would not go to heaven is because of their sin of unbelief (Cf. 16:8-9)

— A startling statement: there are people on this earth who will not go to heaven. Jesus is saying that the religious leaders in Israel, the people who were to lead the people into spiritual truth, are going to hell.

##### (b) Confusion (8:22)

22 So the Jews were saying, **"Surely He will not kill Himself, will He, since He says, 'Where I am going, you cannot come'?"**

22 So the Jews were saying, "Surely He will not kill Himself, will He, since He says, '**Where I am going, you cannot come**'?"

22 So the Jewish leaders were asking, "He isn't going to kill himself, is he? Is that why he said, '**You cannot come where I'm going**'?"

**22** Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? because he saith, **Whither I go, ye cannot come.**

- Instead of understanding the idea that Christ is going back to heaven, they misinterpret what Jesus is saying, thinking that He may commit suicide

- They are taking a spiritual reality and misinterpreting it at a physical level. This happens all throughout Jesus' ministry, as outlined in John's Gospel (Cf. 2:19-20; 3:3-4; 4:10-11; 6:32-35; 7:34-35; 8:19).

- What does someone have to do to understand these heavenly/spiritual realities? What gives a person a heavenly viewpoint on things? It is the Man who came from heaven coming to live inside of you. This happens at the point of faith.

- This is what Jesus is talking about in 7:39 when He is talking about the Holy Spirit...it is the Holy Spirit inside of us that makes us smart in terms of understanding spiritual realities (Cf. 1 Cor 2:14).

- Man thinks in human terms and God thinks in heavenly terms, so until there is a meeting of the minds between man and God, we cannot understand spiritual/heavenly things. This is what the Holy Spirit does...He brings the mind of God inside of us so that we are enlightened to spiritual realities. The illuminating ministry of the Holy Spirit illuminates our minds to spiritual truth.

- We need the indwelling ministry of the Holy Spirit to think how God thinks, so we don't misconstrue everything spiritual into simply being a physical reality

- "...Surely He will not kill Himself, will He" - another ironic statement by the Jewish leaders. Unbeknownst to them, Jesus actually did "kill Himself" in a sense because He laid down His life on His own accord (Cf. 10:17-18).

- In 7:34-35, they wondered if He was referring to going on a mission to the Gentile world

(c) Claim (8:23-24)

23 And He was saying to them, "**You are from below, I am from above; you are of this world, I am not of this world.**

23 And He was saying to them, "**You are from below, I am from above; you are of this world, I am not of this world.**

23 He told them, "**You are from below, I'm from above. You are of this world, but I'm not of this world.**

**23** And he said unto them, **Ye are from beneath;**



- This is the reason for the different perspectives and viewpoints between Jesus and the Pharisees

— In terms of their origin, the Pharisees are human beings, they have an earthly perspective just like every man. They look at life from a human perspective (humanism). They view themselves as the center of all things and evaluate things around them based on what they understand and can see or experience.

— Jesus, on the other hand, came from heaven. Remember Job's Science Quiz (Job 38)? The first question God asked Job (v4) was, "Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?"

— Why can't Job answer a basic question about creation? Because he wasn't there, he didn't see it happen, he wasn't any part of the planning. God goes on for two chapters (Job 38-39) asking Job question after question, the answers to which Job has no clue because he is limited by his human viewpoint. The perspective of man has severe limitations on it. If you think only as a man thinks, you cannot understand spiritual things.

— The Pharisees are trapped in humanism, but Jesus is not. He has the divine perspective because He came from above/heaven.

— In 18:36 Jesus answered: **"My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm."**

— Jesus Christ came from a completely different realm, and He became the God-Man to reveal truths to us about this heavenly realm. By contrast, the Pharisees were trapped in this realm, in this world system (*cosmos*).

- If you think in a worldly sense, you are trapped in a system of philosophy that is controlled by Satan (1 John 2:15-17). When Adam & Eve fell in the Garden, the title deed/ownership of this world transferred over to Satan, and he has been running this world ever since.

— In His second temptation, Satan offered Jesus all the kingdoms of the world (Luke 4:5-7) if Jesus would worship him. Jesus didn't refute or second-guess the claim that Satan owned the present world system because it was true.

— Satan is called the "ruler of this world" 3x in John's Gospel (12:31; 14:30; 16:11); he's also called the "prince and power of the air (Eph 2:2), and the "god of this world" (2 Cor 4:4).

— This is why the Bible tells us that we need to have our minds renewed, so that we don't think the way the world thinks. Until we come to trust in Christ, we are just like the Pharisees. However, after we trust Christ, we need to guard against the thinking that is embedded in our flesh/sin nature to think like the world.

— It's not until the Holy Spirit enters us at the point of faith that we even have the capability to think as God thinks. And it's not until the regenerated believer begins to saturate their



mind on Scripture that we begin to develop a capacity to think God's thoughts and understand God's mind.

— If a believer does not spend quality time in the Bible, reading/studying it and digesting it, you will only have a very limited worldly perspective. In essence, we remain just like Job, who could not answer even the most rudimentary question about creation.

24 Therefore I said to you that you will die in your **sins**; for unless you believe that **I am**, you will die in your **sins**."

24 Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am *He*, you will die in your sins."

24 That is why I told you that you will die in your sins, for unless you believe that I AM, you'll die in your sins."

24 I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.

- "...sins" [2x] - *hamartia*, used here in the plural (Cf. v21), referring to all of their sins

— If the Pharisees and religious leaders did not repent of their sin (singular, v21) of unbelief, then they would die in their sins (plural, v24)

— Jesus viewed their many sins as a consequence of their singular sin of unbelief

— Unbelief puts a person on a track in life where they are going to commit sin after sin after sin, with no end in sight. An unbeliever has no power against the world, the flesh, or the devil, so they have no capacity not to sin. The sins that they commit, therefore, are the repercussions of the greatest sin, unbelief.

— A great example of this is Rom 1:18-32...Paul describes the sin of unbelief as the "suppression of truth" (because your mind has to work overtime to deny God His place in your life). Once a person is in a confirmed state of unbelief, then what follows is a downhill trajectory of sins: gossip, sexual immorality (homosexuality), children rebelling against parents, a breakdown of the family, and a darkening of the human mind, all of which Paul lists in Rom 1.

- "...I am" - *ego eimi*, a divine title; Jesus is claiming to be God by applying this title to Himself

— Jesus has already done this (Bread of Life, 6:35; Light of the World, 8:12), and He'll continue to do it during the last part of His ministry with greater frequency:

- Gate for the Sheep (10:7,9)
- Good Shepherd (10:11,14)
- Resurrection and the Life (11:25)
- The Way, the Truth, and the Life (14:6)
- The True Vine (15:1,5)

— In fact, at the end of this chapter, He'll do it plainly to the Pharisee's faces in v58 and they'll pick up stones to kill Him

(d) Confusion (8:25a)

(e) Claim (8:25b-26)

25 Then they were saying to Him, "Who are You?" Jesus said to them, "What have I even been saying to you *from the beginning?*"

25 So they were saying to Him, "Who are You?" Jesus said to them, "What have I been saying to you *from the beginning?*"

25 Then they asked him, "Who are you?" Jesus told them, "What have I been telling you all along?"

**25** Then said they unto him, Who art thou? And Jesus saith unto them, *Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning.*

- More confusion on the part of the Pharisees (He just told them who He is)...which leads to more claims of Christ...

- Jesus tells them that He has already revealed to them who He is, but they refused to believe

— He's not saying anything different now than what He has revealed in the past, and no different than He will reveal in the future

— Jesus testimony remained consistent throughout His ministry regarding who He is and why He came

26 *I have many things to say and to judge regarding you, but He who sent Me is true; and the things which I heard from Him, these I say to the world."*

26 *I have many things to speak and to judge concerning you, but He who sent Me is true; and the things which I heard from Him, these I speak to the world."*

26 *I have much to say about you and to condemn you for. But the one who sent me is truthful, and what I've heard from him I declare to the world."*

26 *I have many things to say and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him.*

- Part of Christ's teaching would be to announce judgment on these people who refused to believe

— There is a lesson that Jesus wants to convey, and is conveying to them in this passage: unbelief brings judgment. This is why these Pharisees are moving off into judgment: because they refused to believe.

- "...He who sent Me is true" - everything Jesus said/taught was true because it came directly from the Father who sent Him

— Jesus did not give words on His own initiative, independent of the Father. Everything He said and taught came in a direct channel from the Father, to Him, then to the world.

— Jesus' lack of originality in His message and teaching was also highlighted in 7:16: **My teaching is not My own, but His who sent Me.**

(f) Confusion (8:27)

27 They did not realize that He was speaking to them *about* the Father.

27 They did not realize that He had been speaking to them about the Father.

27 They didn't realize that he was talking to them about the Father.

**27** They understood not that he spake to them of the Father.

- One of the great stumbling blocks that Christ's listeners had was that by and large they did not like the way He spoke openly about His relationship with the Father

— They were offended and irritated that Jesus talked about the Father as if He knew Him intimately, as if Jesus was in some kind of 1:1 relationship with Him (Cf. v19; 5:18)

— The fact is, not only did Jesus have an intimate 1:1 relationship with the Father, but His very purpose for coming into the world was to give humanity the opportunity to have this same relationship

— Believers today can have the exact same relationship in terms of intimacy and walking with Him that Jesus had with the Father, provided because of Jesus' sacrificial death on the cross

— Through His death on the cross (and subsequent resurrection), Jesus Christ removed every obstacle that exists for a mere man to have a relationship with the Father

— As you begin to talk to people about this, they will be disturbed by it because you're talking about a relationship that they do not understand and they don't currently have

(g) Claim (8:28-29)

28 So Jesus said, **"When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am, and I do nothing on My own, but I say these things as the Father instructed Me.**

28 So Jesus said, **"When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me.**

28 So Jesus told them, **"When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I AM, and that I do nothing on my own authority. Instead, I speak only what the Father has taught me.**

**28** Then said Jesus unto them, **When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.**

- "...lift up" - second of three references to the Cross (3:14; 8:28; 12:23,32,34). John views this as His "exaltation."

- The Pharisees did not understand Jesus' purpose or His relationship with the Father, but He says that at some point in the future, after they have crucified Him, these things will become evident to them

- "...Son of Man" - a title given only to God, which Jesus claims here for Himself (Cf. Dan 7:13-14)

— The Son of Man reference is a reference to the One who will come in the end and put an end to the kingdoms of man and bring in a higher kingdom

— When Jesus applies this title to Himself, He is clearly claiming to be deity

— In one of His three Jewish trials (Mark 14:62), Jesus takes the title of Son of Man and applies it to Himself. After He did this, Caiaphas the high priest tore his clothes and began a rush to judgment through the justice system in order to put Jesus to death as quickly as possible.

- "...I am" - *ego eimi*, Jesus applies this title to Himself again, second time in this paragraph (Cf. v24)

- "...I do nothing on My own" - there has never been a Man in the history of the world who has submitted Himself more to the will of the Father than Jesus Christ

— The agenda of the Father was the agenda of the Son

29 **And He who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him."**

29 **And He who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him."**

29 **Moreover, the one who sent me is with me. He has never left me alone, because I always do what pleases him."**

29 **And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.**

- "...He has not left Me alone" - the entire nation of Israel was about to abandon Jesus (except for a small believing remnant), but the Father never abandoned Him

- "...I always do the things that are pleasing to Him" - Jesus Christ lived to please the Father, to carry out His will perfectly

— How different is this than humanism, which lives to please self; how different than materialism, which lives to please self. How different from the coming Antichrist (Cf. Dan 11:36), who will also live to please himself.

— The entire world system is setup specifically to coax you to live independently from God, be your own boss, you be you, do it your way, adhering to "your truth." Yet Jesus never succumbed to the world system, but continued to be pleasing to the Father in everything He did, up to and including His brutal and undeserved death on the cross.

(h) Conversion (8:30)

30 **As He said these things**, many **came to believe in Him**.

30 As He spoke these things, many came to believe in Him.

30 While he was saying these things, many believed in him.

30 As he spake these words, many believed on him.

- "As He said these things" - they are believing based on the declaration/teaching of the Word of God (Cf. Rom 10:17; 2 Tim 3:15)

- "...came to believe in" - *pisteuo eis*, standard Greek construction used by John to indicate faith in Christ. These were believers.

- The Pharisees and religious leaders are in a state of confusion and blindness at Jesus' powerful teaching, but the regular people understood Jesus' teaching here and came to a life-saving belief in Him

(C) Christ's challenge to professing believers (8:31-47)

(a) Jesus speaks to believers (8:31-32)

31 So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, **"If you continue in My word, then you are truly My disciples;**

31 So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, **"If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine;**

31 So Jesus told those Jews who had believed in him, **"If you continue in my word, you are really my disciples.**

31 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, **If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;**

- Jesus now narrows His audience from the crowd and the Pharisees down to only those who believed in Him (v30)

- Notice that Jesus, while addressing believers, introduces another term to these believers: disciples

- "...If" - a third class conditional statement, indicating the possibility but not guarantee that something will take place. The condition is uncertain of fulfillment, but still likely.

— The third class condition for "if" states what results will happen if at any time in the future the condition is met. The writer/speaker knows that at the present time the condition has not been fulfilled, but it is possible and even probable that the condition will be met at some point in the future.

- "...continue" - *menō*, to remain, abide; to not depart. Does not refer to coming to Christ in initial belief (as in 6:56), but rather a consistent daily walk with Christ (see note on 15:4).

- "...in My word" - means that you continue to cultivate habits in life where you are constantly intaking the Word of God, you attend churches that are teaching the Word of God

— But it is more than just hearing and studying the Word of God...that is just step 1. As you ingest the Word of God, the Holy Spirit places His finger on different areas of your life that are not pleasing to God, and tells you that you need to change that because it's not consistent with what you are learning in God's Word.

— So we say, Ok Lord, I don't know how I'm going to give up this habit/sin because I've been enjoying it for so long but now it has to go, so I'm going to access your resources that you give me in Your Word and help me overcome whatever problem it is that needs to go away.

— As we yield and apply the resources God has given us in His Word to the sin that God has put His finger on through His Word, it is through His power and resources that the sin is diminished or praise God goes away altogether

— As we move in this direction over time, we are not only believers but we become disciples. A disciple is marked by a willingness to abide in the Word of God.

- "...disciples" - *mathētēs*, a learner or student/pupil; someone who continues on in the Word of God, not only increasing in knowledge of His Word and wisdom, but in application through the power of the Holy Spirit

— Jesus draws a distinction here between believers and disciples. He is challenging believers to continue on in their walk with God and become disciples. Every disciple is a believer, but not every believer is a disciple.

- The Bible gives us many examples of people who were believers but never moved into the realm of discipleship. The best example are the Corinthians...they were believers (1 Cor 1:2,7), but they had some major issues:

- 1 Cor 1-4 - the church was divided on the speaking styles of various preachers
- 1 Cor 5 - incest among the believers; Paul reprimands them that not even the pagans were involved in incest
- 1 Cor 6 - believers are suing each other, with trials before unbelieving judges, discrediting the gospel; sexual immorality with temple prostitutes; not obeying John 13:35
- 1 Cor 7 - rampant divorce and remarriage
- 1 Cor 8-10 - food sacrificed to idols; stronger believers taking advantage and flaunting their liberty, offending weaker brothers
- 1 Cor 11 - drunkenness and disorderly conduct at communion; there was also a "pay-to-play" scheme that favored the rich and excluded the poor; they had turned communion into a common meal; lost its sacredness
- 1 Cor 12 -14 - imbalance on spiritual gifts, placing those who speak in tongues on a pedestal, with no interpreters. This practice was disorderly and non-conducive to non-believers; the church was using their gifts, but not with love (1 Cor 13)
- 1 Cor 15 - gnostic takeover in Corinth, denying the resurrection

- Interestingly, you can read 1 Cor and 2 Cor until you are blue in the face, and nowhere will you ever see Paul questioning their salvation
- The point of 1 Corinthians in particular was for Paul to move these saints from simply being believers into being disciples. In fact, this is the main focus of most of the NT.

<b>SALVATION</b>	<b>DISCIPLESHIP</b>
<b>FREE GIFT</b>	<b>COSTLY</b>
<b>RECEIVED THROUGH FAITH</b>	<b>ENTERED INTO THROUGH COMMITMENT AND OBEDIENCE</b>
<b>NOT BY WORKS</b>	<b>INVOLVES OUR COOPERATION</b>
<b>INSTANT</b>	<b>LIFE-LONG PROCESS</b>
<b>JUSTIFICATION</b>	<b>SANCTIFICATION</b>
<b>JESUS PAID THE PRICE</b>	<b>BELIEVER PAYS THE PRICE</b>
<b>TRUSTING JESUS AS SAVIOR</b>	<b>FOLLOWING JESUS AS LORD</b>
<b>BELIEVE THE GOSPEL</b>	<b>OBEY THE COMMANDS</b>
<b>ONE CONDITION</b>	<b>MULTIPLE CONDITIONS</b>
<b>EXPERIENCED BY ALL CHRISTIANS</b>	<b>EXPERIENCED BY SOME CHRISTIANS</b>
<b>RESULTS IN ETERNAL LIFE</b>	<b>RESULTS IN REWARDS &amp; AUTHORITY</b>

- Free Gift - Eph 2:8-9; received upon belief in Christ
- Costly - daily fulfilling the commands to pickup cross daily and follow Me; go where I tell you to go; stop yielding to the sin nature; put Me first (leave behind mother/father), study to show yourself approved; put on the full armor of God, and other such commands
- Believer pays the price - believers are often called to give up some sort of temporal benefit in order to become a disciple

32 and you will **know the truth, and the truth will set you free."**

32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."

32 And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

- Ok Jesus, it sounds like this discipleship thing will take some effort on my part, and I may even lose out on some temporal blessings if I decide to dive into this...so what is my



incentive. Jesus says, I'm glad you asked...

- "...know the truth" - disciples who continue to abide (*menō*) in Jesus' word (v31) will come to "know the truth." Jesus' words are truth because He is the incarnation of Truth (John 1:14; 14:6).

- The truth of Jesus' words set people free when they understand His teaching. It liberates them spiritually from ignorance, sin and spiritual death.

- This phrase has been misquoted on more public and private buildings: "You will know the truth and the truth will set you free," but the whole point is missed if you leave out the first part in v31: If you continue in my Word...!

- It's commonly misapplied by implying that true information has a liberating effect, however this is only true to a degree. In context, Jesus is talking about spiritual truth that *He revealed*. Thus, many people today have the same problem as the Jews in Jesus' day...they take His words as referring to physical rather than spiritual things. It is spiritual truth that Jesus revealed that is in view here.

- "...the truth will set you free" - Jesus is talking to believers who will be set free from the bondage of sin when they become disciples, by remaining/abiding in God's Word

- Once a person becomes a believer, their worldly patterns do not change in a split second. Their soul passed from death to life in a split second, but they bring with them a lot of fleshly baggage (wrong thinking and wrong behaving) into their Christian walk when they first become saved. It is not until our glorification that those things are removed.

- These wrong ideas and wrong habits that continue on after I'm saved keep me in a state of bondage. I have the power to free myself from that bondage, but while these habits continue in my life they reap tremendous corruption and consequences.

- But as I move from a believer to a disciple, and I allow the Holy Spirit through God's Word to do God's work in me, allowing it to put it's finger on bad thinking, bad behaving and bad living from my former life, I am progressively freed from the horrific bondage that sin brings.

- In Rom 6:12 Paul commands believers to now allow sin to reign/rule in our mortal bodies. If sin couldn't reign/rule in the life of a Christian, this would be a non-sensical statement.

- As I as a believer allow sin to reign in my mortal body, because I have carried it in from my life before Christ and never gotten rid of it, then there are consequences. These consequences cannot send me to hell, but they can reap all sorts of destruction in my life (marriage, family, relationships, health, finances, trust, qualifications to serve God, etc.).

- This verse is normally quoted out of context, speaking to an unbeliever to encourage them to trust in Christ for salvation. However, the context in which Jesus makes this statement is to encourage believers to become disciples. Jesus is not addressing unbelievers here (Cf. v30). This verse is not talking about the freedom that an unbeliever experiences when they trust Christ; it is talking about the freedom from the bondage of sin



that disciples experience once they allow the Word and Holy Spirit to begin working in their lives.

— "free" - from what?

1. Sin, ignorance, spiritual bondage, and the consequences of such
2. Guilt, condemnation
3. From the need to be in control
4. Ignorance
5. Freedom to do what I ought to do, which pleases God

— He did not promise the crowd immediate freedom from Rome...He reached further. He offered them freedom from God's judgment and freedom from sin's control of their lives.

— To ground our lives in Jesus' truth brings us the ability to break free from sinful habits, dominating fear, self-indulgence, cultural demands, self-absorption, anxiety, greed, pride, and a litany of other sins and temptations.

— Genuine freedom is not freedom to act as you choose, or the lifting of some hard circumstance. Genuine freedom is the gift of living your life as your Creator intended.

### **The Heresy of "Two Faiths"**

The remainder of this chapter is very often misinterpreted and mistaught in many churches today. The key to rightly understanding the rest of this chapter is rightly understanding who the third person pronouns they/them refer to (Cf. v33-34; v39; v41-42). The dominant interpretation in the church today is that since Jesus is talking to believers in v31-32, He continues to talk to believers in v33-48. However, a cursory reading of this passage clearly shows in v37,40,44-46 that Jesus shifted His audience to the Pharisees.

The (Reformed/Calvinist) doctrine that is taught in this passage is that the faith displayed by these one-time believers (v30-32) was a spurious faith, not a true faith. They essentially believe these believers became unbelievers, they were professors but not possessors. From this passage, people came up with the doctrine of the "two faiths": a faith that saves and a faith that does not save.

What this heretical doctrine opens you up to, if you buy into it, is that you will question, until your dying day, your assurance of salvation. If there is a faith that saves and a faith that doesn't save, how do you know which of the two faiths you have? You ask those who believe/teach this doctrine and they will tell you that you won't know until you die. So you spend your entire Christian life wondering and worrying if you have the right faith or the wrong faith, never knowing if you're headed for heaven or spending eternity in hell. This is satanic because it is a strategy by the enemy to neutralize your service and effectiveness to the Lord Jesus Christ.

What makes us effective as a servant of Jesus Christ is the certainty/assurance of our salvation. When we are assured of our salvation, we don't serve Christ out of fear, guilt or

obligation, but out of gratitude because you are completely blown away at what He has done for you. That motivation in a believer is far more effective and long-lasting than someone who worries and frets their entire life about whether they're truly saved or not, whether they have the right kind of faith or the wrong kind of faith. Insecurity in your salvation will damage your effectiveness in serving Jesus Christ.

How are we assured of our salvation? It's not based on how we feel when we wake up in the morning. It's not based on what we've done, whether or not we slipped into sin today, allowed the flesh to get over on us today, or what my reaction was when the guy on the freeway cut me off. It's not based on whether or not I pass a set of tests, which Reformed theology proposes are taught in 1 John, to determine whether or not I'm saved. My assurance does not come from my performance. My assurance of salvation is based on the ironclad promises of God in His Word, a God who relishes in making and keeping His promises, and a God who cannot lie.

Scripture teaches no distinction between different kinds of faith. You have to read this into the text. Only one kind of faith is taught in Scripture and that is saving faith. In John's purpose statement (20:30-31), there is no sign of two faiths, a right faith and a wrong faith. There is only saving faith. For John, there is no such thing as a person who has seen the Son of God and believed in Him who does not have eternal life.

(b) Pharisees question Jesus (8:33)

33 **They** answered Him, "We are Abraham's descendants and **haven't ever been enslaved to anyone**; how is it that You say, '**You will become free**'?"

33 They answered Him, "We are Abraham's descendants and have never yet been enslaved to anyone; how is it that You say, '**You will become free**'?"

33 They replied to him, "We are Abraham's descendants and have never been slaves to anybody. So how can you say, '**You will be set free**'?"

**33** They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, **Ye shall be made free?**

- "They" - typically in grammar, a pronoun is defined by the nearest antecedent (noun) to figure out who the pronoun is referring to. However in this case, the principle of using the nearest antecedent does not work. It's a principle, not a law; it works 99 out of 100 times, but this is a case where it doesn't work. This verse is an exception to the principle.

— In this instance, "they" refers to the furthest antecedent (v27), and also back to v13 (the Pharisees)

— This entire chapter, with the exception of v31-32, is a discussion/argument between Jesus and the Pharisees. In the parentheses (v31-32), Jesus briefly addressed those who believed in Him, then in v33 He reverts back to a discussion with the Pharisees.

— The Pharisees obviously heard Jesus' side conversation with those who believed in Him (v31-32), and are now questioning Him about what He told them

- "...have never been enslaved to anyone" - really? These Pharisees are gaslighting Jesus straight to His face. In Deut 28:49-50, as part of the blessings and curses of the Mosaic Covenant, God promised to move Israel off into exile for disobedience. This happened first in Egypt for 400 years, then for the northern kingdom in 722 BC, then for the southern kingdom in 586 BC.

— At the time the Pharisees made this statement, they were under the control and occupation of Rome, who had levied exorbitant taxes on them. The blindness and denial of the Pharisees to Israel's previous exiles into slavery, for both the northern and southern kingdoms, as well as their current political situation, is astounding.

- This is another in a long line of misunderstandings that the Pharisees had with Jesus' teaching. It illustrates the blindness that unbelievers are in, where they can't even properly understand their current spiritual state, and many times this blindness from unbelief prevents someone from understanding the physical state they are in.

— Here, Jesus is speaking of believers being free from the bondage of sin, a spiritual truth, but the Pharisees interpret His words in the physical realm, thinking He's talking about slavery to an earthly master

— The Pharisees demonstrate their extensive blindness with this statement...not only are they blind to their spiritual state (which John has made obvious throughout his gospel so far), but they are also blind to their own current political state.

#### (c) Jesus answers the Pharisees (8:34-38)

**34** Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly I say to you, everyone who commits sin is a slave of sin.

**34** Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin.

**34** Jesus answered them, "Truly, I tell all of you emphatically, that everyone who commits sin is a slave of sin.

**34** Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.

- To the ridiculous statement of the Pharisees that they have never been slaves of anyone, Jesus responds that not only are you currently in a state of physical (political) bondage to Rome, but you are also in bondage to sin

— This is the state of every unbeliever: the position of every unbeliever is a state of bondage; they are deluded into thinking they have freedom, but in reality they are in bondage

- This is why we need redemption (Eph 1:7); redemption is the paying of a ransom to release someone from slavery
- Think about this in terms of the Exodus: Israel was in bondage/slavery in Egypt for 400 years. Then a ransom was paid, in this case the blood of the Passover Lamb, which was applied to the doorposts of the Israelites, to redeem them from slavery.
- When the Angel of Death went around that night, he "passed over" all of the homes where the blood was applied, but killed the firstborn in every home where the blood (ransom) was not applied. This broke Pharaoh's will and he released the Israelites from bondage. God sealed the deal by drowning the Egyptians in the Red Sea.
- Prior to our redemption, we are in bondage to sin, we can do nothing but to sin. Sin was our *modusoperandi*, our default setting

### Slaves of Sin

How does this revelation harmonize with Paul's teaching about the believer's relationship to sin in Rom 6? In that passage, Paul explained that at regeneration God broke the chain that makes the believer a slave of sin. Sin does not have the power to enslave us that it did before we believed in Jesus. However, believers can become sin's slaves by practicing sin (Rom 6:16). But we do not *need* to be its slaves any longer, since God has broken its enslaving power over us. We are no longer its slave, but we can still *choose* to live as its slave by repeatedly submitting to temptation. Sin gains power over us when we yield to temptation.

Similarly, a heroin addict cannot break his or her addiction without radical treatment. The treatment can result in total rehabilitation, but the former addict can choose to become a slave again by returning to his or her habit. However, he or she does not have to return, since liberation has taken place. Another illustration is Israel in the OT. Having experienced liberation from the Egyptians, the Israelites chose to return to slavery under the Assyrians and Babylonians, though they did not need to do that. By continually sinning, they set themselves up for these strong enemies to take them captive.

35 Now the slave does not remain in the house forever; the son does remain forever.

35 The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son does remain forever.

35 The slave does not remain in the household forever, but the son does remain forever.

35 And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever.

- The moment a person believes in Christ, their position is transferred from a slave to the first Adam and the associated repercussions, into the blessings of the Last Adam, Jesus Christ

36 So if the Son sets you free, you really will be free.

36 So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.

36 So if the Son sets free, you will be free indeed!"

36 If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

- Trusting in Christ changes your position from one of slavery and bondage to one of freedom; your position changes from being a slave to being a son

- A slave has no freedom; a son has freedom
- A slave has no family privileges; a son has family privileges and enjoyment
- A slave has no inheritance; a son is an heir to the family wealth
- A slave has no resources and now power; a son has both resources and power

37 I know that you are Abraham's descendants; yet you are seeking to kill Me, because **My word has no place in you.**

37 I know that you are Abraham's descendants; yet you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you.

37 "I know that you are Abraham's descendants. Yet you are trying to kill me because you've not received what I've told you.

**37 I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you.**

- The Pharisees were banking their entire eternal destiny on the fact that they were descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob

— They believed that because they were God's chosen people, they were automatically heirs, had eternal life, and nothing bad could ever happen to them

— Jesus tells them that it's true they were physical descendants of Abraham, but they were not spiritual descendants of Abraham (Matt 3:9; Rom 2:28-29; 9:6; Rev 2:9)

— These Pharisees were connected to Abraham as far as genealogy is concerned, but they were certainly not connected to Abraham spiritually or through their actions and behavior

- "...My word has no place in you" - there was no spiritual relationship between the Pharisees and Jesus; the only relationship the Pharisees think they had with God was their race, their genealogical connection to Abraham. But God will not accept people because of their genealogical association, but only on their faith in Christ.

— This is an important teaching because many people today believe similarly: they believe they are going to heaven because they attend church, because they do "good works," because of what their parents or grandparents did, because of their denomination, because they are Americans, because of how they vote or their political beliefs.

— The only thing that gives a lost human being a relationship with the God who made them is their belief in Jesus Christ

38 I speak of the things which I have seen with *My Father*; therefore you also do the things which you heard from *your father*."

38 I speak the things which I have seen with *My Father*; therefore you also do the things which you heard from *your father*."

38 I declare what I've seen in my Father's presence, and you're doing what you've heard from your father."

38 I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father.

- Jesus says that one of the problems in our relationship (between Jesus and the Pharisees) is that we have different fathers...

— Jesus says that He is doing things and speaking of the things of His Father, and the Pharisees are doing things and speaking of the things of their father

(d) Pharisees speak to Jesus (8:39a)

(e) Jesus speaks to the Pharisees (8:39b-41a)

39 They answered and said to Him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus \*said to them, "*If you are Abraham's children, do the deeds of Abraham.*"

39 They answered and said to Him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus \*said to them, "*If you are Abraham's children, do the deeds of Abraham.*"

39 They replied to him, "Our father is Abraham!"

Jesus told them, "*If you were Abraham's children, you would be doing what Abraham did.*"

39 They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, *If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.*

- The Pharisees were very aware that Jesus is questioning their relationship with Abraham

- Jesus tells them that you indeed are connected to Abraham genealogically, but you have no relationship to Abraham spiritually because you do not do the deeds of Abraham

40 *But as it is, you are seeking to kill Me, a man who has told you the truth, which I heard from God; this Abraham did not do.*

40 *But as it is, you are seeking to kill Me, a man who has told you the truth, which I heard from God; this Abraham did not do.*

40 *But now you're trying to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. Abraham would'nt have done that.*

40 *But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham.*

- One of the examples of how the Pharisees are not following in the deeds of Abraham is that Abraham never set out to kill someone who was telling the truth

— This is the evidence that Jesus provides to show that the Pharisees were completely disconnected from Abraham on a spiritual level...there is a night-and-day difference between Abraham and these Pharisees spiritually

(f) Pharisees speak to Jesus (8:41b)

41 **You are doing the deeds of your father."** They said to Him, "We were not born as a result of sexual immorality; **we have one Father: God."**

41 **You are doing the deeds of your father."** They said to Him, "We were not born of fornication; we have one Father: God."

41 **You are doing your father's actions."** They told him, "We're not illegitimate children. We have one Father, God himself."

41 **Ye do the deeds of your father.** Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God.

- Having just demonstrated that the Pharisees were not behaving like Abraham, He alludes to the fact that Abraham was not their spiritual father and they in fact were following a different "father"

- The Pharisees knew nothing of the virgin birth of Christ, but instead believed that Jesus was born out of fornication and was an illegitimate Son

— This is an attack on the paternity of Jesus Christ and on the virgin birth

- "...we have one Father: God" - the Pharisees are saying that not only is Abraham was their father, but God was also their Father

— So we are right with God, Jesus, and we don't need you around here telling us what to do, since you're an illegitimate child

(g) Jesus speaks to Pharisees (8:42-47)

42 Jesus said to them, **"If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I came forth from God and am here; for I have not even come on My own, but He sent Me.**

42 Jesus said to them, **"If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and have come from God, for I have not even come on My own initiative, but He sent Me.**

42 Jesus told them, **"If God were your Father, you would've loved me, because I came from God and am here. I haven't come on my own accord, but he sent me.**

**42** Jesus said unto them, **If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.**

- Jesus immediately contradicts what the Pharisees said in v41...

- "...If" - second class condition, indicating the assumption of an untruth

— If the Pharisees really loved the Father they would also love the Son because the Son came from the Father and the Father sent the Son



— One of the theological truths that John emphasizes over and over in his gospel is that the Father and the Son are a package deal. If you reject the Father, you reject the Son, and if you reject the Son, you reject the Father. There are no two ways around it.

43 Why do you not understand what I am saying? *It is because you cannot listen to My word.*

43 Why do you not understand what I am saying? *It is because you cannot hear My word.*

43 Why don't you understand what I've said? *It's because you can't listen to my words.*

43 Why do ye not understand my speech? *even because ye cannot hear my word.*

- "...cannot" - an impossibility; the Pharisees could not listen to Jesus' words and understand because they did not want to understand, they never attempted to understand (Cf. 7:17)

— How does a person know that what Jesus is saying is true? They know it's true if they are willing to do His will.

— If a person is willing to do the will of God, which is trusting upon the Son whom He sent, then the words of Jesus will make perfect sense. This is what a small remnant of believers did in v30-32.

— But the Pharisees did not want the teachings of Christ, they did not want the teachings of the Father which came through Jesus Christ. Because they had resolved in their hearts and minds to reject truth, they were in a position where they could not hear or understand Jesus' words.

— This verse says that you can have your apologetics down pat, have memorized every evidence for Christ (of which there are many), but if the person you're speaking to does not want to believe, they are not going to understand and synthesize your apologetic arguments because they have no ears to hear and no spiritual understanding.

— If someone has already decided that they are not going to receive the teachings of God the Father through God the Son, no mountain of evidence is going to change their heart.

44 You are of *your* father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. **He was a murderer** from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he tells a lie, he speaks from his own *nature*, because he is a liar and **the father of lies**.

44 You are of *your* father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *nature*, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

44 You belong to your father the Devil, and you want to carry out the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning and has never stood for truth, since there is



no truth in him. Whenever he tells a lie, he speaks in character, because he is a liar and the father of lies.

44 Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

- Jesus says that beyond the hardness of your hearts, there is something else blinding you: Satan (Cf. 2 Cor 4:4; 2 Tim 2:26)

— Jesus tells them very clearly that they are not following the same Father that He is following: His Father is God, they think their father is Abraham and God, but it is neither because they do not do the works of either. Their father is Satan.

- This is a very important verse on Satanology because we learn a couple things:

1. "...He was a murderer" - who did he murder? Many people, first of all himself because of his sin. Hell was created specifically for him (Matt 25:41).
  - He murdered one-third of the angels who followed him (Rev 12:3-8); thus, the plan of salvation is not open to fallen angels, so they are destined to spend eternity in hell. This is why the demons tremble (James 2:19), because the plan of salvation is not open to them.
  - This is why in the gospels that every time Jesus is near demons, the demons are in fear and ask Jesus if He has come to torment them before the appointed time. They don't question the fact that their destiny is in the lake of fire, they only question when it will happen.
  - Satan murdered the human race (Gen 2:16-17) through his lies and brought death to the human race (Rom 5:12)
  - Satan murdered Jesus Christ (Heb 2:9)
2. "...the father of lies" - Satan is not "a" father of lies but "the" father of lies; he is the ultimate liar
  - How do you know Satan is lying? His lips are moving.

45 But because I say the truth, you do not believe Me.

45 But because I speak the truth, you do not believe Me.

45 But it is because I speak the truth that you don't believe me.

45 And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not.

- The central issue, the root cause of the Pharisee's hatred of Jesus and desire to murder Him was their unbelief

— They would not believe in Christ because they had already bought into a falsehood, which is a very dangerous thing

- Once you become attached to a falsehood, once you fall in love with a lie, your unbelieving mind will work overtime explaining away the truth that contradicts that lie

because you are invested in that lie

— When truth comes and you've already made up your mind that you're going to believe the lie, your mind will work overtime to re-write truth or explain truth away or to push truth out of the conversation

— It's a fact that people do not like their file drawers rearranged...we have our system of thoughts and beliefs set up and we don't want someone coming in and interfering with it (especially true the older we get). We become comfortable believing what we believe, and we don't want someone coming in and challenging that because we don't want to rearrange our file drawers.

— We all believe things about God or the Bible that are not true. The important thing is what happens to us when we hear truth...if we're willing and open to truth, the truth will undo the lies we hold in our mind. Every time we hear the truth, we can either continue on believing the lie because of my pride, or you can go through the discomfort of having your file drawer rearranged.

*The only barrier to receiving truth is the assumption that you already have it.*

46 Which one of you convicts Me of sin? If I speak truth, why do you not believe Me?

46 Which one of you convicts Me of sin? If I speak truth, why do you not believe Me?

46 Can any of you prove me guilty of sin? If I'm telling the truth, why don't you believe me?

46 Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?

- Jesus asks this question of people who hated His guts and wanted Him dead. People who were just looking for one shred of evidence whereby they could rush Him through the court system and put Him to death.

— What He says to these people is...look at My life and show Me one defect, one flaw, one sin, one wrong I have committed

— We know the end of the story...they could not find one thing He did wrong, so they made things up in order to kill Him. They even violated their own evidentiary standards to rush Him to judgment and kill Him as quickly as possible, because there was not a single wrong thing that He ever did.

- Because Jesus is sinless, He speaks the truth. And because He speaks the truth, He should be believed.

— Why believe in Jesus? Because He is sinless and He speaks the truth. What better evidence or reason do you need than that.

— Truth is right in front of the Pharisees, yet they will not believe in Jesus Christ because they do not want to believe in Jesus Christ because they don't want their file drawers rearranged. And on top of that, Satan is using their anger and their unbelief to keep them in

a state of blindness so he can use them as tools in a strategic way to eventually kill the Messiah.

47 The one who is of God hears the words of God; for this reason you do not hear *them*, because you are not of God."

47 He who is of God hears the words of God; for this reason you do not hear *them*, because you are not of God."

47 The one who belongs to God listens to the words of God. The reason you don't listen is because you don't belong to God."

47 He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.

- Only the person who is positionally right with God through belief in Christ can hear, accept, understand, and apply God's Word

— The problem with human beings is not a lack of intellectual information, it's not a head problem, it's a heart problem. Because they do not want the teaching, their mind goes into a state of darkness. If their mind wanted His teaching (Cf. v31-32), suddenly their mind goes into a state of enlightenment and understanding and their lives begin on a trajectory whereby they can be made right before God, both in justification and sanctification.

— Once you're transferred out of the curse of the first Adam into the benefits of the Last Adam, your priorities are in order, your mind is open to truth, and God begins to work in your life and you begin to become more like Christ

— But if you're not positionally right with God, you can't hear or accept the things of God or apply them to your life. Your ultimate problem is not a lack of information, it's not a problem of intellectual acumen, it's a problem with the wicked condition of your heart. You love your sin so much, you love your false belief system so much, that you do not want the light of God to shine on it because you're not interested in changing (Cf. 1 Cor 2:14).

#### (D) Response of Christ's critics (8:48-59)

##### (a) Pharisee's question (8:48)

48 The Jews answered and said to Him, "Do we not rightly say that You are **a Samaritan**, and **You have a demon?**"

48 The Jews answered and said to Him, "Do we not say rightly that You are a Samaritan and have a demon?"

48 The Jewish leaders replied to him, "Surely we're right in saying that you are a Samaritan and have a demon, aren't we?"

48 Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?

- There's a saying in the legal system that says: When the facts are on your side, pound the facts; when the law is on your side, pound the law; when neither is on your side, pound your opponent.
- This is the exact mentality of the Pharisees at this point...since neither the facts or the law are on their side, they can't get one over on Jesus, it constantly has the perfect answer or response to their statements or questions, so now they are attacking Him personally
- "...a Samaritan" - a desperate, last-ditch effort to attack Jesus' Jewish roots in order to discredit Him as a possible Messiah for Israel
- This charge is not beneath them because back in v41 they called Jesus a product of fornication
- "...You have a demon" - in John's Gospel, telling someone they had a demon was the same as calling them insane (Cf. 10:20)
- So what the Pharisees are saying here is...Jesus, the things You are saying are so out of bounds that You are clearly not the Messiah of Israel genealogically, and by the way your brain is not functioning on all cylinders
- *Ad hominem* attacks against Jesus by the Pharisees and other religious leaders will begin to ramp up the closer He gets to His "hour"
- For us today, some of the most vicious attacks you can face from others are based on the biblical stand that you take. People try to discredit you by leveling a bunch of *ad hominem* attacks against you (attacks not on what you say, but on you personally). We shouldn't be surprised by these attacks, but should expect them and absorb them as normative because the same thing happened to Christ (Cf. 15:20).
- The more we stand out from this darkened world, the more we can expect attacks like this. We're never to be attacked because we are rude, crude, or obnoxious, but because we take a stand for things that are opposite from the world system.

(b) Jesus' answers (8:49-51)

- 49 Jesus answered, **"I do not have a demon; on the contrary, I honor My Father, and **you dishonor Me.****
- 49 Jesus answered, **"I do not have a demon; but I honor My Father, and you dishonor Me.**
- 49 Jesus answered, **"I don't have a demon. On the contrary, I honor my Father, and you dishonor me.**
- 49** Jesus answered, **I have not a devil; but I honour my Father, and ye do dishonour me.**
- Jesus replies: I am not insane nor am I demonically energized. The reason that My teachings seem strange to you is because I am honoring My Father.
  - Because Jesus saw Himself as simply a channel of divine truth, through which the teachings of the Father flowed unedited and unchanged, His teachings seemed strange and out of the ordinary to the natural man.

- "...you dishonor Me" - Jesus made it clear that if you dishonor the Son, you dishonor the Father (Cf. v42). If a person dishonors Jesus, he will be default dishonor God the Father...they are a package deal.

— You cannot honor God the Father without first honoring God the Son; if you want the Father, you have to get to the Father through the Son...that is the only means of access to the Father.

— This is important because Jesus is speaking with people and a nation that believed they were in right standing before God. They not only called Abraham their father, but they also called God their Father. But Jesus tells them that they don't even know the Father because they will not honor the One whom the Father sent.

50 But I am not seeking My glory; there is One who seeks *it*, and judges.

50 But I do not seek My glory; there is One who seeks and judges.

50 I don't seek my own glory. There is one who seeks it, and he is the Judge.

50 And I seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth.

- Because Jesus honors the Father, He's not in business to bring honor upon Himself

— If your teaching is original, you typically want to attract attention to the originator of that teaching

— Jesus did not think of Himself as an Originator, but made it clear that everything He said and did came to Him from the Father. He would receive no honor from men because He was simply relaying the teaching of God the Father.

- "...it" - glory; God's purposes in history are doxological, to glorify Himself

51 Truly, truly I say to you, if anyone follows **My word**, he will never see **death**."

51 Truly, truly, I say to you, if anyone keeps My word he will never see death."

51 Truly, I tell all of you emphatically, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death."

51 Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.

- Christ says that I came into the world to reveal what the Father has shown me, the basic essence of which is to follow God's Word, namely to believe upon the One whom He has sent

— People will carve this verse out of context, ignoring the rest of John's Gospel, to argue for salvation by works: I must adhere to a series of do's and don't's, I have to climb the ladder of works to attain salvation. This doctrine is foreign to this verse, and to the entire Bible.

— All of our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment (Is 64:6)

- "...My word" - then what exactly does "My word" mean? If we back up in this same chapter, we'll find the answer: **unless you believe that I am, you will die in your sins** (v24).

— The Word of God that we are to keep is the plan of salvation related in 8:24 and about 98x elsewhere in John's Gospel. The Word is that we come to Christ not on our terms, but on His terms. We don't rely on ourselves or some perceived self-righteousness within us to come to Christ, but we come trusting on what He has done for us.

- "...death" - referring to spiritual and eternal death; if a person follows the Word of God by believing in whom He sent, then spiritual and eternal death become non-issues for them. They are wiped off the table, no longer a possibility.

— If you are in Christ, the absolute worst thing that can happen to you is that you physically die. And that may not even be an issue for you if the Rapture comes before your death (1 Cor 15:51).

— But if you are not in Christ, if you haven't believed, then you are staring all three deaths right in the face. All three deaths are on the table for you, and it's not a question of *if* but *when*.

### **Penalty of Sin**

- Death (Gen 2:17; Ezek 18:20; Rom 6:23; James 1:14-15)
- Death = separation
- Three types of death:
  - Physical (Gen 3:19)
  - Spiritual (Is 59:1-2; Eph 2:1)
  - Eternal (Rev 2:11; 20:14)

(c) Pharisee's question (8:52-53)

52 The Jews said to Him, "Now we know that You have a demon. Abraham died, and the prophets *as well*; and yet You say, '**If anyone follows My word, he will never taste of death.**'

52 The Jews said to Him, "Now we know that You have a demon. Abraham died, and the prophets *a/so*; and You say, '**If anyone keeps My word, he will never taste of death.**'

52 Then the Jewish leaders told him, "Now we really know that you have a demon. Abraham died, and so did the prophets, but you say, '**If anyone keeps my word, he will never taste death.**'

**52** Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, **If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death.**

- The Jews interpreted Jesus' mention of "death" in v51 as physical death

— They did not believe that all people are spiritually dead because of the Fall. Thus, they judged that only a demon would claim that his words were more powerful than the revelations that Abraham and the prophets had received and passed down after they died.

53 You are not greater than our father Abraham, who died, are You? The prophets died too. Whom do You make Yourself *out to be?*"

53 Surely You are not greater than our father Abraham, who died? The prophets died too; whom do You make Yourself *out to be?*"

53 You aren't greater than our father Abraham, who died, are you?  
The prophets also died. Who are you making yourself out to be?"

53 Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself?

- Once again, the Pharisees are understanding Jesus on a physical, earthly plane when Jesus is speaking on a spiritual plane

(d) Jesus' answers (8:54-56)

54 Jesus answered, "If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing; it is My Father who glorifies Me, of whom you say, 'He is our God';

54 Jesus answered, "If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing; it is My Father who glorifies Me, of whom you say, 'He is our God';

54 Jesus answered, "If I were trying to glorify myself, my glory would mean nothing. It is my Father who glorifies me, of whom you say, 'He is our God.'

**54** Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God:

- Jesus gets back into this issue that He is not doing what He is doing or saying what He is saying to glorify Himself. In fact, He says, if My glory comes from what I say rather than what the Father says, My glory means nothing.

— We know this in practice today...you're much more open to glorifying someone if someone else praises them rather than someone who only praises themself

— Jesus is simply living out Prov 27:2: Let another praise you and not your own mouth; A stranger and not your own lips.

— The moment we praise ourself, our glory is reduced; but the moment another praises us, our glory is enhanced

— But Jesus says that I'm not glorifying Myself, but the Father is glorifying Me, consequently My glory is true. And by the way, the Father that is glorifying Me is the same Father you call your God.

55 and you have not come to **know** Him, but I know Him. And if I say that I do not know Him, I will be a liar like you; but I do know Him, and I **follow His word**.

55 and you have not come to know Him, but I know Him; and if I say that I do not know Him, I will be a liar like you, but I do know Him and keep His word.



55 You don't know him, but I know him. If I were to say that I don't know him, I would be a liar like you. But I do know him and keep his word.

55 Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his saying.

- But you don't know Him because you have not chosen to come to the Father through the Son

- Jesus says that if I claimed to know the Father but I didn't really know Him, I'd be a liar just like you because that's exactly what you (the Pharisees) are doing...you claim to know the Father, but you don't really know Him.

- "...know" - *ginōskō*, a deep, intimate, personal knowledge; the deepest sense of intimacy between a husband and wife is analogized to this word (Gen 4:1)

— The other prominent Greek word for know is *eidō*, which is the word behind the remaining three uses of "know" in this verse. It speaks of a factual knowledge, to know information or facts about, but lacks the personal, intimate knowledge of *ginōskō*.

— The Word *eidō* speaks to facts and information in the mind, which is an outflowing of the deep and abiding relationship we have with the Father

- "...follow His word" - the evidence of the deep and abiding relationship (*ginōskō*) we have with Jesus Christ

— We're saved purely by faith alone in Christ alone, then God says I'm glad you're saved but I want to take you further in your walk with me...I want you to grow, to mature, to develop into a disciple. I want you to experience a deep and abiding intimacy with Me. I have more for your life than simply you having your fire insurance paid up.

— The Pharisees did not have the deep and abiding relationship with the Father...they only had Abraham as their father to stand on...that and \$5 will get you a cup of coffee

— And further, Jesus is saying that I know you are not connected to the Father because you are not even doing the things that Abraham did. You (the Pharisees) are trying to kill Me, but that's not what Abraham did 2000 years ago.

56 Your father Abraham was overjoyed that he would see My day, and he saw it and rejoiced."

56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad."

56 Your father Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day, and he saw it and was glad."

56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.

- The common interpretation of this verse is that Abraham, in heaven, rejoiced when Jesus was born into the world. However, I believe this interpretation misses the point. There is a whole lot more going on here than Abraham rejoicing when Jesus was born.

— Abraham witnessed a pre-incarnate appearance of Jesus Christ (a theophany) in Gen 18:1-5. When Jesus showed up unannounced on Abraham's doorstep, Abraham did not try



to kill Him. He rushed around to prepare a meal and be hospitable; he also bowed down to worship Him.

— Why? Because Abraham walked with God, he had a relationship with the Lord.

— In contrast, the Pharisee's response is evidence that they have no relationship with the Father nor with Abraham, because they do not do the works of either. Their relationship with Abraham was purely physical, but not spiritual. It's not spiritual, it's genealogical.

(e) Pharisee's question (8:57)

57 So the Jews said to Him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and You have seen Abraham?"

57 So the Jews said to Him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?"

57 Then the Jewish leaders asked him, "You are not even 50 years old, yet you have seen Abraham?"

**57** Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?

- Again, the Jews are confused. They didn't understand Jesus' meaning because they disregarded the possibility of His deity.

- The story of Abraham took place in about 2000 BC, 2000 years before Jesus was born incarnate

— They asked how in the world could Jesus, at well under 50 years old, had an encounter with Abraham, who lived 2000 years ago

— This question is not a problem if you understand 1:1-5, that Jesus was the eternal second member of the Godhead, and had no beginning and will have no end. There never was nor will ever be a time when He is not.

— If you understand that Jesus is the incarnation of eternal God, then Jesus having a conversation with a man 2000 years ago is not really an issue

— But the Pharisees are confined only by what they know; they do not have the Spirit of God inside of them to illuminate them to spiritual truths

(f) Jesus' answers (8:58)

58 Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly I say to you, before Abraham was born, **I am.**"

58 Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am."

58 Jesus told them, "Truly, I tell all of you emphatically, before there was an Abraham, I **AM!**"

**58** Jesus said unto them, **Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I AM.**

- "...I am" - *ego eimi*, the eternally existent God, the One who has always been and always will be

— Since Jesus is the eternally existent One, Him speaking with Abraham 2000 years ago is not much of an issue

— This is the title that God used of Himself when He revealed Himself to Moses (Ex 3:14); it is a title reserved exclusively for God in the OT, and now used by Jesus directly and emphatically here, to the Pharisees

— Jesus used the title *ego eimi* before, but this is the clearest possible usage so far. Jesus could not be more clear in His claim to equality with God the Father and deity than this.

### **Jesus' Claim of Deity**

Jesus implicitly claimed deity in at least 12 ways:

1. He claimed the divine right to judge mankind
2. He claimed the divine right to forgive sins
3. He claimed the divine right to grant eternal life
4. He declared that His presence was God's presence and the presence of God's kingdom
5. He declared that the attitude people took toward Him would determine their eternal destiny
6. He identified His actions with God's actions
7. He taught the truth on his own authority
8. He performed miracles on His own authority
9. He appeared to receive worship
10. He assumed that His life was a pattern for others
11. He applied OT texts that describe God to Himself
12. In several parables, He identified Himself with a father or king who represents God

(g) Pharisee's reaction (8:59)

59 Therefore they picked up stones to throw at Him, but Jesus hid Himself and left the temple *grounds*.

59 Therefore they picked up stones to throw at Him, but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple.

59 At this, they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the Temple.

**59** Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

- Based on Jesus' clear claim to be God in v58, there was no trial, no huddle, no board meeting to discuss the ramifications...they immediately picked up stones to kill Him

— The Pharisees and Jesus are often speaking on different planes, Jesus on a spiritual plane and the Pharisees on an earthly, physical plane, which leads to many misunderstandings

— But there is no misunderstanding here...Jesus is crystal clear in His statement that He is God, the Pharisees understood His claim perfectly, and they attempted to stone Him for blasphemy to enforce Lev 24:16.

- Jesus miraculously escaped death here (not the first time) because He lived His life on a divine time schedule, and it was not yet His hour

— Every move Jesus made was ordained by the Father, including the timing and manner of his presentation to Israel (Cf. Dan 9:25; Luke 19:42) and His death (Cf. 10:17-18)

— There were many times during His ministry that Christ could've died prematurely but did not because He is so sovereign and so in control, He is able to even orchestrate the manner and timing of His own death