

The Gospel of John

Chapter 8:48-59

June 8, 1997

- **The Gospel of John Outline:**

- Chapter 1 Our Lord is the Word, the Light and the Life
- Chapter 2 The Lord of the Wedding Feast; Zeal for the purity of the temple
- Chapter 3 Spiritual Birth, Belief and Salvation vs. Unbelief and Condemnation
- Chapter 4 The Ministry in Samaria, The Harvest, The Faith of the Nobleman
- Chapter 5 Paralytic man healed on the Sabbath, Unity of The Father and Son
- Chapter 6 The Bread of Life
- Chapter 7 The public debates about Jesus during the Feast of Tabernacles
- Chapter 8 Public debates: Woman caught in adultery; The Son makes you free; Abraham's true children

- **Review and Introduction**

We continue in with the discussion Jesus is having with the obstinate Jews who were challenging His identity and authority. Their claim was that as physical descendants of Abraham, they were true children of God and that the promises flowed to them because of this relationship. Last week we took a long look at the fact that being of the progeny of Abraham provides no benefit unto salvation. We also learned that the "true" Israel is those who are of the faith of Abraham and those who are in his "Seed", that is, Christ.

The issue we did not address was, "What advantage then is there in being a descendant of Abraham?" Clearly, Paul declares that there is a blessing (Romans 3:1-2) but not unto salvation. There is not a "special" salvation plan for the Jews other than being in Christ. They have been provoked to jealousy by God in that He has brought into the covenant those who were not a people—the Gentiles (Romans 11:1-7, Eph 2:11-18).

- **Exposition of John 8:48-59**

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

- The people perhaps confused His being raised in Galilee with actually being a Samaritan. At best this was a mistake of where Jesus was born. At worst it was an attack on His character. The people show just how hard their hearts were and how they had been confused such that they could not see the truth or receive it.

49 Jesus answered, "I do not have a demon; but I honor My Father, and you dishonor Me."⁵⁰ "And I do not seek My own glory; there is One who seeks and judges."⁵¹ "Most assuredly, I say to you, if anyone keeps My word he shall never see death."

- Jesus makes no reply regarding being a Samaritan but does obviate their accusation of being a demoniac. He places in their face how vile their disparaging of Him is; He sought to glorify the Father and the Jews dishonored Jesus. Therefore, the Jews dishonored the Father, of whom they claimed to be children.
- There is One who seeks the glory of Himself and His Son—the Father. The Father is the one ensuring that His Son is glorified and has placed all judgement in the hands of His faithful Son.
- Jesus' declaration is a glorious one. Those who are in Christ will not partake in the Spiritual death. Clearly we are not speaking about physical death as all men will die physically. But those who are saved by the atonement of Christ will not fear the physical death (Hebrews 2:14-18) nor will they be cast away as those who are rejected by God and receive the full wrath for their sin. Those who are in Christ are reborn of incorruptible seed and this seed cannot perish (1 Peter 1:23-25).
- Although death has lost its sting for those who are in Christ because our sins have been removed (1 Cor 15:50-56) death itself will be the last enemy to be destroyed. It has been rendered powerless against those who are in the hand of Christ but it won't be destroyed until the very end (1 Cor. 15:20-28).

52 Then the Jews said to Him, "Now we know that You have a demon! Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and You say, 'If anyone keeps My word he shall never taste death.'⁵³ "Are You greater than our father Abraham, who is dead? And the prophets are dead. Whom do You make Yourself out to be?"

- Rejecting the good news of Jesus' declaration, they show just how hard their hearts are and persist in their accusations of Christ. As the light approaches and begins to reveal the sins of those who would refuse to step into the light, their slanders frequently become louder and louder.
- Obviously they are still stuck thinking with temporal wisdom and can't fathom how Jesus could say that those who continue in His words would never die. If those (and the Jews thought they were) who follow the words of Abraham clearly die, and even Abraham himself died, how could Jesus claim that those who follow His words would not see

death? This is the logic they employed and it is flawed in that those who follow Abraham's words are those who are of the faith of Abraham and they like Abraham, although they died physically, they will not taste the eternal death that these descendants of Abraham were going to experience.

- Notice how hard their hearts are even against the clear promises declared by Christ. No matter how good or persuasive our presentation may be, if God does not send His Spirit first to soften the hearts through regeneration, all of our declarations of the promises of God will be just further condemnation for them as they reject the Good News.

54 Jesus answered, "If I honor Myself, My honor is nothing. It is My Father who honors Me, of whom you say that He is your God.⁵⁵ "Yet you have not known Him, but I know Him. And if I say, 'I do not know Him,' I shall be a liar like you; but I do know Him and keep His word.

- Jesus contrasts His truth with their lies. The Son claims to know the Father and the Father glorifies the Son. The Jews claimed to know the Father but neither glorified Him nor His Son.

56 "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad."⁵⁷ Then the Jews said to Him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?"⁵⁸ Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM."

- Although He grants to them, in word only, that they are descendants of Abraham, He shows them that they are completely unlike their "father" Abraham because Abraham believed God's promises and rejoiced for the day when they would be fulfilled. As Abraham took Isaac to the mountain to be sacrificed, he by faith knew that they would return back to the servants. Notice how after Abraham's faith is confirmed that the place where the sacrifice was to occur of Abraham's son, his only son, that the place was named "The Lord Will Provide". The gospel had been declared to Abraham and he believed the promises of God and longed for the day for it to be revealed fully. Genesis 22:1-19

59 Then they took up stones to throw at Him; but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by. NKJV

- They demonstrate again how hard their hearts were and also how God ensured that the people would rise up against His Son, but only in His proper time. Christ slips from them through the middle of the temple because the Father ensured that His Son was not harmed until the proper time. Everything happened precisely as it pleased the Father to happen. He used the sin and hardness of the Jews to bring the glorious salvation to the entire world. Praise be to Him!