

John Ch 8 Vs33-59

“Like father, Like son”

We enter into this scene whereby the Lord is engaging the religious authorities in a very bold and blatant manner. This is one of those times in His ministry in which He's poised for controversy. They're going after Him, and He's giving it to them both barrels, full tilt, no holds barred, you want it, you got it, kind of a happening here. The gloves are off and they're standing toe to toe, but I mean who can go toe-to-toe with the Lord? It's like every time the Lord throws a blow it's a direct hit, but whenever they throw a blow at Him it's easily evaded, and does no damage whatsoever to His integrity or His ministry. So that by the time it's all said and done they've reverted, and digressed to all out name-calling because they just can't come against Jesus in any kind of honest and upright way. (It would be comical if it weren't so sad).

You recall if you were here last week how Jesus is just laying it out on the line, alleviating any confusion and just telling them straight that He is the only means of salvation for mankind. “If you do not believe that I am, (Jesus said in vs 24) you will die in your sins.” and Should one die in their sins, where He is (that is in Heaven) they cannot go. If one cannot receive Jesus Christ into their hearts and into their lives as God Himself, if they in anyway diminish the deity of Jesus, believing that the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Him bodily, than they cannot be saved. and Jesus really began to challenge them to scrutinize Him closely, see if they could find any wicked way in Him; He said, “I always do those things that please My Father.” and As they sat there and pondered that, considered His lifestyle and the way He conducted Himself, they couldn't conclude that there was so much as 1 minute detail in His life that wasn't in perfect harmony with God's Word, and as a result many of them believed.

Now there were still several there who *didn't* believe, but many of them did. and As soon as they surrendered their hearts to the reality of who Jesus is, Jesus immediately recognized and realized what was transpiring in their hearts and in vs 31 we see where He turned *towards* them and began to speak *to* them. and We observed the fact that the same thing happens in the lives of anyone today who moves from the sidelines of skepticism to the playing fields of faith. When you give your heart to Jesus Christ He immediately fixates His attention *upon* you, begins to minister *to* you, and make Himself real to you through His Word. He begins to disciple you, and frees you from the sin and the snares of this life, and in that we drew attention to one of the earmarks of one who's passed from death to life. and It's that all out, full on love for the Word of God, the desire to be *in* God's word, to give priority *to* God's Word, and make practical application *of* God's Word. It's that active continuance *in* the Word of God, out of your love *for* the Word of God, you *abide* in the Word. Not just dutifully reading your chapter everyday, not out of a legal religious obligation, but out of a loving relationship, because you love the Lord, you want to know the heart of the Lord, by spending time in the Word of the Lord.

It's by His Word that you'll know true freedom, remember these vs? "*How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word.*" Ps 119:9 "*And I will walk at liberty, For I seek Your precepts.*" Ps 119:45 Here's one more, "*Direct my steps by Your word, And let no iniquity have dominion over me.*" Ps 119:133 You see it's the truth of the Word of God that brings true freedom to an individual's life. If you allow the Word of God to direct your steps and determine what aspects of life you will or will not actively participate in, iniquity won't have dominion over you, you won't subject yourself to sinful situations.

This is how the Lord is ministering to these new believers, just emphasizing the need to give priority to the Word of God in their lives if they're to have a life that's free and fruitful. Of course the other people who are simply there to ridicule rather than receive are listening to this, and here in vs 33 they chime back in.

Vs33

Now this blows my mind because they state that as Ab's descendants they've never known bondage! It's like, "Hello" what about that 400yr period in Egypt? What about the 7 different nations that placed them in bondage during the time period of the Judges? Or the time that the Syrians led them away, or when the Babylonians took them captive? Or we could forget about all that, what about what's happening in their nation right as they spoke these words and how they've been subjected to Rome? It's amazing how easily we can deceive ourselves through pride; of course they've missed the point entirely here regarding what kind of freedom Jesus is talking about.

They're thinking physically, Jesus is speaking spiritually (and we've seen that common misunderstanding that people had with Him, He'd always be seeking to open their hearts to a spiritual truth and they'd always interpret it as physical, or material) but even in that they misrepresent themselves, they've been in bondage several times as Ab's descendants. God even showed Ab in Gen 15:13, that his descendants would be afflicted and serve a nation for 400yrs (in regards to Egypt) hundreds of yrs before it came to pass. But Jesus brings the conversation right back into focus here in vs 34, He doesn't even entertain their notion of never having been in bondage because the physical is peripheral in comparison to the spiritual.

Vs 34-36

2 Things I want to specifically draw your attention to and would have you note or perhaps underline, because we're talking here about freedom, slaves, and sons. So the 1st thing we need to see and draw attention to is there in vs 34. They're saying, "We're not, nor have we *ever been* in bondage to anyone or anything." Jesus says, "Listen, this is the fact, whoever commits sin, is a slave of sin."

The 2nd thing we need to see is in vs 36, and that is that freedom from sin comes through the Son. "If the Son sets you free, you shall be free indeed."

So 1st of all, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. Now this obviously binds the whole human race as slaves of sin, and in the broad sense that's true. But the key in unlocking the meaning to this vs is found in that word, "Commits." This really isn't in reference to a one-time stumble, or having a struggle in life. This is more directly in reference to a pattern, or a lifestyle of sin, we might understand it, "Whoever *practices* sin is a slave of sin." Whoever is under the grip of sin, and sins habitually the same way over and over is a slave to that sin. and Of course those who understand this the most evidently are those who've ever struggled with any kind of addiction. Be it alcohol, or Meth, or pornography, or whatever, you know what it's like to be gripped by that sin and enslaved by it. As much as you may want your freedom from it, that's too bad, you'll serve it faithfully to your own demise and destruction.

Now being a slave to sin is in no way limited to obvious addictions, some are enslaved by their tempers, or their careers, and all kinds of things, there's no list of sin that's completely exhaustive. However obvious or subtle it may be, the one who subjects themselves to sin become slaves of that sin.

Jesus just illustrates a practicality in vs 35 saying that a slave has no real hope of a future. No guarantee of any inheritance in the estate, only members of the family have that insurance, a slave is faced with only uncertainty about their future. But the problem is that a slave has no power or authority to free another slave. I can talk to you about your freedom, reason with you regarding how nice it would be to be free, but the fact is, if I'm a fellow slave, all the talking in the world isn't going to be of any benefit to you. It takes one who's already free, and has the authority of the house to free you. and So in vs 36 Jesus dares to claim that He's not under the bondage of sin (He's sinless, He's free, and has the authority of the Kingdom in Himself) therefore He can in turn free others who are bound and enslaved. (Read vs36)

Now lets talk just a minute about this freedom that we've been given by the Son. and It's absolutely critical to your walk, as one whom Jesus has set free that you understand this. The freedom that we enjoy as believers is not freedom *to* sin; it's freedom *from* sin. and The reason that I draw your attention to that seemingly simple fact, and what may seem to you to be obvious is because there are those who take the mentality that now that they've been set free. It's a "Free for all." "Anything goes I'm free in Christ." But to begin to deceive yourself into thinking that you can do this and be ok, or engage in that but not do any real damage is a dangerous position to take. Paul the apostle said, "*All things are lawful for me, but not all things are helpful; all things are lawful for me, but not all things edify.*" 1 Cor 10:23

In other words it's true that I have the freedom to do whatever I want in Christ, but I need to consider carefully if what I'm confronted with, I really *want* to do. Is it going to help me out in my walk with Christ, or will it somehow jeopardize my relationship with the Lord, will it build me up, or tear me down? and So in considering the outcome I need to determine, is this something I want to do? Because as soon as I give myself over to sin, I'm no longer free, I've subjected myself once again to slavery (of my own volition). and So the freedom that you enjoy in Christ, is freedom from sin, not freedom to sin.

The bible says, "*Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.*" Gal 5:1 This goes back to that whole, "Go and sin no more" principal with which Jesus liberated that woman who was caught in the act of adultery earlier in this ch. Don't go back and entangle yourself with a yoke of bondage once you've been liberated by Jesus Christ Peter put it like this, "*For by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage. For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning.*" 2 Peter 2:19-20 and Then he goes on to liken our returning to our sin to a sow having washed to her wallowing in the mire and a dog returning to its vomit. Here the time and effort and love and energy was taken to wash you off, and cleanse you and then you just flippantly go back to the dirt. Why take the time to clean up at all? Let's turn to Romans Ch 6 and then we'll move on. Now as we approach ch 6 Paul is basically going down this same line of being set free from sin through the Son, and how the grace of God abounded much more than the sin of man through Jesus Christ (Look at vs 1) thru 23.

So you see the freedom we enjoy is the freedom not to sin, I don't have to go out drinking, I'm not bound to internet pornography, I don't have to blow my top or whatever. That old man is dead, having been crucified with Christ so that now it's no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. The bible says, "*Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles -- when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries.*" 1 Peter 4:1-3 You see, you've been set free from the pollutions of this life; now don't enslave yourself again. If the Son sets you free, you shall be free indeed. Consider the outcome of your actions, will it build you up, or tear you down? If it'll tear you down, or tempt you to compromise your relationship with Jesus, don't do, it's trying to rob you of your freedom. Now Jesus goes on to address this their seeking to justify themselves by identifying themselves with Ab, thinking that their physical lineage somehow justified them in the sight of God because of the covenant God had made with him.

Vs37-41 (Thru the words of Jesus)

Let's stop right there. There are a few things we need to see here briefly; last week we noticed the 2 different natures that Jesus spoke of regarding these religious leaders and Himself, one being worldly the other Heavenly, (back in vs 23.) Now He's speaking of 2 different fathers, and He's going to reveal to them the reality of their father in just a moment. But I want you to notice the distinction that Jesus is careful to make regarding the *descendants* of Ab, and the *children* of Ab. Both of which have Ab as their father, but to be a child of Ab is completely different than being a descendant of Ab. Both Ishmael and Isaac had Ab as a father, but only one did God recognize as his true child, the son of promise, the fruit of the Spirit, not the work of the flesh.

Let me just cut to the chase, it's not about a physical lineage, it's about a spiritual heritage. The bible says, "*Therefore know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham.*" Gal 3:7 and To be of faith you have to receive the word of God, believe it and act upon it. Again the emphasis is upon abiding in God's Word. and That's these guys problem, Jesus says it straight, "You seek to kill Me because My Word has no place in you." In Vs 38 Jesus says, "I'm coming to you with a Heavenly message and instead of receiving Me you're rebelling against Me." and That's the distinction that Jesus is making between them and Ab. When heavenly messengers came to Ab in Gen 18 he received them gladly. When God spoke His Word to Ab, he received it whole-heartedly, believed it unreservedly, and acted upon it unhesitatingly. But here Jesus is, a messenger sent from Heaven, and they don't receive Him, (they don't want to take Him in, they want to take Him out,) He speaks to them the Word of God, and they don't believe Him.

That's the works of Ab, believing and receiving the Word of God, "*For what does the Scripture say? 'Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.'*" Rom 4:3 and Everything Ab did was the overflow of his faith in God, having received and believed in His Word. and The point that Jesus is making here is, "Like father like son. If you were Ab's children you would be like Ab, so the fact is, your father isn't who you claim your father to be." Look at the rest of vs 41

Now this is a dig on Jesus ambiguous past, "Speaking of not knowing who one's father is; we're not born of fornication." The implication being that Jesus was, you see they're starting to issue low blows, it wasn't a huge secret that Mary was pregnant before she married Joseph, and that whole "virgin birth" thing seemed to them to be an outlandish cover up. So, "You want to talk about fathers," and they deal out this personal slam, and then plaster this self-righteous statement over the top of it claiming to be God's children themselves in reference to the way God brought the nation of Israel into fruition and called Israel His 1st born.

Vs42

Underline the 1st ½ of this vs, “If God were your Father, you would love Me.” Anyone who claims to love God, and be a child of God, yet has a problem with Jesus Christ is a liar. The fact is, if you’re a child of God you’ll love Jesus Christ They’re a package deal, you can’t have One with out the Other. and John reiterated this when he said, “*Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him.*” 1 John 5:1 You see you can’t have a love for the Father with out having a love for the Son, God the Father and God the Son are inseparable, and if you love the Father, you’ll love the Son.

Vs 43-44

You see it’s heating up a bit here, they’re all, “We’re not sure who your father is.” and Jesus says, “I’m sure of who your father is because you act just like him, you’re of your father the devil who was a murderer from the beginning, he’s the liar, and the father of it. He doesn’t stand for the truth because there’s no truth in him and you guys act just like your dad, you’re liars, you don’t deal in the truth, and all you can think about is murdering Me.” and Just like Satan their own foolish pride will be their undoing.

I want to make the distinction here between this and what I mentioned last week regarding vs 26. This isn’t Jesus tearing into them and railing on them, this is the faithful wound of a friend. This is invasive surgery, and He’s seeking to remove this cancer of sin that’s destroying them from the inside out. He’s not seeking to belittle them, He’s seeking to save them, wants them to come to their senses and see themselves in the desperate position that they’re truly in. and He’s saying here that you guys believe your own propoganda, and build on one another’s lies, but because I tell you the truth (vs 45) you don’t believe Me. Just like Satan they rejected the truth, Ab was called the friend of God, but just like Satan they’ve made themselves to be the enemy of Jesus Christ who was God come in the flesh. and Before we leave this section I want you to see back in vs 44 that when you tell a lie to your spouse, or in that business deal, or when we deceive another for some reason, we’re drawing from Satanic resources, he’s a liar, and the father of it.

Vs46

This is another amazing passage, Jesus is saying, “Who among you can say that there’s any sin in My life?” (Pause, pause, pause,) no one spoke up, no one could point out sin in Jesus’ life, and this challenge is still relevant today, who can find a discrepancy in the life of Jesus with the principals and precepts of God’s Word? So then why do we struggle with what He has to tell us at times? If there’s no sin in Him, if He deals in truth because He is the truth, then He’ll never deceive you or Me and we can always trust the promises of His Word to our lives.

Vs 47-48

Good come back guys! Jesus convicts them of being of the devil, and they're all, "Uh, uh, You are!" Good one... and They throw in a racial slur for good measure since they're not certain who His father is.

Vs 49-50

What I want you to notice here is that Jesus derailed the accusation regarding the demonic, but He said nothing regarding the racial slur, why? Because Jesus came to identify with all men, and He wasn't going to consent to one type of man, being any worse, or more debased than any other. There's only one race, the human race, and God so loved the world, there's none of us who are righteous, no not one. and So this ethnic slam is irrelevant, because humanity is humanity to Jesus, and there's no one with which He's unwilling to identify.

Vs 51

You see Jesus isn't giving them an inch, He just keeps pouring it on, He doesn't say anything about keeping God's Word, He says "My Word" again making His Word equal to Gods. Because He *speaks* the Word of God because He is God, underline this vs, "If anyone keeps My Word he shall never see death." In Ch 6 He said, "*The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.*" John 6:63 What's it mean to "keep" His Word? We're speaking here about preserving the integrity and walking in the reality of His Word, the implication is that of obedience from a pure heart. and Of course the death He's speaking of is spiritual not physical, He's not saying you'll never expire physically, He's saying you'll never be separated from God eternally, you'll go from life to life. Jesus said, "*I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die.*" John 11:25-26 and That's the type of statement we're seeing here.

Vs53-59

Vs58 is another vs that you do well to underline. You may sense some ambiguity in the other "I AM" statements of this ch, but this one is crystal clear. A revelation of the eternal nature of Jesus Christ He says I'm the ever present I AM, notice He speaks of Ab's physical presence upon the earth in the past tense, but regarding Himself He keeps it in the present tense. and Again this takes us right back to the burning bush passage there in Ex.

Jesus is making another claim to deity here, saying that He's the same God that commissioned Moses to liberate the children of Israel. This is radical stuff, but take it back up to vs 46, if it's true that there's no sin in Jesus, then He can't but tell the truth, and so if He's telling us the truth and it's impossible that He should lie, why wouldn't we believe Him? Jesus is God, so when did Ab see His day? Some say that he saw it in Isaac when the child of promise came and he received the promise that in his seed all the nations of the earth would be blessed and by faith he understood that to be a promise of the Messiah.

But I believe there's more to it than that, I believe that Ab literally saw the Lord, and He was glad when He saw Him in that day. and I already sighted Gen 15 when the Lord visited Ab prior to destroying Sodom and Gomorrah, and he was glad that day. But then also in ch 14 after Ab rescued Lot from captivity you recall that he met Melchizedek whom the bible refers to as the High Priest of God. Now Melchizedek is an interesting character. Having no beginning and no end (the bible says) no lineage, and He was the High Priest of God before God ever established a priesthood. The Levitical priesthood would come through Levi who was still in the loins of Ab, and what did Ab do? He paid tithes to him and received a blessing from him. and I believe that that encounter was a Theophany, a manifestation of Christ in the OT prior to His incarnation. You might read Heb Ch 7 in regards to that if you're interested in following up. Ab saw His day, and rejoiced, they rebelled, like father, like son.

Don't rebel against the work of Jesus Christ in your life, receive it, whether it be for salvation, or sanctification Jesus wants to know you and be known *by* you, the question is does His Word have place *in* you? If anyone keeps His word he'll never see death, allow the Word of God to be assimilated into your heart, and applied to your life, believe it, receive it, and walk in it and so be sons and daughters of your Father who is in Heaven, and where He is there you may be also.

If you've never received Jesus Christ into your heart, or given place to His Word in your life, Jesus is seeking you out today, don't rebel against Him, receive Him, He loves you so much He took all your sin, all my sin, all our sin upon Himself, and took it to the cross where He laid down His life and shed His blood for you. and If you'll just believe upon Him you'll never perish, but receive the forgiveness of your sins and everlasting life, that's what He said, and if He tells you the truth, then why don't you believe Him. You can trust Him, and if He's tugging on the strings of your heart, then surrender your life to Him, and He'll set you free, and whom the Son sets free, shall be free indeed.