

## Lighthouse Bible Church

August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2013

John 8: 37 – 47 *Scripture Reading Romans 2: 17 - 29*

**'Faith Alone in Christ Alone'**

### Stand – Read – Pray

Jesus has been dialoging with some of the religious leaders who made a superficial profession of belief in Jesus.

Because Jesus knows their hearts and knows their profession is a shallow non-saving belief in Him, He tells them that in order to be His disciple they must believe His words and abide in His words. They were unwilling to do that.

Jesus tells them that they are in bondage to their sin of unbelief and rejection of Him and uses the analogy of a slave to tell them that they are slaves of sin because they have a sin nature and unless they are freed by Jesus and the truth He shares, they will die in their sins.

Well, they don't think that they are in bondage to anyone and they keep saying over and over again **we are descendants of Abraham...Abraham is our Father...God is our Father**. They are basing their secure relationship with God on their lineage, their heritage as descendants of Abraham. So Jesus tells them, you may be a physical descendent of Abraham but you are spiritually bound like a slave to your sin and only a son abides in the house and not a slave.

Jesus tells them that you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free and that if the Son makes you free, you are free indeed. Then Jesus continues His conversation with them in Verse 37.

And as He continues His conversation with them He becomes more and more direct about their sin and who their true father is and the unbelief in their hearts and the fact that they don't know God and are not of God but of the devil.

He doesn't pull any punches when it comes to His condemnation of them and that is because of their ever increasing inward and outward rejection of Him and the ongoing sin in their lives.

And that is the most loving thing that Jesus could do for them and that is to confront them with their sin and unbelief and false religion because that is the only way that the character of their sin is going to be revealed. It is no different today; the more obvious the rejection of Jesus the more direct the condemnation of that rejection must be and that is what we see with Jesus here.

These religious leaders didn't believe they were sinners, they didn't believe they were in bondage to anyone or anything, they thought they were in good with God because of their self-righteousness, their good works and their heritage as Jews and Abraham's descendants.

People are the same way today; they don't believe they are sinners or at least not as bad as some others they know and God will take that into consideration. They believe the religious system they are in is the right one. They believe that because they have belonged to this church or this denomination for so long that they are automatically secure in their salvation and relationship with God.

No one is going to come to Christ as long as they are secure in their own religion, their own goodness, their own religious heritage or their own works. Only Jesus can expose that kind of false security and only in Christ can sin be forgiven and one be made righteous before God.

So Jesus is about to expose and condemn the Jews and their security in being descendants of Abraham to get them into heaven. So let's look at it starting in Verse 37.

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

They said earlier in Verse 33 'we are Abraham's descendants ... and are not in bondage to anyone. They say in Verse 39 'Abraham is our father and no one else' and in Verse 42 they say 'God is our only Father'. So this is what they are hanging on to when it comes to their security in salvation and their relationship with God and these are the claims that Jesus will deal with.

So Jesus says to them in Verse 37 '**I know that you are Abraham's descendants**' I know that; but He is talking in the physical sense only. He says 'I know that you are the physical descendants of Abraham, that is not in dispute' but you are not the spiritual descendants, as you thought in Verse 33, why? **Because you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you.**

Your heritage as physical descendants of Abraham, your being circumcised in the Abrahamic covenant will do you no good in your gaining entrance into the kingdom of heaven. Remember what **Romans 2: 17 – 29** said...**for he is not a Jew who is one outwardly nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh but he is a Jew who is one inwardly and circumcision is that of the heart...** and only God through Christ can perform that type of procedure.

Listen to what **Deuteronomy 30: 6** says **the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants to love the Lord your God with all your heart with all your soul, that you may live.**

**Colossians 2: 11** puts it this way **in Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands by putting off the body of sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ...**

They thought that being children of Abraham they were automatically into the kingdom of heaven. But listen to what **Galatians 3: 7** says **therefore know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham.** Later it says in **Galatians 3: 13 – 14** that it is through **faith in Jesus Christ.**

They were physical descendants of Abraham but not spiritual, by faith in Christ, descendants of Abraham and Jesus says it is evident because ‘you seek to kill Me’. Abraham rejoiced to see My day, He will say later in Verse 56, but you want to kill Me.

They couldn’t be the true children of Abraham and heirs of salvation because they have rejected His words and want to kill the One whom Abraham longed to see.

They sought to kill Him **because His word had not place in them.** Remember back in Verse 32 Jesus said ‘if you abide in My word you are My disciples’. Well His word has no place in them so it is evident that they are not His disciples and not disciples and followers of the One true God either.

That phrase ***had no place*** is one word in the Greek *choreo* and it means to give place to, to yield to, to advance, to go forward, to progress or to proceed. The word of Christ that they heard did not advance in their lives, they did not yield to it, they did not go forward or progress with it. They did not abide in the word and it was evident because there was no progression of the word, no fruit of the word in their lives.

A true disciple of Christ where the word takes hold becomes evident, Jesus says.

Let me give you an example in **1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 1: 5 – 10 + 2: 13 - 14:** that is the word of God, that evidences itself, that progresses, that advances in the lives of people that they are true disciples of Christ because that word has a place in them and is abiding in them.

Jesus then says we have two different fathers that is why My word has no place in you. Look at Verse 38.

**Verse 38: I speak what I have seen with My Father and you do what you have seen with your father.**

Jesus says, in essence, a child speaks the language of His Father and I am speaking the language of My Father, God, and you don't understand it because you have a different father. Jesus, as we have already seen, came from the Father in heaven, speaks the words and truth of the Father in heaven, does the will of His Father and is going back to His Father in heaven and they don't get it because they have a different father.

He, in essence, says because you don't know My Father you don't know what I am saying. He told them back in **John 8: 19** that **you know neither Me nor My Father.** He implies that they are not even children of Abraham or God because they don't know Him and they don't understand Him. And He begins to imply that they have another, a different father, you are someone else's children.

Jesus says **you do what you have seen or heard with your Father.** What had their father told them to do? To kill Jesus, right? He says in Verse 37 'you seek to kill Me'. **John 5: 16** says **they sought to Kill Him** because He healed on the Sabbath day. **John 5: 18** says **they sought all the more to kill Him because He said that God was His Father..**

Jesus says, 'you can't have the same Father as I have because My Father says 'you shall not kill, you shall not murder' and that is exactly what you want to do, so you must have a different father. Look at their response in Verse 39.

**Verse 39: they answered and said to Him, Abraham is our father.** Meaning that he is their spiritual father, because Jesus has already acknowledge that they are they physical descendants of Abraham but they are saying he is our spiritual father. So Jesus says at the end of Verse 39 **If you were Abrahams children you would do the works of Abraham.**

What were the works of Abraham? They were works of faith; by faith Abraham believed, by faith Abraham offered his only son Isaac. Abraham was a man of faith and the people to whom Jesus is talking are a people of works. If you were children of Abraham you would be a people of faith but you are self-righteous workers trying to earn favor with God and work your way into heaven. You don't by faith, believe who I am, you don't believe My words and works and if your were Abraham's children, you would.

Jesus says in Verse 40, 'I'll tell you another reason you are not children of Abraham'.

**Verse 40: but now you seek to kill Me, a Man who has told you the truth which I heard from God. Abraham did not do this.**

Jesus says you seek to kill Me, would Abraham or Abraham's children do that? You seek to kill Me and I have told you the truth, would Abraham or Abrahams children do that? You seek to kill Me because I am telling you the truth and the truth comes from God Himself, would Abraham or Abrahams children do that? No! Then Jesus makes it very clear in Verse 41

**Verse 41: You do the deeds of your father.**

He hasn't told them who their father is yet, but they know that He has told them repeatedly, by examples of their lives, that God is not their Father. So they lash out at Him at the end of Verse 41 by saying **we were not born of fornication we have on Father, God.**

Now this can be taken one of two ways and it should be taken both ways. First of all they are, in essence, insulting and deriding Jesus because of His physical heritage. Remember we talked before about the rumor going around about Jesus' parents.

Mary was pregnant during the betrothal period and Joseph was going to divorce her privately so as to not cause public shame for her. *Explain* So their claim was that Jesus was born as a result of fornication between Joseph and Mary and some say between a Roman soldier and Mary. So they are talking on the physical level here. They are saying that they are more pure and legitimate than Him, physically.

But it can and should also be taken in the spiritual sense as well. These religious leaders are saying to Jesus 'we were not born of fornication ... we are not illegitimate children, we are children of God', they are talking in the spiritual realm of being spiritual children of God as the chosen people of God.

They are saying that 'we are not the offspring of any illicit union between God and some pagan system', we are God's spiritual children. In other words they are saying our religion is pure, undefiled, without idols, without the worship of other gods. By the way, those are the very things that God chastened the nation of Israel for over and over again and he called it 'spiritual adultery, spiritual fornication' with pagan gods and pagan people.

They are telling Jesus 'we are the offspring of God and have not mixed ourselves with heathen religious practices, we are the children of God.'

Think about this; in their religious practices they hated idolatry, they followed the God of the Bible, they knew the scriptures, they were a true religion. And yet Jesus condemns them to everlasting punishment. Why?

Listen very carefully, they were very religious but their religion was ritualistic, legalistic, institutionalized, it was all of works and they did not have a relationship with Jesus, it was all mechanics. One writer said this “what God demands is a personal relationship with Him. And theirs was purely ritualistic. They went through the religious motions and even though they were sitting in the middle of the truth, they were damned by their false securities and their inability to see the personal relationship they needed with God rather than an institutional ritual.” Jesus says God isn’t your father, you have no relationship with Him.

**Verse 42 Jesus said to them ‘if God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God nor have I come of Myself but He sent Me’.**

Jesus says ‘you are not children of God because you hate Me, you want to kill Me and I came from the Father and I speak what the Father has told Me to say and if God were your Father you would love Me not hate Me. You hate Me and that is evidence that God is not your Father.

**1<sup>st</sup> John 5: 1 says whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.** Jesus says you are not children of God because you don’t believe I am the Christ, the Messiah, because you want to kill Me, you don’t love Me. Paul said in **1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 16: 22 if anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let Him be accursed.** Jesus will tell them later in **John 15: 23 he who hates Me hates My Father also.** Jesus then says in Verse 43

**Verse 43: Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word.**



The reason these religious leaders could not understand what Jesus was saying is because they could not hear His words. They heard the words that He was saying but they did not understand them. That phrase you ‘are not able’ is one word in the Greek and it is the word *dunamai* and it means power. Jesus says you have no power, in and of yourselves, to understand My words.

Jesus says ‘you do not understand My **speech** *laleo*. And then He says ‘because you are not able to listen to My **word** *logos*. In other words He is saying ‘you don’t understand the language, *laleo*, so you can’t interpret the sentence *logos*. It is foreign to you because your father speaks a different language than My Father.

Then He tells them very clearly in **Verse 44: you are of your father the devil and the desires of your father you want to do.**

Jesus makes it very clear that they can’t understand Him or His Father because their father is the devil and he speaks a totally different language. What an indictment against these religious self-righteous people. Physically, they were children of Abraham but spiritually, they were children of the devil and the devil’s desires they want to do.

What are the desires of the devil that they wanted to do? That word **desires** is *epithumia* and it means strong lusts, craving or desire for what is forbidden. Well there are many in scripture that can be put into 3 categories; the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life that **1<sup>st</sup> John 2: 15 – 16.**

But in our passage here Jesus singles out two desires of the devil that mark him and those that follow him and we see both of them in the lives of these religious leaders to whom Jesus is talking. He says the devil has a desire/lust as a **murder** and a **liar**.

Jesus goes on to say **He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources for he is a liar and the father of it.**

Jesus is undoubtedly referring to the accounts in **Genesis 3 & 4** when He says the devil being a murder from the beginning and a liar and the father of it. He is talking about the devil coming to Adam and Eve and lying to Eve by saying in **Genesis 3: 4 you shall not surely die.** And what happened? Death began at that very time and still continues on today. **Romans 5: 12**

The first murder that was ever committed was against Able by his brother Cain in **Genesis 4: 8.** All of this because the devil had lied saying **for God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.**

Two of his greatest deceptions since that time are, one in **2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 4: 4** where it says **whose minds he has blinded who do not believe lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ who is the image of God should shine on them.** *Explain.*

And the second is in **2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 11: 13 – 15** for such are false apostles, **deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ and no wonder, for Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness...**

Satan, the devil, is a murderer and a liar and he hates people and will lie and manipulate them to kill each other or to kill themselves or both; and he's being doing a pretty good job over the years.

But the most horrific murder and lie that would ever take place, and it would be at the hands of these religious Jews, was the murder of their own Messiah, Jesus Christ. So He says you are of your father the devil because you want to kill Me because the desire and lust of your father the devil you want to do. Then in Verses 45 - 46

**Verses 45 - 46: But because I tell you the truth, you do not believe Me ... and if I tell the truth, why do you not believe Me?**

The answer to that is found in **Verse 47** where Jesus says **He who is of God hears God's words; therefore you do not hear because you are not of God.**

They **were not of God** , they were of the devil and would not and could not hear the truth. He says your father is the devil, you are living and acting like the devil and the reason is, is because you are of your father the devil because you are not of God. Is it any wonder they wanted Him dead?

What are you putting your security in today? In your religion, your heritage, your church, your money, your job, your goodness, your good works...or in Christ? Do you know Christ only in a liturgical, legalistic, ritualistic way or do you have a relationship with Him because you truly know Him and He knows you and lives within you?

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Introduction and Review:

Verse 37:

Romans 2: 17 – 29, Deuteronomy 30: 6  
Colossians 2: 11, Galatians 3: 7, 13 – 14  
1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 1: 5 – 10, 2: 13 – 14

Verse 38:

John 8: 19, John 5: 16, 18

Verse 39 – 41:

‘If you were Abraham’s children’  
Matthew 1: 18 – 25  
‘We have one Father, God’

Verse 42:

1<sup>st</sup> John 5: 1, 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 16: 22  
John 15: 23

Verse 43:

Speaking in a different language

Verse 44:

1stJohn 2: 15 – 16, Genesis 3 & 4  
Romans 5: 12, Genesis 4: 8  
2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 4: 4, 11: 13 – 15

Verses 45 – 47:

‘You don’t believe because you are not of God

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