



John 8:37-47

Who Is Your Father?

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

38 "I speak what I have seen with My Father, and you do what you have seen with your father."

39 They answered and said to Him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham.

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.

41 "You do the deeds of your father." Then they said to Him, "We were not born of fornication; we have one Father -- God."

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.

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

44 "You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. 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.

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

46 "Which of you convicts Me of sin? And if I tell the truth, why do you not believe Me?"

47 "He who is of God hears God's words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God."

There are many ways to group or divide people, we can say they belong to this nation, this race, this denomination, this language, and so on. But the bible tells us that all of those other divisions are insignificant compared to the one great division that separate people into two and only two different camps or families, more accurately. We can speak about the division as being between believers and unbelievers, the regenerate and the unregenerate, or we can use the language that Jesus uses in these verses, *Sons of God, and Sons of the Devil*.

Now the interesting thing is that since the fall every person, with the exception of Christ, starts out their existence as a Son of the Devil, and in the case of this sonship, it is very much *like father, like son*. We all start out resembling him, inclined towards sin, slaves to it, and desirous to do his will. But by God's grace, some of those people are chosen by God and changed through faith in His Son Jesus, and made the adopted Sons of God. The go from being Sons of the Devil to Sons of God.

NKJ Ephesians 2:1 And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins,

2 in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,

3 among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.

4 But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,

5 even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),

6 and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,

7 that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,

9 not of works, lest anyone should boast.

But how do we go about knowing who is in which family? Whose father is the Devil and whose father is Jesus? Is there a paternity test we can use to figure out who someone's real spiritual father is?

Well, yes there is, but it isn't a simple matter of DNA like a physical paternity test. That was the initial mistake of the Jews here, they assumed that because they were the physical descendants of Abraham, and had the outward sign of the covenant, they were the Sons of God. But to be a Son of God is not merely to be his physical descendants, it is to his spiritual descendants.

Romans 2:28 For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh;

29 but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God.

Who was their spiritual father? Was it God or the Devil? As we go through the evidence, and come to a conclusion, I want to ask you to apply the same criteria to yourself.

First, they seek to kill Jesus – because that is what their father the Devil wanted to do. The Devil and his children are absolutely opposed to Christ and his children and will do all they can to murder them.

Second, It doesn't matter who you *say* is your father, it is what you **DO**, whose lead you are following, that shows your real paternity. They do the deeds of their father, the devil, not those of God.

Now notice they get defensive as Jesus presses them. The natural unregenerate heart is not convicted when warned of their true peril. Instead it gets *angry!* In verse 41 they essentially say, **HOW DARE YOU** say we are not sons of God and on our way to heaven. Then the insults come out, "we weren't *born of fornication.*" What are they not so subtly saying, oh yeah Jesus we've done some inquiring, we've heard some rumors, and we can do math. We heard your mom was pregnant *before* she married Joseph.

Now this evil rumor continued to spread by Jewish authorities after the resurrection and actually made it into the Talmud.

This is another clear sign that God is not their father, they deny the virgin birth. Now please understand, both Christ and His followers and their enemies are agreed on this point, Joseph was not Christ's actual father. So we only have two possibilities, either we agree with the testimony of Scripture and believe in the Virgin Birth, or you agree with these sons of the devil that his conception

was the result of fornication. This is another sign that someone is a child of the devil, that they deny the virgin birth of Christ.

They claim once again to have God as their father, but Jesus simply tells them, *no, God is not your father*. If He was you would *love me* because I'm the Messiah the Christ, the one He has sent. And I hope you see here that Jesus is not leaving any middle ground, no neutral territory. Either you are in God's camp and you love Jesus and confess that He is the Messiah, the Christ, or you are in the Devil's camp. You can't truly love God and hate His Son, Jesus and deny that He is the Christ:

1 John 2:22 Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son.

23 Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also.

Jesus told them the truth, He is the Messiah, He is the Son of God. He is the only one who could free men from bondage to sin and the Devil and make them Sons of God. But they could not see it because they would not see it. There is a saying that *There are none so blind as those who will not see*.

Their problem was not one of the intellect, it was a problem of the will. They would not receive these things because of the natural darkness of their hearts.

1 Cor. 2:14 But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

So, although not a one of them could refute Christ, or convict Him of any sin, precisely He is the sinless son of god, they still would not turn. No amount evidence would ever make them believe in Him because they were not His Adopted Sons. And that is the ultimate and final proof that a man is still a Son of the Devil. *If you will not hear and respond to the Gospel, it is because you are not of God – you are not his adopted sons.*

TWO Applications –

1) **Christians** – I know you all acknowledge there really is a God, and He really does have a Son named Jesus. But please understand as Jesus makes very clear in these verses, **there is also a Devil** –

“There is a devil! We have a mighty invisible enemy always near us--one who never slumbers and never sleeps--one who is about our path and about our bed, and spies out all our ways, and will never leave us until we die. He is a murderer! His great aim and object is, to ruin us forever and kill our souls. To destroy, to rob us of eternal life, to bring us down to the second death in hell, are the things for which he is unceasingly working. He is ever going about, seeking whom he may devour.”
– **JC Ryle**. He is ceaselessly working to destroy you, and as a result all of your Life is Spiritual Warfare.

I have seen countless indications of that, and rather than use one that will inevitably cause you to waste precious time trying to figure out who the people in the example are. I'll use one from another minister's experience – The fellow approached him after church and said he was struck by his sermon, would like to talk to him, agreed to a pastoral visit. Went with an elder, started talking to the man about his personal relationship to Christ, the man said he didn't have one, he asked if he could share the gospel, the man said he would like that. At that moment his six year old son, Ben came racing into

the room screaming his head off. Called wife, roll-eyes, starts again, Ben comes back this time with a big coca-cola, he trips it goes all over the room, and the man, has to clean it up, change, start again, this time Ben comes in with a Whiffle Bat and begins hitting the preacher as hard as he can and then the TV set. Eventually the man stands up and says, "I'm sorry this just isn't going to work tonight" Outside, the RE says, "that was the most obvious example of demonic activity I've ever seen."

Ok, badly behaved kid, but whose will was he doing? His fathers, because his true father desperately didn't want that man to hear the gospel. Brothers and Sisters, he doesn't want you to hear it either.

You go to a movie and you don't turn around and crane your head to see who is coming in and going out. You also don't find 20% of the audience dozing off. Well some may say, "if you were a better preacher, we wouldn't look around" Well friends, that's not true, because exactly the same thing has happened in the congregations of the greatest preachers. Spurgeons example – Mr. So & So.

You know why your head is on a swivel when you are in here, why you become so unaccountably sleepy the moment the sermon starts. Because the Devil is coming at you with everything he has, and you aren't nearly prepared, you haven't prayed, you haven't put on the full armor, you don't even recognize that you've entered into battle. You come in here, you sit down and before you even know it, he is right up next to you, and he has his arm around you, and he's saying "*look over there*" and "*how heavy your eyes are, you are so sleepy, aren't you?*" and "*have you thought about what to have for lunch yet?*" and then before you even know it, the sermon is over, and he says to you "*now that wasn't a very good sermon was it, if it was you would have listened.*"

Please understand, the Devil *hates* to give up his slaves. He doesn't want any of you to become the adopted children of God. So like Apolyon with Christian in Pilgrim's Progress he stands in the way and offers lying incentives for you to return to the city of destruction. Please understand if Satan is so bold that he would try to tempt *Christ* in the wilderness to serve him, then he is not going to have any reservations about tempting you. And he will use every means at his disposal.

The first thing, though that he will attempt to do is to get you away from the means of grace or make the means ineffectual. Can you even conceive of how many Christian families he has gotten to leave churches over perceived slights, or some utterly insignificant issue.

The devil is no fool, and like every smart military leader, he wants to lure you away from your best defensive position, separate you from your support and hit you when you have no one on your flanks or backing you up.

2) The movement from being a Son of the Devil to Being a Son of God, is not something we can do for ourselves. We were born Sons of the Devil and therefore to become Sons of God we need a new birth. We need to be Born Again, Born from Above. This is something that only God the Holy Spirit can do. I really didn't need to be persuaded by much in the way of scripture that what Christ is saying here is true. I know it all too well from personal experience. There was a time friends when I was absolutely in the Devil's camp. I was his son and wanted to do his deeds. I hated Christ, Christians and the church. I mocked them, abused them, and I could give all sorts of examples. He moved me into his camp and I was changed dramatically forever.

Now the true sign of that change, is not being the descendent of believers, of a member of a church or even getting baptized and coming to the Lord's Supper. Yes a Christian will get baptized, become of a

church, and come to the Lord's Supper, but as we see from these Jews to simply be in the visible covenant community is not necessarily to be in Christ. The true signs are what Christ listed. IT is that now we Love Jesus, We Believe in Him, We Believe He is the Messiah, we believe His miracles including his miraculous birth, and We do His Works. If that is not true of you, then like these Jews you are neither the descendents of Abraham nor the Son of God.

If you desire to be a true descendent of Abraham and Son of God, it can only be through Faith. ***Gal. 3:29 And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.***