

UPPER ROOM ADULT BIBLE STUDY
"The Gospel of John"
Pastor Jim Otte
Spring – Fall, 2019

Lesson 35: John 8:12 – 38. "Who's Your Daddy?" (Part 1)

¹² Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

- a. "light...darkness" – Jesus reiterates a common theme in John's gospel: "Darkness" = sin, death, delusion, falsehood, deception, etc. "Light" = forgiveness, life, energy, truth, transparency

¹³ So the Pharisees said to him, "You are bearing witness about yourself; your testimony is not true." ¹⁴ Jesus answered, "Even if I do bear witness 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. ¹⁵ You judge according to the flesh; I judge no one. ¹⁶ Yet even if I do judge, my judgment is true, for it is not I alone who judge, but I and the Father[@] who sent me. ¹⁷ In your Law it is written that the testimony of two people is true. ¹⁸ I am the one who bears witness about myself, and the Father who sent me bears witness about me." ¹⁹ They said to him therefore, "Where is your Father?" Jesus answered, "You know neither me nor my Father. If you knew me, you would know my Father also."

- a. "You are bearing witness" – "bearing witness" spoke to the issue of the genuineness of truth. Jewish law stated that at least two witnesses had to testify to a claim, in order for that claim to be held as true.
- b. "You know neither me nor My Father." – the Jewish leaders claimed to worship the Father, but were rejecting the Son: Jesus. Jesus asserts, that if you reject the Son, you cannot have a relationship with the Father.

²⁰ These words he spoke in the treasury, as he taught in the temple; but no one arrested him, because his hour had not yet come. ²¹ So he said to them again, "I am going away, and you will seek me, and you will die in your sin. Where I am going, you cannot come." ²² So the Jews said, "Will he kill himself, since he says, 'Where I am going, you cannot come'?" ²³ He said to them, "You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. ²⁴ I told you that you would die in your sins, for unless you believe that I am he, you will die in your sins."

- a. "...from below...from above...this world...not of this world." – Jesus illustrates the difference between Himself and those who chose to reject Him. This difference was not mere geography ("below...above"), but was also of the heart.

- b. **“unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins.”** – Jesus’ strongest assertion that faith in Him, as Savior of the world, saves you from your sins. The realities of “sin” are:
- SIN is a power over us and a condition into which we were born.
 - Because of SIN, we are born spiritually dead, blind, and hostile to God. (Only the new life given through Jesus can change that).
 - SIN shows up in the form of sins, which master our thoughts, words, and deeds.
 - SIN separates us from a perfect and just God (the Father).
 - Jesus’ perfect life and death paid the price for our redemption from SIN.
 - Jesus’ resurrection was God’s way of affirming, that the price Jesus paid, was enough.
 - Faith in Jesus, accepts/receives the forgiveness of sins, which Jesus earned. Forgiveness acts as God’s ‘covering’ of our sins.
 - Rejection of Jesus removes the covering of forgiveness; exposing the SIN to God’s wrath.

²⁵ So they said to him, **“Who are you?”** Jesus said to them, **“Just what I have been telling you from the beginning. ²⁶ I have much to say about you and much to judge, but he who sent me is true, and I declare to the world what I have heard from him.” ²⁷ They did not understand that he had been speaking to them about the Father. ²⁸ So Jesus said to them, “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he, and that I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the Father taught me. 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.” ³⁰ As he was saying these things, many believed in him.**

- “When you have lifted up the Son of Man”** – Jesus foretells His crucifixion.
- “for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him.”** – Jesus reminds them of His absolute devotion to His Father.

So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, **“If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, ³² and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” ³³ They answered him, “We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, ‘You will become free?’”**

- “abide in My word...know the truth...will set you free.”** – the “truth” that Jesus’ sacrifice for sin, earning your forgiveness, is what “frees” you from the threat of God’s wrath (for SIN).
- “set you free.”** – the Jews believed, and taught, that their birthright as offspring of Abraham, guaranteed them a place in the Father’s kingdom. They were God’s “chosen people.” Such people were already “free!”
- “We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone.”** – the reference as “offspring” was a point of pride for these Jewish leaders. It was used as way to distinguish themselves from those whose lot in life was to be enslaved. One way to interpret this is: *“If the truth you speak of is only good for slaves, do not trouble us – the offspring of Abraham – with it!”* (Lenski, 633).

³⁴ Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave^[a] to sin. ³⁵ The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. ³⁶ So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. ³⁷ I know that you are offspring of Abraham; yet you seek to kill me because my word finds no place in you. ³⁸ I speak of what I have seen with my Father, and you do what you have heard from your father."

- a. **"everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin (SIN)."** – Jesus points out the power of the condition of SIN as a slave master – commanding his slaves to do his bidding (practices sin). The word "practice" indicates a repetitive action in thoughts, words, and deeds regardless of the intent not to commit sin.
- b. **"you are offspring of Abraham, yet you seek to kill Me."** – So offended were the Jews, that Jesus would suggest their birthright held no promise of sonship in God's kingdom, they sought to kill Jesus!