

## Jesus is Greater Than Abraham

John 8:39-59 (Page 79 in the BPB)

February 6, 2022

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### Introduction

In his first epistle, John uses conditional sentences to show that what one says might not be the reality if one's life is lived in contradiction to one's confession.

"If we say..." (1:6, 8, 10; 4:20)

In our text John uses conditional statements to show the Jews that their claim to have Abraham as their father and even to have God as their Father is a claim without substance because their actions are contradicting what they claim.

### Context:

8:30 As He spoke these things, many came to believe in Him.

8:31 So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him,  
**"If you continue in My word, *then* you are truly disciples of Mine;  
and you will know the truth , and the truth will set you free.**

This prompts the Jews to declare that they are descendants of Abraham (v. 33) which Jesus acknowledges (v. 37) yet they were seeking to kill Jesus because His word had no place in their hearts (v. 37).

In verse 38 Jesus makes a distinction between His Father and their father (without declaring, at this point, who their father is).

This leads the Jews to claim that Abraham is their father (v. 39). Jesus questions their claim to Abraham because they are not living in a manner that reflects Abraham's life.

### WWAD? (What Would Abraham Do?)

8:39 **"If you are Abraham's children, do the deeds of Abraham.**

What deeds?

8:40 “But as it is, you are seeking to kill Me, a man who has told you **the truth**, which I heard from God; **this Abraham did not do.**

**Jesus acknowledges that the Jews are in fact doing the deeds of their father but it’s not who they think it is.**

“You are doing the deeds of your father” (v. 41a).

**The Jews respond with scorn.**

“They said to Him, We were not born of fornication; we have one Father, God.” (v. 41b)

**Jesus again challenges their claim with a conditional statement.**

**“If God were your Father, you would love Me,”** (v. 42)

“for/because  
I proceed forth and have come from God,  
I have not even come on My own initiative, but He sent Me.

**Question:** (v. 43)

Why do you not understand what I am saying?

**Answer:**

It is because **you cannot** hear My word.

“cannot” 3:3, 5; 7:34 & 8:21; 8:43; 14:16-17)

v. 31 “If you continue in My word...”

**Jesus reveals who their true father is & his nature. (v. 44)**

“You are of your father, the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father.”

1 John 3:7-12

He was a murderer from the beginning,

And he does not stand in **the truth** because there is no truth in him.

Whenever he speaks a lie,

he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

**Contrast: (v. 45)**

But because I speak the truth, you do not believe Me.

**Challenge: (v. 46)**

Which one of you convicts Me of sin?

If I speak **the truth**, why do you not believe me?

**Conclusion: (v. 47)**

He who is of God hears the words of God:

for this reason you do not hear them because you are not of God.

**The Jews respond again with scornful accusations. (v. 48)**

“Do we not say rightly that you are a Samaritan and have a demon?”

Samaritan (Jn. 4:9 “For the Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.”)

Demon – (7:20; 8:52; 10:20)

**Jesus' response:** (vv. 49-50)

I do not have a demon; but I honor My Father, and you dishonor Me.

But I do not seek My glory; there is One who seeks it and He is the judge. (ESV)

**Jesus' Promise** (v. 51)

“Truly, truly, I say to you, **if anyone keeps My word he will never see death.**”

John 11:25-26

**The Jews are skeptical at Jesus' statement.** (vv. 52-53)

<sup>52</sup>The Jews said to Him, “Now we know that You have a demon. Abraham died, and the prophets *also*; and You say, ‘If anyone keeps My word, he will never taste of death.’ <sup>53</sup>“Surely You are not greater than our father Abraham, who died? The prophets died too; whom do You make Yourself out to be?”

**Jesus' Answer:** (vv. 54-55)

<sup>54</sup>“If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing; it is My Father who glorifies Me, **of whom you say, ‘He is our God’;**

<sup>55</sup>**and you have not come to know Him, but I know Him;**

and if I say that I do not know Him, I will be a liar like you,

**but I do know Him and keep His word.**

**Jesus Is Greater Than Abraham. (vv. 56, 58)**

“Your father **Abraham** rejoiced to see **My day**,  
and **he saw it and was glad.**”

**The Jews Response: (v. 57)**

You are not yet fifty years old and have You seen Abraham?

**Jesus' Response: (v. 58)**

Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am.

“I am” Exodus 3:14; Isaiah 41:4; 43:10, 13, 25; 46:4; 48:12

“God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM”; and He said, “Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’” (Ex. 3:14)

“And understand that **I am** He. Before Me there was no God formed,  
And there will be none after Me.” (Isaiah 43:10)

**The Jews Response: (v. 59)**

Therefore they picked up stones to throw at Him,

Lev. 24:16

but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple.

Luke 4:28-30

John 7:30

**Application**

If you **continue in My word** you are truly disciples of Mine. (8:31)

If you are Abraham's children, **do the deeds of Abraham**. (8:39)

If God were your Father, **you would love Me**. (8:42)

If you love Me you will keep My Commandments (14:15; 1 Jn. 5:1-3)

He who is of God hears the words of God. (8:47)

Rejoice and be glad like Abraham (8:56) (1 Peter 1:6-9)