

Lighthouse Bible Church

September 1st, 2013

John 8: 48 – 59 *Scripture Reading Hebrews 11: 8 - 19*

‘Before Abraham was, I AM’

Stand – Read – Pray

Jesus has been talking to the religious leaders of Israel and He told them ‘if you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed’. But He says in Verse 37 ‘but you seek to kill Me’ and the reason is ‘because My word has no place in you’. In other words, you are not My disciples and consequently God and Abraham are not your Father.

Jesus said in Verse 42 ‘if God were your Father you would love Me’ but you don’t love Me, you want to kill Me and that is evidence that you have another Father ‘you are of your father the devil’ and you want to do what he wants you to and that is to kill Me.

Jesus concludes in Verse 47 by saying ‘He who is of God hears God’s words. Therefore you do not hear because you are not of God’. Over and over again Jesus restates that it is always your understanding of, your abiding in, and your receiving of His words that proves your relationship with God.

Jesus is going to state the importance of His words in Verse 51 when He tells them ‘if anyone keeps My word he shall never see death’. The word of God is of absolute importance in showing that we are His disciples by abiding in it, that we live like His disciples because His words is in us, has a place in us, that we are of God because we hear and obey His words and as a result, someday, by His words, we will never taste death, spiritual death.

What He has in essence told these unbelieving religious Jews is that they are not His disciples, they do not know the truth and they are in bondage to their sin and that their father is the devil and they do his bidding because they are not of God because they do not hear the truth of His words.

So we see in Verse 48 how they respond to that confrontation and it ends up in them wanting to kill Him right there in the temple in front of everyone. This is their ultimate rejection of Him and from this point on Jesus begins a more private ministry with His closest disciples.

But before we look at that I just want to go back and address what I purposely did not address last time in Verse 46 where it says ‘**which of you convicts Me of sin?**’ I want to look at that for just a brief moment because it is a vital doctrine that you must hold to; and that is the sinlessness, the perfect holiness and righteousness of Christ, because He is God. *Encounter in Park with young man*

2nd Corinthians 5: 21 says **For He made Him He WHO KNEW NO Sin to become sin for us that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.**

Hebrews 4: 15 says **He was in all points tempted as we are yet WITHOUT sin.** **Hebrews 7: 26** describes Jesus as **holy, innocent, undefiled separate from sinners.**

1st Peter 2: 22 says **Jesus committed NO sin nor was deceit found in His mouth.** Jesus, **1st Peter 2: 24**, **bore our sins in His own body on the cross.** He never once sinned but our sin was imputed to Him, it was reckoned to Him, it was counted to Him, on the cross that when you put your faith and trust in Him, His righteousness was imputed to you.

So Jesus finishes by telling them; you are of the devil and I am sinless and you are not of God and I speak the very words of God. You don’t know Me and you don’t know God the Father and you don’t understand our words because you have a different father who speaks a different language, the language of lying and murder and deceit and that is why you want to kill Me. So they say in Verse 48.

Verse 48: Then the Jews answered and said to Him ‘do we not say rightly that You are a Samaritan and have a demon?’

Since these Jewish leaders could not refute what Jesus was saying as true, they resort to childish name calling to get back at Him. Isn't that ridiculous? They call Him two names ‘**you're a Samaritan**’ and ‘**you're demon possessed**’.

The Jews hated the Samaritans and to be called a Samaritan was an insult. They were saying ‘You are an outcast, You are worse than the worst in our eyes’. ‘You are not a friend of God and you are not a friend of Israel, you are a Samaritan. And if that isn't enough they say ‘you are demon possessed’.

That wasn't the first time they called Him that and it wouldn't be His last. In **John 7:20** they said **you have a demon, who is trying to kill you**. Then later in **John 10: 20** they will say **He has a demon and is mad why do you listen to Him?** In **Mark 3: 10** it says **the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said ‘He has Beelzebub, and by the ruler of the demons He casts out demons’**.

To say He was demon possessed was to say He was mad, He was crazy, He was insane, as many demon possessed people acted in scripture. And that is what they are saying about Jesus. With all the revelation of Himself through his miracles, through His Words and Works and through what the Old Testament had said about Him, these religious leaders conclude that He is demon possessed. That is the ultimate rejection of Jesus.

So Jesus answers the way Peter, in **1st Peter 2: 23** said He would **when He was reviled He did not revile in return, when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously;** and that is what we see Him do in Verse 49.

Verse 49: I do not have a demon. He just simply says ‘I am not demon possessed, I am not mad. As a matter of fact **I honor My Father and you dishonor Me.** No demon possessed person can honor God but you dishonor Me.

Remember what He said earlier in **John 5: 23 He who does not honor the Son does not (what) honor the Father who sent Him.** So Jesus is telling them in your dishonoring of Me you are actually dishonoring the God you say is your Father, but He is not. That word dishonor *atimazo* means to insult, to treat with contempt, or to treat shamefully. And that is what they are doing with Jesus and with God.

Verse 50: and I do not seek My own glory; there is One who seeks and judges.

Jesus says ‘I’m not here for My own glory, to be applauded by men. I am here for God’s glory’. What I came here **Luke 19: 10 says was to SEEK and save that which was lost.**

There is **One who seeks** honor for the Son and that is the Father and He judges Me worthy to be His Son. What did the Father say of His Son in **Matthew 3: 17** and **Matthew 17: 5? This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.**

God, at Christ’s death, **highly exalted Him and gave Him a name above all names that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord to the glory of God the Father Philippians 2: 9 -11** Jesus then says in Verse 51.

Verse 51: most assuredly I say to you, if anyone keeps My word he shall never see death.

These religious leaders who have denied Him, rejected Him, blasphemed Him, hated Him and want Him dead, He offers eternal life to, once again, and once again they will reject it.

Jesus says **if anyone keeps My word he shall never see death**. The only way someone can have eternal life is through the keeping and obedience to the word of God. That word keep *tereo* means to guard, to hold fast to, to preserve; it means to obey. That is always the mark of a believer headed for heaven.

We will all die physically, unless Jesus comes back while we are still alive, but believers will never die spiritually. At the moment a believer dies physically, He enters the presence of the Lord, **2nd Corinthians 5: 8** says, and will be more alive than ever. **1st Corinthians 15: 54 – 56** says that **death is swallowed up in victory** and that victory is **through Jesus Christ**.

Jesus will say later in **John 11: 25 – 26** **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.** . Then look what they say to Him.

Verses 52 - 53: then the Jews said to Him, Now we know that You have a demon! Abraham is dead and the prophets; and You say ‘if anyone keeps My word he shall never taste death. Are You greater than our father Abraham, who is dead? And the prophets are dead. Who do You make Yourself out to be?

They are saying ‘wait a minute, you say that if anyone keeps My word he shall never taste death and yet Abraham and all the prophets are dead’, they couldn’t defeat death, so what are you saying. Who do you think you are? Who are you making Yourself out to be? Are you greater than them?

Verses 54 – 55: Jesus answered ‘if I honor Myself, My honor is nothing. It is My Father who honors Me, of whom you say that He is your God. Yet you have not known Him, but I know Him. And if I say ‘I do not know Him’ I shall be a liar like you; but I do know Him and keep His word.

Jesus says ‘I am not seeking My own glory in what I am telling you. My Father in heaven, God the Father, honors Me, so how could I be demon possessed? The same God you say is your God and yet you blaspheme and reject Me shows you have not known Him at all.

Jesus says ‘yet you have not **known** Him. That word known is *ginosko* in the Greek and it means to perceive, to be aware of. Then Jesus says but I **know** Him. It is a different word that Jesus uses for know, it is *oida* and it means more intimately, innately. In other words, Jesus is saying you only know God intellectually but I know Him intimately.

That is a frightening place to be, to think that you know God in your religion and you really don’t, or to lie about knowing God in your religious practices when you really don’t know Him at all. Either way, you would die in your sin and taste death, physically and spiritually.

Jesus says ‘but I know Him and if I told you I didn’t know Him I would be a liar like you. I do know Him and it is absolutely evident because I keep His word. Then Jesus makes this incredible statement in Verse 56 and 58.

Verse 56: Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day and he saw it and was glad.

Since they were so dedicated to Abraham, Jesus tells them that Abraham even believed in Me and rejoiced to see My day and yet you call Me demon possessed and want to kill Me.

Jesus tells them that **Abraham rejoiced to see My day**. What day is He talking about. Well, not a day in particular but a time frame. That word **day** is used in scripture of a particular day, several days, years and the word time. What Jesus is saying is that Abraham rejoiced to see the time of My coming as the promised Messiah, the promised hope that was promised to Him by God.

That promise would include His birth, His life, His sacrificial death and His resurrection. In **Genesis 22: 18** said **In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed.. Galatians 3: 16** says **Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, and to seeds, as of many, but as of one, and to your Seed, who is Christ.**

The promise to Abraham that he **rejoiced** in and looked forward to was Christ Himself and then Jesus says **and he saw it and was glad**. Well, how did he see the time of Christ? He saw it through the promised birth of the Messiah through His seed that was carried on with Isaac and Jacob and down the line to Christ.

He saw it in the daily animal blood sacrifices for the atoning of sin leading to the sacrifice of God's only Son for the sin of the world. Abraham became a vivid illustration of this sacrifice by the testing of God for him to sacrifice his own son and then he calls the place Jehova-Jihre.

He saw it in the promise of eternal life through the resurrection and **Hebrews 11: 17 – 19** by faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said 'in Isaac our seed shall be called, concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead...

Hebrews 11: 13 says these all died in faith, including Abraham, no having received the promises, but having SEEN them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed them.

And that brought great joy and rejoicing to Abraham, to see the time of Christ fulfilled; in the promises, in the sacrifices, in his own children, in the O.T. prophets predictions and in being a living illustration of God's love through the sacrifice of His own Son. Jesus says Abraham saw it and was glad.

Verse 57 then the Jews said to Him, You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?

Well, first of all, Jesus didn't say that He saw Abraham but that Abraham saw His day and it was not in the physical sense, it was in the prophetic sense of the promises of the coming Messiah. Although we cannot rule out the fact that Jesus, as the angel of the Lord in the Old Testament, may have met with Abraham.

But these Jews were thinking purely on a physical level. You're not even 50 years old and you've seen Abraham? By the way, Jesus was only around 30 years old at this time. Just goes to show you that ministry can age you. Then Jesus makes this most profound statement in Verse 58.

Verse 58: Jesus said to them 'most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.

Jesus again tells them, as He did in **Verse 24 & Verse 28** that He is the I AM of the Old Testament. Jesus is saying that I am the eternal, everlasting God of the Old Testament. I AM. Remember **Exodus 3: 14** where Moses asked God His name.

I was in existence before Abraham ever existed, is what Jesus is saying. Before Abraham was ever born, I already was. And you want to know something? They got what He was saying. Look at Verse 59.

Verse 59: Then they took up stones to throw at Him; but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them and so passed by.

According to **Exodus 20: 7** and **Leviticus 24: 16** anyone who blasphemes God is to be stoned to death, and to these Jews, Jesus claiming to be Yahweh God was the ultimate blasphemy. The only thing is, it is true of Him.

So they decided to do what the law allowed them to do to a blasphemer, take up stones to stone Him to death. They were going to take Him right then and there and kill Him for claiming to be God in human form. But that is exactly who Jesus is, right.

They are going to confront Him with the same thing later in **John 10: 32** after He tells them 'I and the Father are One' There it says **for a good work we do not stone You but for blasphemy and because You being a Man make Yourself God.** That is because He is and to acknowledge or ascribe anything less than that for Jesus would be the act of blasphemy.

So Jesus, because He is on God's timetable and His time hasn't come to be killed, **hid Himself and went out of the temple.** They have rejected Him, wanted Him dead and can't and won't believe that Jesus is God and consequently, as Jesus said in **John 8: 24 if you do not believe that I am you will die in your sins.** That is the fate awaiting these hardhearted Jews and all who don't believe Jesus is God.

Gospel here and closing prayer before approaching Lord's table.

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Introduction and Review:

Verse 46:

2nd Corinthians 5: 21, Hebrews 4: 15, 7: 26
1st Peter 2: 22, 24

Verse 48:

John 7: 20, John 10: 20, Mark 3: 10
1st Peter 2: 23

Verses 49 – 50:

John 5: 23, Luke 19: 10, Matthew 3: 17, 17: 5
Philippians 2: 9 – 11

Verse 51:

2nd Corinthians 5: 8, 1st Corinthians 15: 54 – 56
John 11: 25 – 26

Verses 52 – 56:

Genesis 22: 18, Galatians 3: 16
Hebrews 11: 13, 17 – 19

Verses 57 – 58:

Exodus 3: 14

Verse 59:

Exodus 20: 7, Leviticus 24: 16, John 10: 32, 8: 24

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2nd Corinthians 5: 8, 1st Corinthians 15: 54 – 56
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