

WHOSE CHILDREN ARE WE?

John 8:31-59

Ken Gangel: A highway billboard glared its message:

“WHO’S THE FATHER?

Call 1-800-DNA-EXAM.”

When a mother doesn’t know which of her partners fathered her child, their DNA will help us discover who the true father is.

In John 8, the question “Who’s the father?” takes on new meaning.

“Whose children are we?” The answer’s in our “DNA.”

People use that in a figurative sense in our day.

We all acknowledge the reality:

children resemble their parents.

Jesus makes that point in **his discourse** to the crowd: Abraham’s children act like their father.

Children of God resemble their Father.

Children of Satan act like *their* father!

So, ***whose children are we?***

Jesus’ words & deeds show that He’s *God’s* Son.

That testimony should motivate His listeners to trust Him.

Instead of accepting evidence & trusting Him, Israel rejects evidence, & opposition develops.

In spite of abundant evidence, the crowd rejects Him.

Evidence isn’t the problem.

They don’t believe because they don’t *want* to believe.

People who want to do God’s will recognize the truth.

7:17 “If anyone **chooses** to **do** God’s will, he will find out . . .”

People who want to obey God discover the truth about Him.

Unbelief arises because they don’t *want* to know the truth.

They reject Him because they don’t *want* to trust Him 12:37-43

Rejecting Jesus is a *symptom* of rejecting God 12:44-50

Series of messages & miracles show that He’s God, yet result in greater opposition.

Discourse concerning the light of the world 8:12-30

As Jesus concludes the discourse, many trust Him

8:30 “...many put their faith in Him.”

They’re no longer just CURIOUS; they’re CONVINCED!

Following discourse, Jesus instructs those who trust Him, which leads to...

Debate Concerning Children of Abraham 8:31-59

Jesus speaks to the **CON-VINCED**—those who trust Him.

He nudges them forward, to take the next step, to join the **COMMITTED**—to become faithful & fruitful followers.

Committed followers, marked by desire to live by His Word.

JESUS’ DISCIPLES ABIDE IN HIS WORD 31-32

Abiding in His word transforms us into fol-lowers of Jesus 31 To the

Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching [lit., "abide in My Word"], you are really my disciples.

"Abiding" in His Word, refers to concept of abiding in John 15

=> *"I am the vine, you are the branches, he who abides in me and I in Him bears much fruit."*

When a healthy branch "abides in" a healthy vine, the branch draws from the vine everything it needs to sustain it's life.

When we abide in Him, we draw from Him what we need for godly living.

When we abide in His Word, it becomes source for godly living as faithful and **fruitful** followers of Jesus.

2 additional results of abiding in His word **32**

'Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.'

Abiding in His word results in...

...knowledge of the truth

...liberty

His comment provokes debate concerning Abraham's children, that leads to rejection.

They're agitated by the suggestion that they aren't FREE!

That has to be the height of denial—how blind can you be?!!

—when you consider their political situation with Roman guard patrolling their streets;

Have they forgotten *EGYPT*?!!

—captivity under Assyria, Babylonia, Persia & Greece?!!

They're slaves throughout most of their history!

But they refuse to admit it!

They Claim to Be Free Children of Abraham 33-47

Their response is a contrast with Jesus' call to abide in His Word; indicators of their unwillingness to listen are sprinkled throughout.

The crowd isn't interested in listening to His Word, much less abiding in it!

Jesus keeps pointing out that *they don't want to hear the truth!*

Their Claim to Be Free 33-38

Claim to be descendants of Abraham 33a

"They answered Him, "We are Abraham's descendants,"

Claim they have never been slaves. 33b

"We are Abraham's descendants,

and have never been slaves of anyone; How can You say that we shall be set free?"

As Abraham's children, they claim they've never been slaves!

Jesus offers to free them from slavery to sin 34-38

He's referring to bondage *to sin* & offers to free them.

34-38 *Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, **everyone who sins is a slave to sin**. 35 Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. 36 "So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. 37 "I know you are Abraham's descendants. Yet you are*

ready to kill Me, because you have no room for my word [**“My word doesn’t fit in your life!”**]
 38 “I am telling you what I have seen in the Father’s presence, And you do what you have heard from your father.”

They aren’t interested in the freedom Jesus offers!

They refuse to acknowledge that they are slaves to sin.

Addicts or alcoholics struggle, not wanting to admit it

–1st step to healing:

admit we’re enslaved.

That’s our struggle—we’re ALL SLAVES OF SIN.

But **we don’t want to admit it!**

Jesus observes:

They used word “offspring/ descendants” (lit., “Seed”).

Jesus responds: You are

Abraham’s “seed,”

but not his sons.

You are his descendants, but not his children.

Their Claim to Be Children of Abraham 39-47

39a “Abraham is our father,” they answered.”

He challenges claim to be *children* of Abraham 8:39-59

Children= “like father, like son!”

Abraham’s children imitate Abraham’s actions

39b “If you were Abraham’s children,” said Jesus, then you would do the things Abraham did.

When Abraham heard the truth, though living in a pagan world, he responded in obedience.

That was his distinguishing mark—it became his DNA.

Abraham wanted to hear and obey God’s Word.

If they’re truly his children, they’ll have same desire.

They don’t!! **40-41** Contrast: “As it is, **you are deter-mined to kill Me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God; Abraham did not do such things.** ⁴¹“You are doing the things your own father does.”

Instead of responding as Abraham did, they’re doing the opposite!

They want to *kill* the messenger!

Satan’s children imitate Satan’s actions 40-47

Desire to kill someone for revealing God’s truth didn’t come from Abraham, but a different father 40-41a

Abraham’s children accept Him as Abraham did.

They reject Him; they’re Satan’s children, not Abraham’s.

The crowd claims to be children of God 41b

“We are not illegitimate children,” they protested. “The only Father we have is God himself.”

God's children love the One He sends 42 Jesus said to them, *"If God were your Father, you would love Me; for I came from God and now am here. I have not come on My own; but He sent Me."*

Satan's children can't stand to listen to God's Word

43-44 *"Why do you not understand what I am saying? Because you are unable to hear My word. 44 "You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language; for he is a liar, and the father of lies."*

Because Jesus speaks the Word of God, Satan's children refuse to listen

45-47 *"Yet because I tell you the truth, you do not believe Me. 46 "Can any of you prove me guilty of sin? If I am telling the truth, why don't you believe Me? 47 "He who belongs to God hears what God says. The reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God."*

God's Children Want to Hear God's Word 47

"People who belong to God listen to what God says!"

Crowd doesn't listen to God,

because they don't belong to God.

Crowd doesn't want to listen to God's Word,

much less abide in it!

They show they aren't really God's children, nor even Abraham's children!

In contrast, Jesus calls those who trust Him to become His followers.

That reminds us of what Jesus says at beginning! =>

JESUS' FOLLOWERS ABIDE IN HIS WORD 31-32

People who want to be His followers not only *listen* to His Word, they *ABIDE* in it!

If we want to be His faithful & fruitful followers, we'll draw from His Word what sustains our life!

Christians can be tempted to conform the teaching of the Bible to the consensus of our the day. As that consensus shifts, we're told:

Bible must be made relevant to changing circumstances.

The old ways can no longer be expected to bear fruit;

new ways must be adopted to make faith appealing.

We must interpret the Bible in thought forms of the consensus and present a world view more in keeping with the spirit of the world.

Faithful followers of Jesus were persecuted, because their world view broke ranks with the consensus.

They're determined to conform their life to what GOD says!

Jesus' faithful followers must allow God's Word to speak to our culture, rather than allow truth to be swallowed up by culture's views!

That requires continuous exposure to God's Word; & reflection on what God says.

Jesus will NEVER be satisfied to have His followers define our lifestyle by popular consensus.

Those who "abide in His Word" are transformed into faithful & fruitful followers of Jesus,

Are we content with just being **CONVINCED**? "I'm saved & glad I am!"

Or are we ready to take the next step? Ready to join the **COMMITTED**?

Are we ready to become faithful and fruitful followers of Christ?

Jesus says there's only one way to get there: **"Abide in My Word!"**

That requires us to draw from His Word what sustains our life! —allowing it to control our words, thoughts & actions.

It's one thing to be **convinced** the Bible is God's Word; it's our final authority.

It's another to be **committed** to do what it says—in every area of our life!

Satan's Children Reject God's Son 8:48-59

When they challenge His Word, Jesus responds by affirming again Who He is.

The Jews answered him, "Aren't we right in saying that you are a Samaritan & demon-possessed?" ⁴⁹*"I'm not possessed by a demon," said Jesus, "but I honor my Father & you dishonor me. ⁵⁰I'm not seeking glory for myself; but there is one who seeks it, & he is the judge. ⁵¹I tell you the truth, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death."* ⁵²*At this the Jews exclaimed, "Now we know that you are demon-possessed! Abraham died & so did the prophets, yet you say that if anyone keeps your word, he will never taste death. ⁵³Are you greater than our father Abraham? He died, & so did the prophets. **Who do you think you are?"*** ⁵⁴*Jesus replied, "If I glorify myself, my glory means nothing. My Father, whom you claim as your God, is the one who glorifies me. ⁵⁵Though you do not know him, I know him. If I said I did not, I would be a liar like you, but I do know him & keep his word. ⁵⁶Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it & was glad."* ⁵⁷*"You are not yet 50 yrs old," the Jews said to him, "& you have seen Abraham!"* ⁵⁸*"I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!"* ⁵⁹*At this, they picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds.*

When Christ claims to be eternal, which presupposes that He is God, the people try to stone Him.

God again protects Him from the crowd & He walks away.

HOW WILL WE RESPOND TO JESUS' CLAIM?

Will we join the crowd?

Or will we trust Him & receive life?

WHOSE CHILDREN ARE WE?

If we want to be His faithful followers, we will draw from His Word what sustains our life!

WHOSE CHILDREN ARE WE?

Is GOD your Father? Have you recognized His Son & trusted Him?

Or, is Satan your father?

Are you rejecting the Son; trying to earn your own way into heaven?

If God is our Father, then heaven is our home.

If Satan is our father, then hell is our destiny.

WHOSE CHILD ARE YOU?