

## Descendants of Abraham, Children of the Devil

John 8.33-47

Jesus told Jews who believed in Him that they could be set free. Jewish leaders said they didn't need to be freed, but Jesus meant freedom from sin. The Jews claimed their spiritual "father" was Abraham or God, but Jesus exposes their lie, and reveals who their true spiritual "father" is...

- Slaves who think they are free (33-38)
  - Context: Who is Jesus talking to?
  - A 'last gasp' gospel message...
- Who's your father? Not Abraham! (39-41a)

*The lie of self-righteous religion*

- Who's your father? Not God! (41b-43)

*The lie of "God" on our own terms*

- Who's your father? The devil! (44-47)

*Who are you really following?*



1. In order to avoid misinterpreting John 8.33-47, we must understand who Jesus is talking to. The text says, "They answered Him..." Who is "they"? Some think these are the same Jews who believed in Jesus in v30, and who He spoke to in vv31-32. Is this possible? Read v46. Do the Jews Jesus is talking to *now* believe in Him or not? If these aren't believing Jews, who are they? Who has been opposing Jesus since He arrived in Jerusalem (from John 7.10 on)? Who does 'they' or 'them' refer to in John 8.6, 9, 10, 13-14, 19, 21-22, 25, 27. Jews who didn't believe in Jesus – the scribes and Pharisees – hated what He said to those who believed in Him (31-32). Why?
2. In v33 the Jewish leaders say, "We are Abraham's descendants and have never yet been enslaved to anyone." Is that true? Regardless, they misunderstood Jesus' meaning: He was talking about freedom from *sin*. What desire of theirs showed that they were sinners (v37)!
3. In v38, the words "My" and "your" (preceding "father") are *not* in the original Greek New Testament (if they are in your Bible, they should be italicized). Also, in the phrase "you do the things which you heard..." the verb translated "do" (ποιεῖτε, *poieite*) is either indicative (a statement of fact – 'this is what you do') or imperative (a command – 'Do this!'). Literally, the verse reads: "The things I have seen with the father, I speak; you therefore, the things you have heard from the father, you do." How do you read it?
4. When the Jews said, "Abraham is our father" (v39) what were they trying to claim for themselves? How does Jesus dispel their claim?
5. The Jews said, "We have one father: God" in v41. How does Jesus prove that God is *not* their 'father' in vv42 and 47?
6. It seems harsh (the truth often is), but Jesus bluntly declares that the 'father' of these unbelieving Jews is the devil (v44). What proves it? What are the results of being a child of the devil, and not God?