



Sunday, February 21, 2021

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Gospel of John Series, Sermon #31 “Who Is Your Father?” John 8:31-47 (King James Version)

This morning we continue our journey through the great Gospel of John. Written by the last disciple on earth, he probably lived into his nineties which was almost unheard of two thousand years ago. By God’s grace, He gave John an extra long life. Fifty years before he wrote this Gospel, he walked with Jesus in ministry. He heard Him speak and heard the word and truth of God from Jesus’ mouth. John saw people raised from the dead; while standing by Jesus’ mother, Mary, he saw Him die on the cross. He was there to enter the empty tomb after Jesus rose from the dead. During those years, the memories percolated in John’s mind. God moved in his heart for him to pen the account of Jesus’ life—the “high water” marks of His ministry. John obeyed and wrote this Gospel with one thought in mind—to write the witness of Jesus Christ so that anyone who reads it can come to Him as Savior and Lord (John 20:30-31). There are great statements of faith in this book such as John 3:16 as well as an invitation to the Lord Jesus Christ.

As Chapter 8 begins, Jesus forgives a woman caught in adultery. A team of religious leaders—scribes and Pharisees—dragged her before Jesus. It was more about Him than her; it was a test of what Jesus would do with someone in sin—they wanted to trap Him. These men called upon the law of God which says to stone her to death as a sinner. By God’s wisdom, Jesus says to them as they held stones in their hands “The one of you who is without sin cast the first stone.” Stones began falling to the ground because not one could throw a stone knowing he, too, was a sinner. As this crowd of angry people were convicted, they melted away from Jesus and the woman, and they were alone. He asked her “Who is here to condemn you?” She said “No one, Lord.” He said “I don’t condemn you either; I forgive you.” He was the only one who could condemn; the only one without sin. She called Him “Lord” which meant she accepted Him as her Savior. As He sent her on her way, He said “If I am truly your Lord, go and sin no more.” When you know Me, your life is going to change. This is still true two thousand years later—when you know Him, you’ll live in His will and not your own. We grow in that; it’s called sanctification and every day we should be growing in His will, not ours. If you’ve never come to Jesus as your Savior, no matter where you are, where you’re from, how much sin is in your background, Jesus, through His cross, **will** forgive you. Jesus will not condemn you; He will accept you and make you His son or daughter because He died on the cross to take your sin away. I know that is true because He took my sin away when I simply said as a boy, “Lord Jesus, I accept You as my Savior; I want to live for you.” The same can be true for you **today** if you say yes.

As this woman leaves Jesus, the crowd comes back again. There’s a mixture of people—some believe on Him as Lord and Savior; some are doubters who wonder who He is; others reject and hate Him and are devising a plan to kill Him. In my last sermon we covered verses 12-30, as Jesus relates to the Pharisees. Why do they want to see him dead? Because He pointed them out as fakes and phonies. Although they were teachers of the law of God to the nation of Israel, they didn’t know the God of the word. He said they were lost, dead, and godless men. Read John 8:24 where Jesus says **“I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he ye shall die in your sins.”** Jesus gives them the

truth that they could not hide behind the façade of being a “dressed up” teacher of the law with a lost heart. As we start today’s passage, read verses 31-32. **“³¹Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; ³²And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”** Jesus is speaking to young believers saved by grace who entrusted their lives to Him. He tells them to continue in the Word of God as you read it and hear it. Remember, these men did not have the New Testament; it hadn’t been written. They had the Old Testament as we know it—words of prophets and of law. They also had the teaching of the apostle and disciples who were teaching them the truth of God. Jesus tells them to follow Him in discipleship and ministry. When you follow the word of God and the truth of God, that word will make you free. Free of what? How does the Word of God free us? It frees us from sin, from guilt that sin brings and lays on our shoulders. It frees us to follow the will, the path, and the ministry of Jesus. We can’t follow His path as a lost person.

We know this Word (holding up the Bible) is the Word of truth and is unchangeable, immutable, and will not be revised or changed. The unsaved world says truth is relative and can be changed. We can move with the wave of how people feel truth is. One example I use is the institution of marriage. In Genesis 2:24 God sets the parameters for all time: “A man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.” They’re one family, one couple emotionally, spiritually, and physically—married in the eyes, grace, and love of God. Marriage will never change by His definition. Yet in our modern world, they says let’s redefine what marriage is. God has defined it as a man and woman who commit themselves to each other for a lifetime. The world wants to change it to say whoever loves another can get married if they’re the same sexual being. God’s Word says **absolutely not!** It’s not our place nor our right to change the Word of God. If we’re true disciples, we won’t tamper with it. Jesus says if we follow His Word, it frees us from sin, guilt, and repression from being jerked around by a fickle world. What the world says is truth today might not be truth tomorrow. Jesus says follow the truth of God because it will never change; it’s going to be an anchor and the island of truth you will stand on for all eternity. If you read the Word today and commit it to your heart and mind, you can carry it forever because it will not fade away and will not change. We want to follow this His Word; it’s our road map for our life and church.

Continuing with verse 33, the audience changes—it’s not the believers in verse 32; it’s the lost, godless men speaking to Jesus. He refers to them in verse 37. This study can be very complicated in places, but in true study of the Word we need to understand who’s speaking to Jesus and who He replies to. The Pharisees are now in control of the conversation—godless, lost men. Let’s continue with verses 33-47. **³³They answered him, We be Abraham’s seed and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free? ³⁴Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. ³⁵And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever. ³⁶If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. ³⁷I know that ye are Abraham’s seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you. ³⁸I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father. ³⁹They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham’s children, ye would do the works of Abraham. ⁴⁰But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham. ⁴¹Ye do the deeds of your father.** Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God. **⁴²Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would**

love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself but he sent me. ⁴³Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word. ⁴⁴Ye are of your father, the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning and abode not in the truth because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. ⁴⁵And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not. ⁴⁶Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me? ⁴⁷He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God."

I don't know if you grasp the context of this Scripture, but it's "red hot!" As Jesus talks about true freedom, the Pharisees say we are free because Abraham is our father. We're the Jews and favored by God. Read verse 34. Jesus says it doesn't matter who you are—Jew or Gentile, rich or poor, famous or a face in the crowd—if you commit sin, you're a servant of sin. Your life is outside of God; you're lost, hopeless, not free. You're surrounded by prison bars of sin you can't get out of by yourself. Much of the world is in that prison today because much of the world does not have Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. My wife, Gwen, likes to watch those home makeover shows which show a husband and wife who take a dump and transform it into a beautiful home. One recent episode featured a couple walking through a house with the man who was going to live there. He said I don't care much it costs; I have enough money for you to do whatever you want. The couple was awed by this and created a lovely home. As I watched this program, the spirit of God dealt with me saying this man might have all the money in the world but he's in prison. It was easy to note that he did not know Jesus as Lord and Savior. As the show ended, I mentally prayed that someone would go by that home and tell the man the beautiful way to heaven. He may have all the world has to offer but he doesn't have life and is in prison. You may know someone like this in your life; there's one solitary way to escape that prison: Jesus Christ, the way, the truth, and the life. No man comes to the Father, except through Him. That's the truth. We see it stated from the Old Testament to the closing page of the New Testament. Jesus is the way—the only way. The world says there's plenty of other ways. In my membership class this morning, I related that some people say God sits on top of a mountain. There are roads leading to the top, and whichever one you choose will lead you to the top. That's not true. The Bible says there's one exclusive route to Father God—through Jesus, His Son, the Christ, and we believe it.

Read verse 36. Jesus says I follow my Father God who is the way and the one road to freedom. That's the message the whole world needs to hear; we cannot cease to preach and witness it! I love that we come and worship together—we're family together. Our in-person worship numbers are increasing, and I'm grateful to those who join in media worship. But the message is not contained in the sanctuary or in the home; we take it to the lost world where it's needed. We're representatives and witnesses who convey that message.

Read verses 38-39. Jesus says again I'm following my Father. He sent Me, the Son, the Lamb of God, to this ministry and you Pharisees follow your father. They say we follow our father, Abraham; we're the chosen nation. Jesus says no; Abraham is not your true father. If he was your father, you'd act like him. Abraham was a deeply godly and righteous man; Scripture calls him the "friend of God." You Pharisees don't act like him at all! If you were his children, you'd be lifting me up and not trying to kill me. Read verses 44-45. These statements did not endear the Pharisees and scribes to Jesus. They could have made a decision to change course and accept the Savior. Instead, their hearts grew harder and harder against

Him, and their hatred deepened. The Pharisees were powerful, popular, rich, and respected men among the Jews; they were considered royalty of the Jewish line. But Jesus did not sugar coat the truth. He did not cower to tell them you were lost and were sons of Satan. If you continue to follow him, you'll live in Satan's home which is hell. That's where our Scripture ends today; I know it's an uncomfortable place. But here's the truth of the church of Jesus Christ cannot miss: Read verses 31-32. Church, we must continue to preach and teach that Gospel, that good news! We will stand on the truth about marriage, about the sanctity of life. Babies belong to God, and **not** to an abortionist! We will acknowledge that Satan is absolutely alive and well. On his agenda, he wants to drag multitudes to his future home which he knows will be hell. When Jesus spoke this truth in today's passage, He was not popular with those men; we see this throughout the eighth chapter of John. These people wanted to kill Him because He spoke the truth, but He would not compromise it. In this modern day when we preach and teach the Word of God, we will not be popular in a lost world. A lost world won't pat us on the shoulders for preaching the truth; they would love to erase this word which we see, sadly, has been erased in the classroom and law books of the United States. Woe be to the preacher in the church who molds the word to suit the world. We stand uncompromisingly on the truth of God here. We continue to send missionaries around the world because the world needs to hear the truth of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

I can promise you this: as we stand, we'll not always be applauded by the world but it will please the Lord. It will invite His blessing and favor upon the people who will stand on His word alone; I want us to be that congregation. It's not just a commitment of our four ministers of the Gospel here, of the deacons here, or certain groups—it has to be a commitment of us all. We all agree that we will resolutely stand on the Word of God alone, even when it's not popular. I pray we'll rededicate our lives to be the church of Jesus Christ—that all of us will stand on His word alone. I pray this road map, the Bible, holds us together.

If you've never come to Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, this is your truth today and I want you to hear it. If you should die within the next minute without Jesus, the Bible says you will inherit hell as your home forever. I can't change that; Jesus would not change that. The good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is that this moment you can say yes to Him as your Savior. You can say yes, Lord, I believe You died on the cross for me—the perfect Lamb of God who took a sinner's place. You shed Your blood and died that I might be forgiven. You rose from the grave so I would have eternal life. Lord, I believe that Jesus is standing before You right now with this invitation. Praise God, He allows me to speak it. If you need Him, come. He wants you as His son or daughter; He's moved the mountain of sin and unlocked its prison door that you might be free indeed. But you have to say yes; you have to say “Lord” to be free.

Let Us Pray: Our Father, our God, thank You for these moving words today. Thank You, Father, that we can move out of Satan's house and into the Father's house simply by calling Jesus “Lord, Savior, the God of our life.” That invitation is open to every single person. Just as Jesus did not condemn the adulterous woman when she said “Lord,” He will not condemn us if we call Him “Lord, Savior” and walk with Him. Thank You that the invitation is open to every person regardless of color, nation, who we are, or the depth of our sin and can say Yes to Jesus. I pray there's someone who hears these words will say Yes and make that eternal commitment before this service ends. I pray for we who are believers will live by those words Jesus spoke in verses John 8:31-32 that we'll abide by it, minister to it, and be free as we serve you. Bless us, Father, as a church; we commit to stand on Your word alone. In Jesus' name. Amen.