

John 8:37–47

³⁷ “I know that you are Abraham’s descendants, but you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you.

³⁸ I speak what I have seen with My Father, and you do what you have seen with your father.”

³⁹ They answered and said to Him, “Abraham is our father.” Jesus said to them, “If you were Abraham’s children, you would do the works of Abraham.

⁴⁰ But now you seek to kill Me, a Man who has told you the truth which I heard from God. Abraham did not do this.

⁴¹ You do the deeds of your father.” Then they said to Him, “We were not born of fornication; we have one Father—God.”

⁴² Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me.

⁴³ Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word.

⁴⁴ You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.

⁴⁵ But because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me.

⁴⁶ Which of you convicts Me of sin? And if I tell the truth, why do you not believe Me?

⁴⁷ He who is of God hears God’s words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God.”

“Who is your Father?” John 8:37-47

INTRO:

Several years ago, Pedro Martinez was the ace of the Boston Red Sox baseball team. When he had trouble winning against the arch rival New York Yankees, he expressed his frustration by saying, “*The Yankees are my daddy.*” The next time he pitched in New York, the fans held up posters that said, “*Who is your daddy?*” Although I may not be using this phrase in the same sense the Yankee fans did, in a real sense, this is the question asked and answered in our text for today.

In this conversation, our Lord laid down the principle that the way that we live demonstrates our spiritual lineage. It was obvious by their response to the revelation of God the Father, Abraham was not their Father. Neither was God their father. Rather, the Devil was their Father.

I. They Are Not the Children of Abraham (v. 37-40)

II. They Are Not the Children of God (v. 41-43)

III. They Are the Children of the Devil (v. 44-47)

I. They Are Not the Children of Abraham (v. 37-40)

“I know that you are Abraham’s descendants, but you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you. I speak what I have seen with My Father, and you do what you have seen with your father. They answered and said to Him, Abraham is our father. Jesus said to them, “If you were Abraham’s children, you would do the works of Abraham. But now you seek to kill Me, a Man who has told you the truth which I heard from God. Abraham did not do this.” John 8:37-40

A. When our Lord counseled those who came to faith to continue in His Word and they would be truly free, the Jewish leaders responded in **verse 33**,

“We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, ‘You will become free’?”

This response leads into our paragraph today.

1. They made a claim to freedom based solely on their being the physical descendants of Abraham. Jesus freely acknowledged that they were physically descended from Abraham. However, in stark contrast to what they should be as Abraham’s offspring, they did not have a place in their hearts for God’s Word. Just as Bethlehem had no room for Jesus, these Jews had no room in their hearts or minds for His Word.

2. Our Lord’s premise became the foundation of the rest of this paragraph. If what the Lord Jesus Christ said and did was a result of who His Father was, then what these Jews did must come from their father. In short, there should be a family resemblance.

“I speak of what I have seen with my Father, and you do what you have heard from your father” (v. 38).

B. His Jewish listeners drew the obvious conclusion from the Lord’s words. They immediately respond, ***“Abraham is our father.”*** We know who our dad was. He was Abraham. While they caught the parallel the Lord drew, they did not understand the point He made. There is a difference between who our ancestors were physically and who our father was spiritually.

1. Our Lord is reiterating something Jeremiah said in **Jeremiah 9:25-26**, ***“Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will punish all those who are circumcised merely in the flesh— Egypt, Judah, Edom, the sons of Ammon, Moab, and all who dwell in the desert who cut the corners of their hair, for all these nations are uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel is uncircumcised in heart.”***

2. The Apostle Paul would expand upon this later in **Romans 9:6-8**.

“But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel, and not all are children of Abraham because they are his offspring, but ‘Through Isaac shall your offspring be named.’”

The children of the flesh of Abraham are the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as offspring.

3. These Jewish leaders believed because they could trace their lineage to Abraham, they could claim spiritual kinship with him. The truth was spiritual kinship comes by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Do you remember Paul’s point in **Ephesians 5:1-3**?

“Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma. But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints.”

Although the Jewish leaders thought because they were Abraham’s children, and thus deserved some spiritual standing in him, this was not true at all. We also have to realize although our mother and father, grandmother and grandfather were all great men and women of faith, that fact does not make us a part of the family of God. We must come to Him by faith ourselves in order to be saved.

II. They Are Not the Children of God (v. 41-43)

A. The Jews protested in frustration,

“Then they said to Him, ‘We were not born of fornication; we have one Father—God.’”

There are many today who are like these Jewish people. They would claim they are God’s children. The real question is: Would the true and living God claim them as His children?

B. These Jewish listeners no sooner get this claim out of their mouths, than the Lord Jesus denies their claim.

“Jesus said to them, ‘If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and I am here. I came not of My own accord, but He sent Me. Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to hear My Word.’”

1. If God really was their Father, two things would be true of them. First, they would love the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus made this argument before. Because they had a love for the Father, they would recognize family resemblance in the Son.

2. This leads to the second mark of being a child of the Father. If they were children of God, they would receive His Word. However, they could not accept what Jesus said, nor what the Word of God said about Him. Remember in **John 5:38** He said,

“You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about Me, yet you refuse to come to Me that you may have life.”

They could not understand what He said because they could not hear the Word.

3. The Apostle Paul diagnosed their problem in **2 Corinthians 4:3-4**,

“And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled only to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.”

III. They Are the Children of the Devil (v. 44-47)

A. If they were not the children of Abraham and they were not the children of God, who was their Father? The Lord told them,

“You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father’s desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies. But because I tell the truth, you do not believe me.”

How is this for a non-confrontive, politically correct statement?

B. He knew the devil was their father because their nature was like his nature. They desired to do what the devil wanted them to do. What are those things?

1. The devil wants to murder. The Jewish leaders wanted to kill Jesus. The devil is still a murderer today. He motivates us to destroy one another. It may not be in a literal way, but certainly by destroying a person’s character.

2. The devil wants nothing to do with the truth. He hates the revelation of God and the Lord Jesus who is the embodiment of that revelation.

3. Satan’s goal is to deceive as many as he can. He is a liar and the father of all lies. He never ever tells the whole truth.

C. Our goal this morning is more than to read the just condemnation of these who rejected the Lord Jesus Christ. What are we to learn from this discussion?

1. We need to make sure that God is our Father and we are His children. Many assume today we are all God’s children. This is never taught in the Bible. The fact is our relationship with God is determined by what we do with His Son. The clear message in this text is those who are God’s children know, love, believe in, and listen to the Son of God. Do you and I know Him as our Savior?

2. We need to be careful to be hearing and heeding the Word of God. Our Lord Jesus repeated in this text how vitally we need to hear and understand the truth of His Word.

“I know that you are offspring of Abraham; yet you seek to kill Me because My word finds no place in you” (v. 37).

“If you were Abraham’s children, you would be doing what Abraham did, but now you seek to kill Me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God” (v. 40).

“Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to hear My Word” (v. 43).

“But because I tell the truth, you do not believe me” (v. 45).

Finally, in verse 47, our Lord said it as clearly as it can be said.

“Whoever is of God hears the words of God. The reason why you do not hear them is that you are not of God.”

Who is your Father?

Hymn #44 Children of the Heavenly Father