

Gospel of John
[Paternity Dispute (John 8:37-47)]

Cameo #3 (8:31-59)

- True discipleship is demonstrated by ongoing attachment to Jesus words (v. 31).
- Jesus' hearers are slaves of sin (v. 32).
- The Jews insist Abraham is their father, and they tie their self-proclaimed freedom to that fact (v. 33).

Liberty (vs. 34-36)

- Jesus is the only One who can emancipate them (v. 36) from spiritual slavery to sin (v. 34) so that they may continue to enjoy the privileges of the Father's house (v. 35).

Paternity (vs. 37-47)

Jesus and the Jews engage in a paternity dispute. Central Question: Who is their father? The topic of paternity is introduced gradually in chapter 8 (vs. 16, 18, 19, 26-29).

- Physical descent doesn't necessarily make one an heir (v. 37; Jer. 9:25, 26; Rom. 2:28, 29; 9:7; Gal. 4:31).
- Conduct reveals paternity (v. 38).
- If Abraham is their father, they should be doing what Abraham did (v. 39).
- Since they desire to kill Jesus, they must have a father other than Abraham (vs. 40, 41a).
- The Jews claim God is their Father (v. 41; Ex. 4:22; Jer. 31:9)
- If God was their Father, they would love Jesus (v. 42)
- The Jews can't hear Jesus' word. Therefore they do not understand it (v. 43).
- The devil is their father (v. 44).
- The Jews were so given over to falsehood, they could not receive Jesus' word (vs. 45, 46).
- They do not hear God's (Jesus') words because they are not of God (v. 47).

Murray Harris: "*Jesus distinguishes Abraham's physical descendants who fail to embody Abraham's faith and obedience, from Abraham's and God's spiritual children who recognize and love Jesus as God's accredited messenger.*"

→Spiritual paternity is proven by the quality of one's relationship to Jesus Christ.

- Abraham's children imitate his faith and obedience (v. 39; see also Rom. 4 Gal. 3: 7, 9, 29; James 2:21-23)
- God's children love Jesus Christ (v. 42)
- Satan's children don't love Jesus (v. 42), are spiritually deaf (v. 43), want to carry out Satan's desires (v. 44), reject God's truth (v. 44), refuse to believe in Jesus or listen to what God says (vs. 45-47).