

## John 8 Chapter Study

### INTRODUCTION

#### I. THE SIGNS Chs. 1-11

#### II. THE END Chs. 12-21

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#### I. THE SIGNS Chs. 1-11

There's a theme that ties together much of what we'll look at tonight – *Scandal*. We begin with a scandal then move on to the scandal of the leaders' rejection of Jesus.

#### O. *A Woman Caught in Adultery 8:1-11*

At this point in his story of the Life of Jesus, John uses the *opposition* of the Jewish leaders as the back-drop to reveal the *glory* of Christ. Ch. 8 begins with a great example of this.

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#### **1 But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.**

In ch. 7, Jesus & the disciples were in Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles.

Jesus used the feast as an opportunity to make another claim to being Israel's Messiah.

This led to another round of hostility on the part of the leaders.

But ch. 7 ends with a *division* among them.

While most of the leaders wanted to condemn Jesus, a small group, led by Nicodemus, supported Him.

With the leadership split, the last v. of ch. 7 says they each went to their own homes.

Jesus led the disciples out of the temple onto the hill where the village of Bethany & the home of His good friends, Lazarus, Martha & Mary was. That's likely where they spent the night.

#### **2 Now early in the morning He came again into the temple, and all the people came to Him; and He sat down and taught them.**

This was probably at the Southern Steps where huge crowds of people could gather.

#### **3 Then the scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman caught in adultery. And when they had set her in the midst, <sup>4</sup> they said to Him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act.**

Meaning they'd apprehended her in the embrace of some guy.

They'd dragged her out of bed to bring her to Jesus.

*Question:* Where's the guy? If they had her, why not him?

This is a set up! They'd known about this relationship & had conspired with the guy to trap this woman so they could then haul her before Jesus.

To this day among the Jews, when there's a moral dilemma to solve, they take it to a rabbi.

Since Jesus has taken the role of a rabbi, they thought they'd found a way to impale Him on the horns of a dilemma.

#### **5 Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned.**

**But what do You say?”<sup>6</sup> This they said, testing Him, that they might have *something* of which to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with *His* finger, as though He did not hear.**

V. 3 tells us the scribes & Pharisees who are behind this.

They were the *strict keepers of the law*.

And they made it clear the law *demand*s the woman be stoned. [Lev. 20:10

Deut. 22:13-24]

So why didn't *they* do it? If justice was so important to them, why drag her to Jesus?

The answer is obvious – Justice is NOT their concern. Trapping Jesus is their goal.

The dilemma they sought to put Jesus in was this . . .

1) If He said the law called for her stoning, 2 damaging results would follow

1<sup>st</sup> – His reputation for mercy & compassion would be forfeit.

While never compromising His personal holiness, He was known as “the friend of sinners.”

Jesus taught that God loved all & longed for the lost to repent & come back to Him.

2<sup>nd</sup> – If Jesus consented to her stoning, He would break Roman law which forbade the Jews using capital punishment.

2) If He said that the woman should be *pardoned*, they could condemn Him of being a law-breaker!

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The Pharisees recognized this as a dilemma they could put Jesus in because of His well known reputation of teaching about the mercy, compassion, & grace of God.

Without ever denying God's holiness, He'd shown how the harsh legalism of the Pharisees & scribes *misrepresented God*.

There was a tenderness to Jesus that endeared Him to the common people.

His popularity with the multitudes lay in His *compassion*, demonstrated time & again in His healing of the afflicted & defense of the down-trodden.

The theology of that time was much like the *health & wealth doctrine* of today.

They said prosperity & health were evidences of God's blessing on the godly while poverty & sickness were His judgment of the wicked.

But Jesus upset their theological applecart.

He undid the suffering of the poor & needy while at the same time warning the rich that they stood in danger of God's wrath.

By dragging this woman before Jesus with such a clear-cut prescription from the law on what was to be done with her, they hoped to place Him in a situation where His teaching about the mercy & compassion of God would be shown to be nothing more than empty words.

They wanted to make Him look like a hypocrite before the multitude.

Or better yet, if He said the woman ought to be let go, they could accuse Him of being a dangerous law-breaker who taught others adultery was okay.

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How will Jesus get out of this dilemma?

Well, we read in v. 6 that as they issued the challenge, He acted as though He wasn't listening, but instead wrote on the ground with His finger.

What He wrote we're not told.

**7** So when they continued asking Him, He raised Himself up and said to them, **“He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first.”** **8** And again He stooped down and wrote on the ground.

They kept pressing the challenge until He stood & told them to commence the stoning, but only if they were in a position to carry out the sentence.

As they pondered this reply John says Jesus resumed His writing on the ground.

**9** Then those who heard *it*, being convicted by *their* conscience, went out one by one, beginning with the oldest even to the last. And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.

Jesus' reply to the challenge delivered by the Pharisees & scribes convicted each them of things in their own lives that were worthy of God's judgment.

But God's judgment had not come – in His mercy & grace He'd not brought on them what was deserved.

Smitten with guilt & the awareness that they'd been shown mercy rather than judgment, they saw their conspiracy with this woman in a new light & went away.

That John says they walked away in order of age, from eldest to youngest may mean that what Jesus was writing on the ground *assisted* in the work of conviction.

Just as they'd exposed this woman to public shame, He wrote something all could see that identified some sin worthy of God's wrath next to the names of each of her condemners.

The word for “write” here means “write against” & was used for a list of charges made against a criminal.

Some commentators suggest that when Jesus first stooped & wrote, He was listing their names in order of age.

Then when He stooped the second time, He added another name next to theirs of someone they'd committed sin with, or a one word summary of their secret sin.

As each guy saw his name, & got busted by Jesus, he turned away.

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While the Pharisees & scribes left, the crowd that was meant by them to be the audience of Jesus' failure was still there, as v. 9 makes clear . . .

**And Jesus was left alone, [by those who opposed Him] and the woman standing in the midst [of the crowd gathered round].**

**10** When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, **“Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?”** **11** She said, **“No one, Lord.”** And Jesus said to her, **“Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more.”**

Wait – doesn't the law require the death penalty for adultery? Yes.

So, is Jesus *breaking* the law here by letting her go? No.

First of all, this woman was little more than a pawn in the conspiracy of the Pharisees to trap Jesus.

That her sin came to light at all was the result of their attempts to trap Him.  
The absence of the man with whom she'd committed adultery proved that they had violated the law in their attempts to trap Jesus.

Second – The rules for capital punishment in the Law of Moses were quite clear.  
There had to be several eye-witnesses to the crime & they had to have a hand in the execution.

If there had been any eye-witnesses to her adultery, they were gone now.

Third – The words Jesus uses here are more precise than our translation suggests.

He said to her, “Neither do I condemn you now; go and sin no more.”

Jesus is not by-passing judgment, He's deferring it.

In accord with the mercy & grace He's been teaching about, He's giving her a period of time in which to demonstrate repentance.

If she takes advantage of that period of mercy & changes, then judgment will be set aside.

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Jesus offered her a second chance.

She'd made a mess of her life. And that mess had put her in the position where she could be *used* by wicked men.

The devil had manipulated her life & thoughts so that she thought she could get away with secret sin.

But eventually she was dragged out of the midst of that sin into the daylight and was put to public shame.

And so it ever is with temptations & sin.

It begins with a temptation to sin in secret, and the devil lets you get away with it.

You steal something.

You tell a lie.

You cheat.

You visit a nasty website.

You drink a bottle, smoke a joint, snort a line, take a pill.

The ease with which you get away with it surprises you.

So you do it again, & again, & more.

And then one day, the manager grabs you at the front door.

A friend you've lied about confronts you publicly.

The IRS audits you.

Your kids stumble on that computer folder.

You get arrested for possession or a DUI.

This is what the devil had planned from the beginning – your shame!

He wants to gloat over you – he wants to parade you before the world & God as another of his many trophies.

But he's in no hurry, so he starts small, with just a taste of *Turkish Delight*.

It doesn't matter where you are in the sin-scenario – at the very beginning when sin is still secret, or later when it's been made into a public spectacle.

Jesus offers you second chance.

The condition is that you repent; turn from your sin to God.

If you will do that, He will not judge you, but will instead count His work on the cross as payment for you sin.

IF, however, you do not repent, then His judgment WILL fall on you.

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This passage has much to teach us in the Body of Christ about how to deal with one another when it comes to sin.

Jesus is the friend of sinners. He loves them & wants to see them come to repentance & faith.

We are not to judge one another.

We must be cautious about being critical & condemning.

As long as we are walking in repentance & demonstrating a desire to follow the Lord, we must support one another.

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What follows isn't necessarily linked in time to vs. 1-11.

### ***P. Jesus, the Light of the World 8:12-20***

**12 Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."**

This took place during the Feast of Tabernacles that we read about in ch. 7.

It was in the middle of the Feast when Jesus went up to the temple mount & during the ritual of the water, referred to Himself as the Living water.

The priests took a golden jar down to the Pool of Siloam, filled it with water, then returned to the temple mount where they poured the water into a funnel that fed tubes in the sides of the altar.

The water then flowed out of the base of the altar, reminiscent of the water that had flowed from the rock in the Exodus.

Jesus then shouted out that He was the fulfillment of what the water from the rock was meant to be a picture of.

Here He makes a similar claim.

During the Feast, 4 large candelabra were lit in the Court of the Women in the Temple.

Their light was so bright it illuminated the entire city of Jerusalem.

It was meant to be a representation of the pillar of fire that led the children of Israel through the wilderness.

Here Jesus applied it to Himself as He had the water.

Just as Israel had followed the pillar of fire to the Promised Land, He was the true light that would lead those who followed to eternal life.

**13 The Pharisees therefore said to Him, "You bear witness of Yourself; Your witness is not true."**

They say that Jesus was making quite a claim – but since He was making it about Himself, there was nothing in it that required they pay attention to Him.

They were saying, "If you want us to follow You, You're gonna' have to do better than just tooting Your own horn."

**14 Jesus answered and said to them, "Even if I bear witness of Myself, My witness is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going; but you do not know where I come from and where I am going. <sup>15</sup> You judge according to the flesh; I judge no one. <sup>16</sup> And yet if I do judge, My judgment is true; for I am not alone, but I am with the**

**Father who sent Me. <sup>17</sup> It is also written in your law that the testimony of two men is true. <sup>18</sup> I am One who bears witness of Myself, and the Father who sent Me bears witness of Me.”**

The Pharisees said that Jesus’ claim to Himself wasn’t valid.

Jesus counters that in light of who He was, as evidenced by both his teaching & His miracles, His claim *was* valid!

But if they required verification of His claim, there was the validation of it by the Father, which was proved at a couple points; at His baptism and at the Mount of Transfiguration.

**<sup>19</sup> Then they said to Him, “Where is Your Father?”**

Implied in this was the rumor that was going round that Jesus’ father was a Roman mercenary who’d raped Mary. Jesus refused to take the bait of their taunt.

**Jesus answered, “You know neither Me nor My Father. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also.” <sup>20</sup> These words Jesus spoke in the treasury, as He taught in the temple; and no one laid hands on Him, for His hour had not yet come.**

The treasury surrounded the Court of the Women where the candelabra were sending out their light across the city.

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While what Jesus said in v. 12 had *special application* to the Jews & the Feast of Tabernacles, it’s *still true* & applies to *all people*.

***Jesus is the Light of the world.***

A marked shift in people’s attitude toward Jesus has taken place in the Western world in the last 10 years.

Until recently, people have generally held Jesus in high esteem.

They might criticize the Church or argue with the basic tenets of Christianity, but they’ve held the historical Jesus in high regard.

In fact, many critics have tried to “rescue” Jesus from Christianity through *liberal theology*.

But over the last ten years, there’s been a slow, steady change in people’s attitudes toward Jesus. Now, many are casting Him as a *comic figure*.

More & more he’s presented as a pathetic, naïve, do-gooder who didn’t really have a clue about what was going on.

Dan Brown’s wildly popular book *The DaVinci Code* which is being turned into a Ron Howard, Tom Hanks movie this year has Jesus marrying Mary Magdalene and fathering a secret bloodline.

A soon to be released TV show has Jesus as a wise-cracking, side-kick.

The point is, the respect unbelievers have historically shown to the Person of Jesus is rapidly disappearing. He’s morphing into little more than a *mythological clown*.

It would be easy for us to wring our hands at this change & assume that sharing Him with others will be more difficult if people see Him as *comic* rather than *inspirational*.

But the fact is – Jesus was a *scandal* from the beginning, yet the Church spread more rapidly in its first two centuries than at any other time in history.

The Church grew quickly when being a Christian was dangerous & scandalous.

Jews were generally *despised* in the Roman Empire, and Jesus was a Jew.

Crucifixion was a *shameful* way to die. Jesus was crucified.

Might & power were everything in the Roman world. Jesus called His followers to meekness.

So why did the Faith spread so quickly when the Gospel was such a scandal?

Because the light always shines brighter in the darkness.

When the world is openly hostile toward God, the line between faith & unbelief is more clear and people know where they stand.

It's time we woke up & realized we live in a post-Christian America.

But rather than wig out and get all upset, let's realize the opportunity that lies before us.

Jesus is STILL the Light of the World!

If the world seems to be getting darker, that only means the opportunity to show forth the life, truth, and love of Christ is that much greater.

### **Q. Confident in His Mission 8:21-30**

**21** Then Jesus said to them again, **"I am going away, and you will seek Me, and will die in your sin. Where I go you cannot come."**

Their unbelief & rejection of Him was final.

Jesus will return to the Father & they will wonder what happened to Him, but it will be too late.

**22** So the Jews said, **"Will He kill Himself, because He says, 'Where I go you cannot come'?"** **23** And He said to them, **"You are from beneath; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. 24** Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins."

There it is; belief in Jesus marks the difference between being saved & being lost.

**25** Then they said to Him, **"Who are You?"**

They asked this because of what He said in v. 24 –

**Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins."**

The pronoun "he" was added by the translators.

In reality, Jesus just said, "I Am" & by so doing claimed the OT name of God.

They understood what He said & were stunned. So they said, "What did you just say? Who are you claiming to be?"

**And Jesus said to them, "Just what I have been saying to you from the beginning.**

All along Jesus has been making claims to deity.

**26** I have many things to say and to judge concerning you, but He who sent Me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I heard from Him." **27** They did not understand that He spoke to them of the Father.

There was a lot Jesus could have done & said in judgment of His critics, but that was not His mission. His mission was to bring redemption, not judgment.

**28** Then Jesus said to them, **"When you lift up the Son of Man, then**

**you will know that I am He, and that I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things. <sup>29</sup> And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him.” <sup>30</sup> As He spoke these words, many believed in Him.**

Jesus continually affirmed that all He did & said was an expression of complete dependence on & unity with the Father.

He said here that the day would come when they would realize their conclusions about Him were wrong.

They would see the truth, but because of their rejection of Him, it would do them no good.

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John tells us that at this point, many of the common people came to faith in Him.

His words brought them to a point of personal conviction & they responded by looking to Him as Savior & Lord.

#### **R. Jesus Brings Freedom 8:31-36**

**<sup>31</sup> Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. <sup>32</sup> And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”**

V. 32 has become a popular mantra of modern philosophy & psychology.

But to hold v. 32 apart from v. 31 is to rip it from its context.

It isn't sheer or bare truth that sets a person free.

“The truth” of v. 32 comes from v. 31.

**“If you abide in My word . . .**

There's the condition; “If”

We must abide in, reside in, be bounded on all sides by, remain in the context of, the teaching of Christ.

**“If you abide in My word – [then] you are My disciples indeed.”**

Being a disciple of Jesus is *conditioned on* consistent obedience to Him.

You know, we talk a lot about being “a Christian.”

In terms of religion, people break down into different labels: Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, Jews, Christians.

Some people think that there's a class of Christians called “Born agains.”

These are the Christians who go to church & read their Bible, as opposed to the rest who are “Americans.”

But in Biblical terms, the issue isn't about being a “Christian.”

That term is used only 3 times in the NT. [Acts 11:26 26:28 1 Pet 4:16]

Rather, the call is to be a *disciple*, a *follower of Jesus*.

A disciple was someone who pledged his/her whole life to be just like the Rabbi!

A disciple *followed* his/her rabbi because he/she wanted to witness everything he did & said so he/she would know what to do when they were in a similar situation in the future.

Jesus affirms the rightness of that here when He says that being His disciple means *continuing in His Word*.

We don't start with Jesus then graduate to Mohammed.

We don't cut our religious teeth on Jesus then move on to other enlightened gurus.



He is the Alpha & the Omega, the Beginning & the End.  
And being a disciple means consistent obedience to His Word.

**32 And**

This “and” links what follows with what came before.

**32 And you**

Who? The disciples who are abiding in Jesus’ word.

**32 And you shall know the truth,**

The truth revealed by abiding in Jesus’ word.

**and the truth [that truth] shall make you free.”**

It isn’t *facts* that make a person free; it’s *truth*- the truth that flows from consistent obedience to Christ as Savior & Lord.

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There’s something I’ve discovered over the years as I’ve followed the Lord.

The more time I spend in God’s word, & the more of it I put into practice in my life, the clearer things become & the more I see the Spirit at work to change me out of the yuckiness of my past into the image of Christ.

I’ve experienced the truth of vs. 31 & 32.

Freedom is in Christ & He imparts that Freedom the more we surrender ourselves to Him.

Bondage to Jesus is the greatest freedom there is.

**33 They answered Him, “We are Abraham’s descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can You say, ‘You will be made free’?”**

The Jews were incredibly proud of their history as the Covenant People of God.

They commemorated that covenant every week in the Sabbath day & marked their deliverance from bondage every year with the Passover.

It was deeply offensive for them to be told they were in bondage.

This is one of the reasons why they resisted the Romans so fervently and why the Romans tended to treat the Jews with kid gloves – they didn’t want to give the impression that they were harsh oppressors or that the Jews were in political bondage to Rome.

When Jesus said they could be free, they shot back a quick, “Made free? Are you saying we’re in bondage?!?!? NEVER! We’re descendants of the great Abraham, the friend of God. We’ve never been in bondage to anyone!!”

Really? What about Egypt? What about Assyria? What about Babylon? What about Persia & Greece?

**34 Jesus answered them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. <sup>35</sup> And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. <sup>36</sup> Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.**

Jesus didn’t even bother to point out their past or present political bondages.

He instead pointed to the most important bondage they needed to be freed from – the spiritual oppression of sin.

They were looking for a *political* Messiah who would deliver them from the Romans.

Jesus *was* the Messiah, but He came with a far more important liberation – freedom from sin.

Their claim to be the descendants of Abraham sends Jesus along another track . . .

### **S. Abraham & Jesus 8:37-59**

**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.

The Jews prided themselves on being the descendants of Abraham, the man God had single out to reveal Himself to & through.

Jesus acknowledged that they were indeed the *physical* descendants of Abraham, but by their rejection of Him, they’d proven they were not Abraham’s *spiritual* descendants.

If they shared Abraham’s faith in God, they would have recognized Jesus for Who He was – God incarnate.

By conspiring to kill Him, they prove their spiritual parent is the devil.

V. 41 reveals the theory on Jesus’ parentage was that He was born of an illicit union.

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Jesus asked -

**43** **Why do you not understand My speech?**

Then He gives the answer -

**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.**

Jesus says satan was a murderer from the beginning. When did satan commit murder?

He murdered Adam & Eve spiritually in the Fall in the Garden of Eden.

He used deceit to entice them into sin, where they died spiritually & the long slow process of physical decay began in creation.

Death does not mean *non-existence* – it means existence without meaning, without purpose.

The dead exist – it’s just that their existence lies apart from their reason for existence.

That’s why some like to refer to death as “*separation*.”

When a person dies *physically*, their spirit separates from their body.

They don't *cease to exist*; they just separate from their body.

*Spiritual* death is when a person's spirit is separated from God.

Since we were created FOR fellowship WITH God, eternal separation from Him is what hell is all about.

The devil's whole aim is to make war on God by attacking that which bears God's image – Man.

Man's ultimate end is heaven where he can enjoy unhindered fellowship & communion with God.

So the devil does his best to keep that from happening by lying & telling people their purpose is something else, *anything* else.

God sent Jesus to unmask the devil's lies, undo the Fall, & restore mankind to its original destiny.

But people have to make a choice who they will listen to – God or satan.

Those who listen to God will come to faith in Jesus.

Those who listen to the devil will reject Jesus.

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

Jesus throws out a clear challenge – “Who can point out a single thing I've done wrong?”

Of course no one stepped forward.

Jesus had made the claim to being God, but making the claim was not in itself a sin, because they all had to admit that in fact, it *might* be true.

That was Jesus' whole point! He'd claimed deity, & they could not identify a single thing He'd done wrong.

On the contrary, there had been a whole lot of stuff He'd done that had been very right!

Tens of thousands of miracles lay along his path.

What's remarkable is that the 12 disciples were standing there.

They'd spent virtually every waking hour with Jesus for nearly 3 years & there wasn't a single thing they could mention that was wrong He'd done.

No one knows us better than the people who live with us.

**47 He who is of God hears God's words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God.”<sup>48</sup> Then the Jews answered and said to Him, “Do we not say rightly that You are a Samaritan and have a demon?”**

This is an ridiculous charge! They all knew He was from Galilee.

And He gave not one shred of evidence of being possessed! He was in complete control of Himself.

He's just leveled such a damning charge against them all they can do is fire off this absurd insult.

**49 Jesus answered, “I do not have a demon; but I honor My Father, and you dishonor Me.<sup>50</sup> And I do not seek My own glory; there is One who seeks and judges.**

Jesus was referring here to the ministry of the Holy Spirit Who comes to glorify

Christ.

**51 Most assuredly, I say to you, if anyone keeps My word he shall never see death.”**

This was as bold a claim to deity as could be made.

**52 Then the Jews said to Him, “Now we know that You have a demon! Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and You say, ‘If anyone keeps My word he shall never taste death.’ <sup>53</sup> Are You greater than our father Abraham, who is dead? And the prophets are dead. Who do You make Yourself out to be?”**

In their minds, if it were possible for a righteous man to escape death, then it would have been Abraham or one of the prophets like Isaiah or Jeremiah who would have made it, but not this upstart from Nazareth!

They put the challenge to Jesus directly – is He claiming to be “greater” than Abraham or one of the prophets?

Now, don’t miss this – it’s obvious that just as Jesus has been saying, they aren’t listening to Him.

Of COURSE He’s claiming to be greater than Abraham!

He’s already made it quite clear that He’s claiming to be God, for goodness sake!

**54 Jesus answered, “If I honor Myself, My honor is nothing. It is My Father who honors Me, of whom you say that He is your God. <sup>55</sup> Yet you have not known Him, but I know Him. And if I say, ‘I do not know Him,’ I shall be a liar like you; but I do know Him and keep His word.**

Notice how Jesus once again links Himself so intimately to the Father.

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Then Jesus really lowers the boom on them . . .

**56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw *it* and was glad.” <sup>57</sup> Then the Jews said to Him, “You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?”**

Abraham lived 2,000 years before the time of Jesus.

Yet Jesus says that Abraham encountered Jesus & rejoiced in Him.

The rulers scoffed at this & said there was no way.

**58 Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.”**

And here Jesus takes to Himself the same name He’d claimed in v. 24 – “I Am.”

Only this time He makes clear what He means by saying that He existed even *before* Abraham.

The Greek of “I am” is “ego eimi” [eggo amy]

The Jews of that time read what was called the *Septuagint*, the Greek translation of the Hebrew OT.

As they read long in the story of Moses’ life, when he got to the burning bush & asked God what His name was, in Greek, they read God saying His name was “ego eimi” = “I am” or as it is in Hebrew “Yahweh.”

Jesus’ announcement here was a bold declaration that He was nothing less than the God who appeared to Moses in the burning bush. He was their Covenant God.

In light of such a bold & confident declaration, they had only one of two reactions:

- 1) Fall on their faces and worship Him; or
- 2) Stone Him for blasphemy!

**59 Then they took up stones to throw at Him; but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.**

As Lee Strobel pointed out in the video last week, those who say that the Bible nowhere shows Jesus making a claim to deity simply haven't read the Bible.

Jesus not only made a claim to deity, He made the claim so clear no one could spin it any other way. The proof of that is the reaction of those who heard Him.