

Who's Your Father?

John 8:39-47

Thought for the Day: We are either children of God, who love and seek to follow the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ, or we are children of the devil, who reject Jesus' message, and naturally do what the devil does.

39 They answered him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would be doing what Abraham did..."

- The Jews were the physical descendants of Abraham, but they were not necessarily his spiritual descendants. If they were his spiritual descendants, they would imitate his behavior. Their character and conduct indicated they were actually children of the devil.
- God's testimony concerning Abraham was that "He obeyed my voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes and My laws" (Genesis 26:5).

40 but now you seek to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. This is not what Abraham did.

- "The contrast between Jesus' opponents and Abraham was sharply drawn: Abraham was not a murderer, yet they sought to murder Jesus; Abraham obeyed and loved the truth, while they vehemently rejected it; Abraham welcomed God (Genesis 18:1), but they rejected Him (Hebrews 1:1-2)... The clear implication, as in verse 38, was that their father was neither Abraham nor God, but Satan (v. 44)." (*The MacArthur N.T. Commentary*)

41 You are doing what your father did." They said to him, "We were not born of sexual immorality. We have one Father—even God."

- "It was true that God was the Father of all Israel in a national sense. But, spiritually speaking, He was the Father only of those who had truly come to saving faith [manifested in obedience to God's commands]."
"Perhaps at this point Jesus' opponents began to grasp what He was implying, that they were children of Satan (vv. 38,41). In response, they maintained that their religion was pure, untainted by idolatrous false religion. Hence they could not be Satan's children, because he was the spiritual father of the heathen. Thus, they asserted with confidence, they must be children of God." (*The MacArthur New Testament Commentary*)

42 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.

- "If you truly honor my Father, you will also honor me: Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him" (John 5:23). "Whoever hates me hates my Father also" (John 15:23).
- If we truly love God, we will also love His Son, Jesus Christ. If we do not love Jesus, we cannot claim God as our Father.
- "It is foolish for anyone to claim to love God and at the same time to hate the Lord Jesus Christ [and despise or reject His teachings. It is a lie to claim that you love God and follow His Word, while at the same time, justifying and supporting the murder of 63 million innocent babies! Jesus would say to such people, "You are of your father, the devil."]
"Jesus said He proceeded forth ... from God. This meant that He was the eternally begotten Son of God. There was no particular time at which He was born the Son of God,

but this relationship of Son to the Father existed from all eternity. He also reminded them that He came from God. Obviously, He was here stating His pre-existence. He dwelt in heaven with the Father long before He ever appeared on this earth. But the Father sent Him into the world to be the Savior of the world, and so He came as the obedient One." *(MacDonald, p. 2138)*

43 Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to hear my word.

- If we reject the Lord and His teachings, then we will not be able to understand what they mean and how they apply to our lives. If we harden our hearts against the Word of God, in time, God will harden our hearts so that we are no longer able to respond.
- "If we fill our life with distracting and conflicting messages from the heroes we follow, the books we read, the songs we listen to, and the movies we watch, we will discover that it is harder and harder to 'hear' God speaking at all. He has not stopped communicating; we are just listening to other voices." *(The Life Application Commentary Series)*

44 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.

- The devil, and those who are his children, are characterized by murder (which would include hatred of others and an unforgiving spirit), a rejection of the truth, and lies.
- "This did not mean that they had been born of the devil in the way believers are born of God. Rather, it meant, as Augustine said, that they were children of the devil by imitation. They showed their relationship to the devil by living the way he lived... The Jews imitated the devil in these two ways. They were murderers because the intention of their hearts was to kill the Son of God. They were liars because they said that God was their Father. They pretended to be godly, spiritual men, but their lives were wicked." *(MacDonald, p. 2138)*

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

- "Those who give themselves over to lying seem to lose the capacity for discerning the truth. Here stood the Lord Jesus before these men, and he had always spoken the truth. Yet they would not believe Him. This showed that their real character was wicked." *(MacDonald, p. 2138)*

46 Which one of you convicts me of sin? If I tell the truth, why do you not believe me?

- "Only Christ, the sinless Son of God, could ever truly utter words like these. There was not a person in the world who could convict Him of a single sin. There was no defect in His character. He was perfect in all His ways. He spoke only words of truth, and yet they would not believe Him." *(MacDonald, p. 2138)*

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

- "If a man really loves God, he will hear and obey God's words. The Jews showed by their rejection of the Savior's message that they did not really belong to God. It is clear from verse 47 that the Lord Jesus claimed to speak the very words of God. There could be no misunderstanding of this." *(MacDonald, pp. 2138-39)*