

John 8:1 Jesus went unto the mount of Olives.

John 8:2 And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them.

Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. At dawn He went back to the temple court. A lot of people gathered around Him, and He started to teach them.

John 8:3 And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst,

John 8:4 They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act.

John 8:5 Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?

Those who copied the scriptures and taught the law brought in a woman who had been caught in adultery and made her stand in front of the group. Then they challenged Jesus. In the law Moses commanded that a woman caught in adultery was to be stoned. They wanted to know what Jesus would do to this woman. (Leviticus 20:10 indicates that both the adulterer and adulteress were to be put to death. Where was the man? If she was "taken...in the act," the man had to have been there also.)

John 8:6 This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with *his* finger wrote on the ground, *as though he heard them not.*

John 8:7 So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.

John 8:8 And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground.

John 8:9 And they which heard *it*, being convicted by *their own* conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, *even* unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.

John 8:10 When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?

John 8:11 She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.

Jesus bent down and wrote on the ground with His finger. They continued to question Him, so He stood up and said, "If anyone of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her." Then He stooped to write on the ground again. One by one, the people began to leave; their consciences were convicting them. Probably first and foremost from not bringing the man she was with. (I've often heard it surmised that Jesus was writing the names and sins of those who accused her. I think McGee is probably right; He was probably writing the Ten Commandments.) The older people left first. Soon it was just Jesus and the woman left. Jesus stood up and asked the woman if anyone had condemned her; she said no. Jesus told her He didn't condemn her either; He also told her to go and leave her life of sin.

Frankly, I'm surprised that these Pharisees didn't act on the law for which they prided themselves on being the experts. Jesus really threw them off guard by turning the focus onto action based on an assessment of their own lives rather than acting simply on the letter of the law. Since God was the originator of the law, you would think Jesus' first priority would be enforcing it. He was more concerned with focusing on the intent of the law. My understanding is that the law was established to provide a basis for right and wrong and to help man see his inability to be a "good" person without God's provision. It also provided guidelines for safety and motivation to live righteously through consequences for wrongdoing. Jesus came into the world to save sinners. He wanted to speak to the hearts of the people. Sin is sin. By examining their own lives, He knew that they would realize they were no better than the adulterous woman. I would sure like to know the untold story of how this experience affected the accused woman.

John 8:12 Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

The next time Jesus spoke, He claimed to be the "light of the world," and that anyone who followed Him would never walk in darkness, but have the light of life. Jesus is not referring to day and night here, but to the light of His presence in one's life or being without Him in darkness; whichever your choice, it is for eternity.

Thought-provoking from George Salstrand:

1. Some light rays have penetrating power--i.e., x-rays.
2. Light purifies – i.e., hanging clothes in the sun.
3. Light dispels darkness.
4. Light heals.

John 8:13 The Pharisees therefore said unto him, Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true.

John 8:14 Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go.

John 8:15 Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man.

John 8:16 And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.

John 8:17 It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true.

John 8:18 I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me.

The Pharisees didn't seem to question Him on the meaning of His words, but the validity of His words. Depending on only His own testimony concerning who He is and what He provides would not be valid in court. (cf John 5:31-38) Jesus basically said His testimony was valid because it was based on His knowledge of His origin and His purpose—something of which they had no knowledge. His knowledge was unlimited; theirs was limited.

The judgment of the Pharisees was based purely from an earthly perspective, as men. He was not condemning any man at this time—but if He chose to, His judgment would be what was right. His judgment would have the confirmation of his Father who had sent Him. Even the law of the Pharisees required only the testimony of two men for validity. Jesus declared He had two witnesses—Himself and the Father who sent Him.

John 8:19 Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also.

John 8:20 These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as he taught in the temple: and no man laid hands on him; for his hour was not yet come.

So the Pharisees wanted to know where His Father was. Jesus answered that because they did not believe Him, they could not really know Him or His Father. Then John tells us that all this was taking place in an area of the temple where the offerings were made. Still, no one seized Jesus because the time was not yet right.

Several times we read this phrase that His hour or time was not yet come or not right. I think there is an important principle here. Until the child of God has fulfilled the purpose for which God created him/her, nothing can happen to that person that will prevent that purpose from being fulfilled.

John 8:21 Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come.

John 8:22 Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come.

Then Jesus told them that He would be going away to a place that they could not follow. They would physically look for Him in vain, and they would physically and spiritually die in their sins. This made the Jews think He was going to take His own life when He said that they could not follow Him. They assumed they could follow Him anywhere He went except to the grave.

John 8:23 And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world.

John 8:24 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 went on to say that He was from above (heaven) and that they were from below (earth). Although He chose to become a man, a little lower than the angels, Jesus, as God, just IS—no beginning and no end. He existed long before He created the world.

He told them that they would die in their sins if they did not believe in Him as the Messiah.

John 8:25 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? And Jesus saith unto them, Even *the same* that I said unto you from the beginning.

John 8:26 I have many things to say and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him.

John 8:27 They understood not that he spake to them of the Father.

Then they pointedly asked Him who He was. He basically said—If you had been listening, you would know. I am who I have claimed to be all along. He would have much to say in judgment of the Jews (and humanity) when He comes as the Judge. The One who sent Him was true/dependable, and He was only telling the world what the One who sent Him, the Father, wanted Him to speak at this time. They didn't understand that He was talking about God the Father (which means they must have not been listening all along because He has identified the Father as the One who sent Him many times).

John 8:28 Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am *he*, and *that* I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.

John 8:29 And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.

John 8:30 As he spake these words, many believed on him.

Then Jesus said that when they lifted up (crucified) the Son of Man (Him), they would realize that He was just who He claimed to be and that He was doing the things and teaching them the things that the Father had taught Him. His Father sent Him and "is" (present tense, continually) with Him. How? Through the indwelling Holy Spirit. Jesus always does what pleases the Father. Then John tells us that many put their faith in Him at that time.

It stood out to me as I read this chapter through this time that Jesus declared Himself to be the "I AM" in verses 24 and 28. (The *he* is in italics and has been added for clarification.) This immediately connects with God's declaration to Moses at the burning bush.

Exodus 3:14 "And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you."

I'm sure they did not realize that He was talking about His crucifixion when He talked about being lifted up. I know we are not being told anywhere near everything the Lord taught. As an ordinary human being, it would be hard for me to pick up all that He was saying at specific times as related in the scripture. Jesus lived among these people and knew how to talk to them based on their culture, their religious training and their language. One of the toughest questions/ideas to ponder is that Jesus is part of a triune God yet a distinct person. When He came to earth as a baby, He came to be the perfect sacrifice for man's sin; this required Him to live a "life without blemish." (Only perfect animals were accepted for sacrifice.) That life of perfection would mean nothing if lived through divine power. My simple logic tells me He lived His human life in the "power of the Spirit" just as we have the ability to do now. It is just that

He knew how to utilize that power to the max. I think an excerpt from my journal on Philippians applies here.

Philippians 2:7-8 “But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”

“made himself of no reputation” and “He humbled Himself” – These phrases emphasize that Jesus came willingly in obedience to the Father to provide the sacrifice needed to redeem man. He affirmed that truth to His disciples during His time of ministry as told us by the Apostle John in one of my favorite chapters in scripture.

John 10:17-18 “Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.”

The Greek for *no reputation* emphasizes the truth that He *emptied* Himself; He lived in the flesh as a man; He lived in dependence upon the Spirit—just as we are supposed to. He didn’t cease being God; He just **chose** to live with the limitations of a man, albeit a sinless man indwelt by the Spirit—just as Adam was created and intended to live. (I know I am repeating myself, but I think this truth is very important.) I think this truth is the basis for Paul’s statement in chapter 15 of 1 Corinthians.

1 Corinthians 15:20-22 “But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since **by man** came death, **by man** came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.”
[end excerpt]

Jesus wasn’t hindered by a sin nature; He had never experienced broken fellowship with His Father. When it came time for His earthly “ministry,” He was blessed with the power of miracles as part of a “proof” that He was who He claimed to be (as were the prophets of old). I also think He came by choice to provide the sacrifice necessary to offer me eternal life, but He could also have chosen at any point to not complete that action. (But again, as the Son of God, we know He would never have chosen to disobey His Father.) It is just beyond my real comprehension to understand an entity that is wholly human and wholly Divine.

John 8:31 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, *then* are ye my disciples indeed;

John 8:32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

John 8:33 They answered him, We be Abraham’s seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?

Jesus continued talking to the Jews who believed in Him. He told them that if they practiced what He taught, it would prove they were really His disciples. In reading this section again I thought of the proof text in 1John that declares continuance in the faith is evidence of true salvation and departure from the faith is evidence of profession but not possession.

1 John 2:18–19 “Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.”

In verse 32 I think He is referring to Himself as the truth that sets one free from sin. In their understanding, being set free implied that they were now slaves, and they told Him that as Abraham’s descendants, they had never been slaves. So, how could they be set free? Paul discusses this subject at length in his letter to the Romans. (See journal on Romans 6-7.)

Notes from George Salstrand re verse 32:

- 1) “know” = ginosko – knowledge gained from experience
- 2) “truth” = alaitheos – revealed reality
- 3) “free” = eleutheros – absence from restraint

John 8:34 Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.

John 8:35 And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: *but* the Son abideth ever.

John 8:36 If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

John 8:37 I know that ye are Abraham’s seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you.

John 8:38 I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father.

Again the use of “verily, verily.” Then Jesus explained that everyone who sins (as a way of life) is a slave to sin. A slave’s position in a family is not permanent, but a son’s is. The son is in the position of heir; this gives the Son the ability to grant freedom—in context, freedom from the chains of sin. Through Christ we can be victorious over the flesh and the sin nature. He will always give us a way of escape.

1Corinthians 10:13 “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.”

Jesus knew they were Abraham’s physical descendants. He also knew that many wanted to kill Him because of His message. Then He confirmed again that He was only telling them what He had seen in the Father’s presence (a place from which He had seen everything). I think He probably used that term because as humans we tend to “believe what we see.” Then He explained that they were

doing what they saw their fathers do; children imitate their parents. What an important truth for all fathers/parents to realize.

Though his audience probably made connection with reference to their human father, Jesus was referencing Satan as used in verse 44 below.

John 8:39 They 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. John 8:40 But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham.

The people really resented this statement. They felt He was saying that Abraham was not their true father. Jesus explained that if they were really Abraham's children, they would do the works of Abraham (who obeyed God through faith). Instead, they were responding with violent intent to the truth that He, the man Jesus, had heard directly from God and spoken to them; they were seeking to kill Him. Abraham did not respond to God this way. Verse 40 gives a clear declaration of Jesus as "a man."

John 8:41 Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, *even* God. John 8:42 Jesus 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.

Jesus continued to emphasize that their deeds were what they had learned from their father (implying again that it was not Abraham). So the people responded that they were not illegitimate sons, they had the same Father as Abraham--God. Jesus patiently continues to explain that if God were their father, they would love Him (Jesus) since He came from God because He was being obedient to His Father.

Jesus makes this statement several times. We tend to concentrate on the fact that Jesus came willingly and obediently to provide our salvation. The fact that He didn't originate the idea, the Father did, makes one think. There goes that limited understanding again. This "three in one" is really difficult. Still it would be normal for the Father (in human terms) to make the hardest, wisest decisions. It is also normal for the child/son to need guidance—especially when the son knows that obedience is going to bring pain and hurt—and separation from the Father He loves, if even for a short time on the grand scale. Jesus at all times is clear on His distinct person in comparison to the Father. I don't think we will ever get a grasp on this truth until we get to heaven.

John 8:43 Why do ye not understand my speech? *even* because ye cannot hear my word. John 8:44 Ye 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.

John 8:45 And because I tell *you* the truth, ye believe me not.

Jesus' patience appears to be tried. He wants to know why they don't understand Him. Then He answers His own question; it is because they don't really hear Him. The reason they are not really hearing Him is because they are the devil's children. The devil hasn't changed since the beginning of this world. He was a murderer and a liar then and he has not changed; he is the "father of lies," the first liar. There is no truth in him. Jesus is telling them the truth, and yet they don't believe Him.

Satan is the master deceiver, and our sin nature is so strong that the truth has a hard time getting through our thick skulls and hard hearts.

John 8:46 Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?

John 8:47 He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear *them* not, because ye are not of God.

Then Jesus challenges them. "Can any of you prove me guilty of sin? If not, why won't you believe me?" Again He answers His own question. The reason they don't believe Him is because they don't belong to God. One who belongs to God hears Him. (A child will listen to and believe his father.)

John 8:48 Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?

So the Jews came back at Him and called Him a demon-possessed Samaritan. (The Jews hated the Samaritans.)

John 8:49 Jesus answered, I have not a devil; but I honour my Father, and ye do dishonour me.

John 8:50 And I seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth.

John 8:51 Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.

Jesus, of course, explained that He was not demon-possessed. He was obeying and honoring His Father. He was seeking glory for His Father and not for Himself. Again Jesus emphasizes the truth of His answer with "verily, verily." Then He tells them that anyone who keeps His word (follows Him in belief and obedience) will never see death (spiritual death).

John 8:52 Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death.

John 8:53 Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself?

Now the Jews get real excited. They just knew He was demon-possessed after a statement like that. Abraham and the prophets had died; did He think He was greater than Abraham? Who did He think He was?

It seems quite obvious that they hadn't heard Him yet; He has identified Himself as the Son of God numerous times. I guess we should not wonder at their stupidity too much. Think how many times we keep on making the same mistakes, the same wrong choices, etc.

John 8:54 Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God:

John 8:55 Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his saying.

John 8:56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw *it*, and was glad.

John 8:57 Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?

Jesus tells them again—*“It is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that He is your God.”* You can't get much clearer than that. God is the one glorifying Him, and God is His Father. If Jesus denied His Father, it would make Him a liar—just like the Jews. He is not going to lie; He is going to obey His Father. Abraham rejoiced in the thought of seeing the Messiah come. The next phrase seems to indicate that Abraham was aware that He had come and was glad. (This implied that He had seen Abraham if He knew of His response to His coming.)

Then the Jews, again with natural human logic, think they've got Him. They point out that He is not yet 50 years old, and yet He claims to have seen Abraham.

Jesus affirms His teaching that Abraham is not “dead” spiritually in the book of Mark.

Mark 12:26-27 “And as touching the dead, that they rise: have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living: ye therefore do greatly err.”

John 8:58 Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.

John 8:59 Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

Again the emphasis on the truth of what He is about to say, “verily, verily.” Jesus promptly replies that before Abraham was, I AM. This was very recognizable as the name of Jehovah God. The Jews had had enough. They picked up stones to stone Him, but Jesus hid Himself and slipped away from the temple grounds, walking right through the crowd.

I think this speaks again to the danger of allowing ourselves to get hardened to the revelation of new truth from scripture or even the clarification or expansion of knowledge regarding biblical truth. They were so ingrained first of all with a perception of the Messiah coming as King that it blinded them to seeing all the other facts that pointed to Jesus as the Messiah. It made it very difficult to believe Him.

Maybe they didn't think of the Messiah as "God in flesh." (cf note at 6:41-43) That would have blinded them regarding His statements claiming deity. I don't know what they believed about the Trinity; I just know it is hard enough for me with all the scripture for reference. Just think—this was a man on earth claiming to be the Son of God and equal with God. I'm convinced the best blessings are reserved for those who are open to continual revelation from the Lord through His word. No person on earth can KNOW it all. There are some things God won't completely reveal until the time is right. The more we stay in His word, the more times we will find ourselves saying—"I never saw that before" or "Now I understand what that means."