

San Juan church of Christ

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What Does God's Word Say About... Which Father You Serve

The scripture text for this article is taken from John 8:31-47. We suggest that you read these verses so that you might be more able to discern the meaning of the verses. Jesus was speaking specifically to the Jews in this scripture, but can be applied not only to them, but also to false religions today.

Jesus told those Jews who believed in Him, "If you continue in My words, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." In order to become genuine disciples one must "abide" in His word, and be obedient to it. True discipleship is not only professing Jesus as Lord, but by action; it is a life one lives, and not solely a doctrine to which one subscribes. Jesus made clear to the Jews what real discipleship consisted of. This is taught throughout the New Testament (Acts 10:34-35; James 2:20-26). The faith that blesses is that which prompts the believer to obedience.

People who live in sin are really the objects of the most advanced slavery, being bound by their passions, desires, and fleshly weaknesses from which they are helpless to escape. Only faithful children of God are truly free, being neither in bondage to the world, nor the flesh, nor the devil; free also from an evil conscience, and anxieties of the world. One who is "in Christ" should not fear physical death for they are made alive (spiritually speaking) through water baptism (Romans 6:4-11).

Jesus told these Jews, "I know that you are Abraham's descendants; yet you seek to kill Me because My word has no place in you." He then told them that, "you also do the things which you heard from your father." The Jews traced their ancestry from Abraham and regarded him as both their natural and spiritual father, and took great pride in this. They believed that this alone assured them of ultimate salvation. They denied that they had ever been in bondage and that Jesus' statements were preposterous. This statement was an irresponsible one and was in conflict with their history. They had been in bondage to the Babylonians, the Persians, the Greeks, the Syrians, and they were at that very moment Jesus spoke, in bondage to the Romans. Through much of their history they were in bondage to idols, and often to the heathen nations around them.

When the Jews told Jesus that "Abraham is our father," Jesus said to them, "You are doing the deeds of your father." They said to Him, "We are not born of fornication; we have one father: God." The Jews, by their disposition and conduct, had demonstrated that they are not the spiritual seed of Abraham (Gal. 3:28-29). Twice Jesus had attributed to them a father other than Abraham without identifying him (verses 38, 41).

Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and have come from God...why do you not understand what I am saying? It is because you cannot hear My words." Jesus' comment to them was without meaning to them because they deliberately closed their ears to any teaching that was disagreeable to them (Matt. 13:14-15). Jesus then said to them, "You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies. But because I speak the truth, you do not believe Me" (verses 44-46).

This past week a Muslim, who pledged allegiance to his father, Allah, murdered 49 people. Remember, the devil "was a murderer from the beginning" (Gen. 4:8). This man grew up from childhood believing a lie because his father (Satan) was a liar from the beginning (Gen. 3:4-5).

The apostles recognized that Jesus "has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead" (Acts 10:42). Every human being, whether righteous, or wicked like the one who murdered those people in Orlando will have to confess "the name of Jesus" and "every knee will bow...and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:10-11). Paul said, "according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus" (Rom. 2:16). Paul also said, "For not knowing about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own [false religions including Islam], they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God" (Rom. 10:3). Jesus said, "He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day" (John 12:48). When "every knee shall bow" before Jesus, there will be no second chances, and that person's eternal fate will be sealed.

Please send any comments, questions, or requests for a Bible study to:

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