

They Picked Up Stones to Throw at Him

John chapter 8 is a chapter full of heated arguments. The Jews are ridiculing Jesus over and over. Everything Jesus says feeds the fire of their anger. They question Him and attack Him, He calmly responds with the truth of God, and the Jews' fury rises. Today we are going to walk through this text and here's what I think we are going to learn:

WHEN THE TRUTH OF GOD IS PREACHED, THERE WILL BE PEOPLE WHO HATE IT.

Jesus spoke the truth, and people hated Him for it.

What I see in this text are 3 major questions.

Question #1 - Are we not right, Jesus, when we say you are a demon possessed Samaritan? **8:48**

To these religious people, Jesus was a liar, a blasphemer, an untrustworthy man, and a man leading people astray. It didn't really matter what Jesus would say to them, they weren't going to hear it. The Jews obviously thought Jesus was wrong and apparently had been calling Jesus a Samaritan. They claimed that they couldn't understand Jesus because He was demonic.

These are people who thought their works make them right with God. They verbally attacked Jesus. They called Him names, but they didn't come to Jesus with the authority of the written Scriptures and showed Jesus where He is wrong. Instead, they just run their mouth's.

(Answer 1) - I do not have a demon controlling Me. **8:49a**

Jesus stays cool, calm, and collected. He doesn't turn the tables and attack them. He humbly answers. He gives them the simple plain truth.

(Answer 2) - What controls Me is a desire to honor My Father, but what controls you is a desire to take Me down. **8:49b**

Jesus said that rather than being controlled by a demon, He was actually controlled by a motive to honor God the Father. Then, He reveals that their motive is not to honor God the Father; their motive is just to take Jesus down.

What are your motives? What controls you? Jesus was determined to honor the Father. We'd be wise to make our motives like His.

(Answer 3) - I don't seek to glorify me, because there's another who seeks to give glory. He is the judge over those matters. **8:50**

God the Father knows the truth of all of this. Jesus didn't need to try to defend himself. God the Father would do that for Him. In the end, the Father will sort all this out, and everyone will eventually see who really is right and who is wrong. Jesus was willing to be patient. He was willing to let God's timing reveal everything.

It's the humble that God chooses to honor (Prov. 29:23). God hates pride (1 Pet. 5:5), but God gives honor to those who make much of God and little of themselves.

(Answer 4) - What is actually right and true is that anyone who keeps my word will never see death. **8:51**

While the Jews were saying isn't it true that Jesus is demon possessed? He responds by saying that the actual truth is that the person who believes in Me and My words will never see death.

What death is Jesus talking about? He is not talking about physical death here. What Jesus would be talking about here is known as eternal death, or the second death, in a place called the lake of fire (Rev. 20:14-15). This is the death He warned the Jews about back in verse 24, with the phrase 'dying in your sins.' Nothing could be worse than dying in your sins. What that means is you physically die having never been forgiven of your sins by God. The Bible would tell us that if you die while still having your sin condition on you, then all you will ever know and see is death, destruction (2 Thess. 1:9), and torment (Luke 16:23) for all of eternity (Rev. 20:10; Luke 16:26).

Christ offers you the complete opposite. How would you like to never see death? How would you like to one day simply leave your physical body and be transferred to a place of glory in the presence of the Lord? (2 Cor. 5:8). How would you like to, according to Jesus in John 11:25, live even if you die? Jesus said, "everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die." (John 11:26)

Would you like to never see death? Jesus tells you how that can happen. If anyone keeps His word, that person will never see death. What should you do? Keep Jesus' word. Absorb what Jesus declared. Believe Him. Trust in Him, and you will escape eternal death. Jesus said this in John 6:47, "*truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life.*" If you haven't placed your faith in Jesus for eternal life, do that today and you will be saved. Transfer your trust onto Jesus, your sins will be forgiven, and you will never die in your sins. You will have life eternally.

The Jews give Jesus 3 responses.

(Response 1) - What you just said, Jesus, about death, confirms our stance. You obviously are demon possessed. **8:52a**

It's like they say, "you're out of your mind! You're a crazy person. You claim that if we take you at your word, we will never die?! What kind of dark, demonic garbage are you trying to feed us?" They missed the invitation to eternal life. They missed that Jesus is speaking humbly and honestly. They missed the grace and the love He is communicating. The most loving thing He could tell them is the truth of the grace of God, and they miss it.

(Response 2) - The greatest religious men of history have all died, and yet, you claim that because of you, there will be people who don't even taste death. **8:52b**

Because Abraham had been brought up earlier, they fire back at Jesus saying, we have our evidence to confirm why we are calling you demonic. Abraham, according to God, was a righteous man, and yet, we all know that Abraham died. If all the great men of God in the past have died, and you are telling us that you can prevent people from dying, then clearly your message is not from God. It must be demonic.

(Response 3) - You think you're better than Abraham? Come on.. He tasted death. He saw death just like the rest of the prophets. **8:53a**

In their mind, the prophets were all just a bunch of guys from history who were all dead, and they had been dead for a long time. That was their theological perspective, but Jesus, who came from heaven, who came from the Father, says, "no, no, no. That's not right." The Jews just claimed that Abraham, their "father," was a dead guy, but Jesus would say, "no. He's not. He's alive." (Matthew 22:31-32)

Question #2 - Who do you think you are? **8:53b**

They say, "You're full of it! You think you are greater than the godliest man who's ever lived? Please.."

For this question, Jesus gives his answer in 7 parts.

(Answer 1) - I'm not on a mission to glorify myself. If so, it would amount to nothing. **8:54a**

Jesus said, "look, I'm not here to make much of me. I'm not here to be self-centered. I'm not the one trying to make much of Me. I am humbly serving the Father." And that is exactly what the apostle Paul said of Jesus in Philippians 2. Jesus made Himself an obedient bond servant of God.

If you make your life about you, it will amount to nothing in the end. But if you make your life about God, putting Him at the center of your life, your life will actually count for something.

(Answer 2) - But like I said, it's My Father that is in the business of bringing Me glory. **8:54b**

Jesus said, "I'm telling you the truth of the Word of God here. God the Father is in the business of bringing glory to the Son. This is not me bragging, it is just a fact. Read Psalm 2, where God's Word says, 'kiss the Son.'"

If God the Father is all about glorifying Jesus, then we should do the same. Make your life focused on glorifying Christ, and God will take you places.

(Answer 3) - You claim that My Father is your God, but you don't know Him. **8:54c-55a**

It's like Jesus told them, "you think you know God but you don't. You don't even know what experiencing a right relationship with God is like. You think you do but you don't."

How about you? Have you come to know God?

(Answer 4) - I do know that God who you claim is your God. In fact, you call Him your God but I know Him as My Father. **8:55b**

Jesus knows the Father. Jesus didn't come to know the Father; He has always known the Father. He is the eternal Son of the eternal Father. He is the second member of the eternal triune God.

He is the Son, and the Father is His Father. Do you realize that when Jesus came to this world and did what He did for us, He was offering for us the opportunity to know God as our Father? And the only way to be introduced to the Father is to come to know Him through the Son (John 17:3).

(Answer 5) - If I told you I didn't know Him, that would make me a liar, like you. **8:55c**

Jesus was not afraid to tell it like it is. He called them liars straight to their face. You claim to know God while refusing to put your faith in Me? You're just lying to yourself. You call me demon possessed? You're just lying to yourself.

If we all get honest with ourselves, we all know that we are all liars. In some form or fashion, we have all lied.

(Answer 6) - But I'll say it again. I do know Him; and I keep His word. **8:55d**

Not only did Jesus know the Father beyond anything we could ever grasp, but He also kept His word. The Bible tells us Jesus never lied, and He always lived perfectly according to the Word of God.

(Answer 7) - Abraham, the one you call your father, looked forward to My day, and he caught a glimpse of My day, and it brought him joy. **8:56**

Basically, what Jesus tells them is that they don't think like Abraham thought. Abraham, being truly right with God by faith, celebrated that day when the Savior of the world would come.

The faith that Abraham had in the Word of God allowed Him to see with spiritual eyes that God would do what He said He would do. God told Abraham that through a descendant of Abraham God would bless the world. It's as if Abraham said, "I trust God so much I can see it now." Abraham lived by faith in Word of God, and that allowed Abraham to see life the way God wanted Him to see it. It brought Abraham joy.

Ron Thompson, the former director of Tentmakers Bible Mission, once said, "faith gives a vision that transcends human sight and time. Faith allows people to see what isn't there."

The religious Jews of Jesus' day claimed to be like Abraham, but they did not live by faith, so they were never able to see what God wanted them to see. They couldn't look at Jesus and see the face of their Savior. They thought their works would be their Savior. They didn't realize that Abraham's faith made him righteous before God, not His works (Genesis 15:6; Romans 4:2). So Jesus gives them His answer, and they miss it again.

(Response) - You're an arrogant young man. You're not even fifty years old. **8:57a**

It's like they said, "if you're claiming to provide an eternal, timeless existence for people, then that must mean you're claiming to be eternally timeless yourself, yet, what's obvious, you're not even fifty years old. You have no credibility."

Question #3 - You mean to tell us you have seen Abraham? **8:57b**

Now Jesus is in a predicament. If He isn't going to be a liar, then He needs to tell them the truth, so what does He do? He gives His answer.

(Answer) - I AM, therefore, I have eternally been existing with the Father. So, yes. I have seen Abraham. In fact, before Abraham came into being, I was there. **5:58**

Ray Stedman noted that "a more precise translation of Jesus' words would read, 'Abraham *became*, but I was already there'" (*God's Loving Word*, p. 258). Jesus says I can provide an eternal timeless existence for people because I AM the eternal, timeless God.

Jesus just called Himself by the personal name of the LORD God. Moses asked God what His name was in Exodus 3, and God responded in verse 14, "*I AM WHO I AM; and He said, 'Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you''*" He knew exactly what He was saying. He said, "*truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.*" Jesus said I am the LORD God. I am the God of Abraham. It's as if Jesus was saying, "I am here humbly serving the Father, but at the same time, I am greater than Abraham, I've always been existing. I am God in human flesh, standing right before you."

(Response) - Let's put this blaspheming, arrogant, demon possessed Samaritan to death. **5:59a**

They had no Scripture to shut Jesus down with. They had run out of arguments. All they knew is they had made their choice. He told them the truth and all they wanted to do was kill Him. To them, Jesus was a blaspheming liar. What about you? Who do you say Jesus is?

Conclusion - Jesus was hidden and left the temple. **8:59b**

Again, it was not Jesus' time to die, and God the Father would protect Him until that day. I don't know what this looked like. Jesus could have gotten lost in the crowds. He could have put on a cloak of invisibility. I don't know. Either way, He was protected once again.

David Thompson made a good point here. He said when Jesus was attacked and walked out of that temple, "the divine presence was no longer in the place of worship."

When the truth of God is calmly and clearly proclaimed, the communicator of the truth can become the subject of extreme hatred and can be attacked by religious people who have determined that faith alone in Jesus is not the way to eternal life.

WHEN THE TRUTH OF GOD IS PREACHED, THERE WILL BE PEOPLE WHO HATE IT.

No matter what Jesus faced, He stayed the course. He focused his life on honoring God.

No matter what you face in this life, you will never go wrong if you trust in God's word and live to honor Him.