

6.25 That You May Have Life In His Name John 8:31-59

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The Truth Will Set You Free

³¹ So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, ³² and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” ³³ They answered him, “We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, ‘You will become?’”

[History shows that Jewish people had been in bondage under Egypt and the Philistines; under Babylon, Persia, Syria, and Rome. JC Ryle comments, “The power of self-deception in the unconverted man is infinite.”]

³⁴ Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices [habitual continual] sin is a slave to sin. ³⁵ The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. ³⁶ So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. ³⁷ I know that you are offspring of Abraham; yet you seek to kill me because my word finds no place in you. ³⁸ I speak of what I have seen with my Father, and you do what you have heard from your father.”

You Are of Your Father the Devil

³⁹ They answered him, “Abraham is our father.” Jesus said to them, “If you were Abraham’s children, you would be doing the works Abraham did, 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. ⁴¹ You are doing the works your father did.” They said to him, “We were not born of sexual immorality. We have one Father—even God.” 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. ⁴³ Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to hear my word. 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 does not stand in 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. ⁴⁵ But because I tell the truth, you do not believe me. ⁴⁶ Which one of you convicts me of sin? If I tell the truth, why do you not believe me? 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.”

Before Abraham Was, I Am

⁴⁸ The Jews answered him, “Are we not right in saying that you are a Samaritan and have a demon?” ⁴⁹ Jesus answered, “I do not have a demon, but I honor my Father, and you dishonor me. ⁵⁰ Yet I do not seek my own glory; there is One who seeks it, and he is the judge. ⁵¹ Truly, truly, I say to you, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death.” ⁵² The Jews said to him, “Now we know that you have a demon! Abraham died, as did the prophets, yet you say, ‘If anyone keeps my word, he will never taste death.’ ⁵³ Are you greater than our father Abraham, who died? And the prophets died! Who do you make yourself out to be?” ⁵⁴ Jesus answered, “If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing. It is my Father who glorifies me, of whom you say, ‘He is our God.’ ⁵⁵ But you have not known him. I know him. If I were to say that I do not know him, I would be a liar like you, but I do know him and I keep his word. ⁵⁶ Your father Abraham rejoiced

that he would see my day. He saw it and was glad.”⁵⁷ So the Jews said to him, “You are not yet fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham?”⁵⁸ Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.”⁵⁹ So they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple.
(Jn 8:31–59).

This claim — before Abraham was, I am — was Jesus directly claiming that He was God. This set the Pharisees off in rage over what they perceived as blasphemy.

Exodus 3:13–15 (ESV): 13 Then Moses said to God, “If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what shall I say to them?” 14 God said to Moses, “I am who I am.” And he said, “Say this to the people of Israel: ‘I am has sent me to you.’” 15 God also said to Moses, “Say this to the people of Israel: ‘The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.’ This is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations.

This is the narrative we see in John’s Gospel — the life and work of Jesus, welcomed and received by some, and hated and opposed by others. The stark contrast between those who love Jesus and those who hate Jesus.

One very clear theme in this passage today is what it means to be a disciple of Jesus, and the role of His word in the lives of those who believe Jesus.

³¹ So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, ³² and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

To the Jews who had believed — Jesus says

- If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples
- Abiding in my word means you will know the truth and the truth will set you free

Today — I want to articulate

- What does it mean to believe
- What does it mean to abide in His word
- What does it look like to know truth and be free

What does it mean to believe Jesus?

RC Sproul - *“It is important that we understand the difference between saving faith and the mere profession of faith - saving faith is the possession of the true believer... We must possess what we profess.”*

John Piper in his recent book, *What Is Saving Faith* – offers helpful clarification on what it means to possess what we profess in faith. He looks at the 602 lenses of the word “faith” in the NT and articulates these essential ideas...

In summary, saving faith is:

- Saving faith is confident trust in what Jesus says
- Saving faith receives Christ himself
- Saving faith is the spiritual sight of the glory of Christ
- Saving faith is the substance of things hoped for
- Saving faith is the root of all God pleasing works
- Saving faith is a supernatural creation of God
- Saving faith is receiving Christ as our supreme treasure, a treasuring trust

What is at stake is not only the sufficiency of Christ's work, but also the worth of it, the beauty of it, the all satisfying glory of it. Or to be more accurate, what is at stake in the way we are justified is the shining forth of the worth of Christ himself, the beauty of Christ, the glory of Christ reflected in the justifying faith of his people. In other words, God ordained for faith to be the instrument of justification not only to magnify the sufficiency of Christ's alien righteousness, but also to magnify its infinite beauty and worth. Faith is not an expedient acceptance of an all-sufficient achievement that I use to escape hell and gain a happy, healthy, Christless heaven. God did not design faith as the instrument of justification in order to turn the alien righteousness of Christ into a ticket from self-treasuring misery in hell to self-treasuring pleasure in heaven. No. God designed faith as the instrument of justification precisely to prevent such utilitarian uses of the work of Christ. This is why saving faith is not only the acceptance of Christ as all-sufficient, but also the embrace of Christ as our treasure. Faith Perceives and receives Christ the sole ground of our justification- not only as efficacious, but as glorious. Not only as sufficient, but as satisfying." Piper

When we think about saving faith in this way, then what it means to abide with Christ, to abide with His Word in an all encompassing way, it looks like we find our everyday life in Christ.

What does it mean to abide in His word?

The mark of a true disciple = abiding in Jesus' word

The mark of a true follower of Christ = Jesus' words find their place in us

To love Jesus = to hear His words

To be of God = hear the words of God

To keep the words of Jesus = eternal life

What is the outcome of believing Jesus and abiding in His Word?

Dane Ortland, *"In our churches today we often refer to the glory of God and the glory of Christ. But what is it about God's glory that draws us in and causes us to conquer our sins and makes us radiant people? Is it the sheer size of God, a consideration of the immensity of the universe and thus of the Creator, a sense of God's transcendent greatness, that pulls us toward him? No, Jonathans Edwards would say; it is the loveliness of his heart. It is, he says, a "sight of the divine beauty of Christ, that bows the wills, and draws the hearts of men."*

The unbelieving Pharisees couldn't bear to hear Jesus' words, but those who love Jesus long to hear His word.

What does it mean to have life in His name? We believe and abide with treasuring trust.

John 3:16–17 (ESV): For God So Loved the World

16 “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

John 6:35–40 (ESV): 35 Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst. 36 But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe. 37 All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out. 38 For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me. 39 And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. 40 For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.”

John 8:12 (ESV): I Am the Light of the World

12 Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

John 8:31–32 (ESV): 31 So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, 32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”