

JESUS, THE SON OF GOD

BIBLE TEXT : John 8:12-59

LESSON 130 **Senior Course**

MEMORY VERSE: "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31, 32).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

John 8:12-59

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.

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

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.

¹⁵ Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man.

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

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

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

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.

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.

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.

²² Then said the Jews, Will he kill

BIBLE REFERENCES:

I The Pharisees' Rejection of Jesus' Testimony of Himself

1 Jesus testifies that He is the Light of the world, and His disciples shall not walk in darkness, John 8:12;

John 1:9

⁹ That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

John 12:46

⁴⁶ I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.

2 The Pharisees reject His testimony, saying that His record is not true, John 8:13;

John 3:19

¹⁹ And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

3 He defends His testimony in that He and the Father both witness of Him, John 8:14-18;

John 5:36

³⁶ But I have greater witness than *that* of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.

John 14:11

¹¹ Believe me that I *am* in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.

Deuteronomy 17:6

⁶ At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; *but* at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death.

4 In answer to their question, "Where is thy Father?" Jesus replies, "Ye neither know me, nor my Father," John 8:19, 20

II Jesus' Declaration that He Is from Above

1 When Jesus asserts that He shall go His way, they question whether He shall kill Himself, John 8:21, 22

2 He declares that He is from above, and they from beneath, who, believing not, shall die in their sins, John 8:23-25

3 He further maintains that He speaks only that taught Him of His Father, John 8:26-29;

John 7:16-17

¹⁶ Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.

¹⁷ If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or *whether* I speak of myself.

4 Many believe, whom He admonishes, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed," John 8:30, 31

III The Son of God the Liberator of Men

1 To the believers He further states, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free," John 8:32

2 The unbelievers reply that, being Abraham's seed, they have known no bondage, John 8:33

3 Jesus explains. "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin" but "if the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed," John 8:34-36;

himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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

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.

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.

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

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

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

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?

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

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

Romans 6:16-18

¹⁶ Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

¹⁷ But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.

¹⁸ Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.

4 He asserts that He speaks what He has seen with the Father, but they do the deeds, not of Abraham, but of their father the devil, John 8:37-44

IV The Accusation of the Jews that Jesus Has a Devil

1 Jesus rebukes them for not hearing the words of God, John 8:45-47

2 He denies their accusation of having a devil, declaring that if a man keep His sayings he shall not die, John 8:48-51

3 They further accuse Him of making Himself greater than Abraham and the prophets who are dead, John 8:52, 53

4 Jesus closes the controversy with the wonderful words, "Before Abraham was, I am," and they attempt to stone Him, John 8:54-59; 1:1

NOTES:

The discourse in this portion of Scripture (John 8:12-59), which Jesus took up before the Jews, was delivered in the treasury of the Temple (verse 20), during the Feast of Tabernacles. And, as often occurred, the declarations which Jesus here made were immediately challenged by His enemies the Pharisees.

The Pharisees' Denial of Jesus' Testimony

Jesus' first declaration was that great truth, never questioned by any genuine Christians: "I am the light of the world." The Apostle John said of Him, "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" (John 1:9). And in that Light men are expected to walk. "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (I John 1:5-7). The Son revealed to this darkened world the Light of the Father, for He was God manifest in the flesh, "the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person." Jesus' chief ministry was conducted in the province of Galilee near the sea where the most of His disciples were recruited; and Matthew, quoting the prophecy of Isaiah, said, "The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; the people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up" (Matthew 4:15, 16).

The Pharisees too saw that great Light — they heard the truth which Jesus preached, they witnessed the miracles which He performed — but they refused to walk in the Light. On the contrary, they sought to ensnare Him with their cunning questions, and bring a charge against Him which would result in His death. On this occasion they rejected His testimony, saying, "Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true." And in doing so they pronounced their own sentence. "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved

abideth ever.

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

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

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

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.

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.

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.

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.

⁴³ Why do ye not understand my speech? *even* because ye cannot hear my word.

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.

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

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

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

⁴⁸ Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well

darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (John 3:19).

Jesus' Authority as the Son of God

When the Pharisees said, "Thy record is not true," they seemed to recall a former discourse in which Jesus said, "If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true" (John 5:31). But Jesus on that occasion was speaking from the human plane, and there existed a maxim among men that self-attestation is not to be received as true. And even from the human standpoint Jesus had a mighty witness, for John the Baptist was accepted by the multitudes as a prophet of God. But on this occasion Jesus was speaking from the divine plane, far higher than the standpoint of men, for He appealed to the testimony of Him who sent Him, even God the Father. Had not God again and again attested to His Deity by the mighty miracles which attended His ministry? His fame went abroad and the whole countryside knew that the blind saw, the lame walked, the sick were healed, and even the dead were raised. No less a personage than Nicodemus, a member of the Sanhedrin, came to Him, saying, "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." "And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen" (Luke 19:37). Jesus Himself said to those disciples who doubted, "Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake" (John 14:11). Twice was that Voice from Heaven heard, "This *is* my beloved Son," and the multitudes were stirred by His teachings; "for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes" (Matthew 7:29).

Yet in the face of all this evidence the Pharisees malignantly rejected Him as the Son of God, true to the prophecy of Isaiah, "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief."

Jesus' Assertion that He Came from Above

Throughout Jesus' entire ministry the great contention among the Pharisees, and among the Jews at large too, was whether Jesus was more than a man, whether He was in truth the Son of God. And this was a vital question, for Jesus said to them, "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." This was the question which He put to His disciples at Caesarea Philippi, "Whom say ye that I am?" And with them it was once for all settled: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

It is just as vital a question today as it was among the Jews, and it is still just as much a subject of contention; for the Modernists, like the Pharisees, have denied Jesus' Deity and have rejected Him as the Son of God. And they too, unless they repent, shall die in their sins.

At this point Jesus said to them, "Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world." And this was a declaration which wrangled in the hearts of the Pharisees, for it cut their pride. The Pharisee in the Temple prayed thus, "God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are." But the Word of God puts us all, in our unregenerated state, into one class. Whether we are bond or free, high or low, rich or poor, we are all sinners. "The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven" (I Corinthians 15:47).

that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?

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

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

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

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.

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

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:

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.

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

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

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

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.

The Pharisees were a self-righteous sect who prided themselves on keeping the Law of God — and self-righteousness is as "filthy rags" in the sight of God. And the abominable pride of the human heart is shutting countless multitudes out of the Kingdom of Heaven. Many a sinner, because of the pride of his heart, will not bend the knee to the Most High, nor honor Him whom He sent to redeem men. The Lord warned the multitude, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 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. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory **of** God the Father" (Philippians 2:5-11).

Many Believers Among the Multitude

When Jesus made the declaration that He was from above, there were many who believed on Him, and He assured them with the wonderful promise, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth, shall make you free" (John 8:31, 32). There were certain unbelievers present, however, who were offended at these words, saying, "We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?" Their whole conception of God's saving grace, in spite of Jesus' teachings, was carnal rather than spiritual, and was based entirely on the fact that they were the children of Abraham, a gross error for which John the Baptist severely rebuked the Pharisees and Sadducees who came out to be baptized of him. John said: "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham" (Matthew 3:7-9). Wherefore Jesus, here, to the spiritually blind before Him explained, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. . . . If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

Jesus Accused by the Jews of Having a Devil

But as the controversy continued it grew sharper, and the anger and malice against Jesus became more manifest. He said to them, "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth. . . . 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." Continuing, Jesus declared, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death" (John 8:51).

And in answer to this profound statement, the angry Jews accused Jesus of having a devil, saying: "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. Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the

QUESTIONS

- 1 Where did this discourse recorded in the eighth chapter of John take place?
- 2 What was Jesus' first declaration? Who denied it? and why did they deny it?
- 3 What was His next declaration? Many believed at this time, but many more did not believe, and opposed Him. Why?
- 4 Much of this discourse centered about Abraham. Upon what did these enemies of Jesus base their hopes of salvation?
- 5 What promise did God make to Abraham in His covenant with him which might have caused him to rejoice in Jesus' day?
- 6 In what way may Isaac (whose name means laughter) have had to do with the joy of Abraham?
- 7 What was the subject of contention between Jesus and the Jews through this entire chapter?
- 8 What statement of Jesus caused the Jews to attempt to stone Him? and why?
- 9 What was the final declaration of Jesus when on trial, which resulted in the Jews' sentence of death?

prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself?" Jesus' enemies were here nearing dangerous ground, for on another occasion when there was brought unto Jesus one who was possessed with a devil, blind and dumb, He healed him, and he both spoke and saw. "And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the son of David?" And certain of the Pharisees said, "This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils." And Jesus, knowing their thoughts, replied: "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men" (Matthew 12:31), obviously implying that attributing to the devil what is clearly revealed to be the work of the Spirit of God is an unpardonable sin. And the Jews well knew that the miracles of Jesus Christ were manifestly the works of the Spirit of the living God.

Jesus' Closing Declaration

Coming to the end of His discourse, Jesus said, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad." And the Jews, still persisting that Jesus was only a man, replied, "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?" Abraham lived nineteen hundred years before Jesus was born in Bethlehem, and yet he had eyes to see His day and rejoice, which Abraham's children, blinded by "the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life," could not see when Jesus was walking in their very midst. On the contrary, their murderous hearts were awaiting the day when they could put Him to death. And they sent officers to take him. Presently the officers returned without Him, and they answered, "Why have ye not brought him?" And the men replied, "Never man spake like this man."

This whole discourse, we have seen, centered around that mooted question: Who is this man Jesus? It was "a subject of contention among the Jews throughout His entire ministry. But some few honest hearts, like Peter, like John, like Paul, settled it upon their knees: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus' closing declaration was, "Before Abraham was, I am." And it was because of His declaration of His Eternal Sonship when on trial before Caiaphas, the high priest, that He was finally taken out to Calvary and crucified.

This is still a mooted question today, and one's eternity is only settled by praying through and having that confession planted in the heart, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Upon this Rock is the Church built, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.