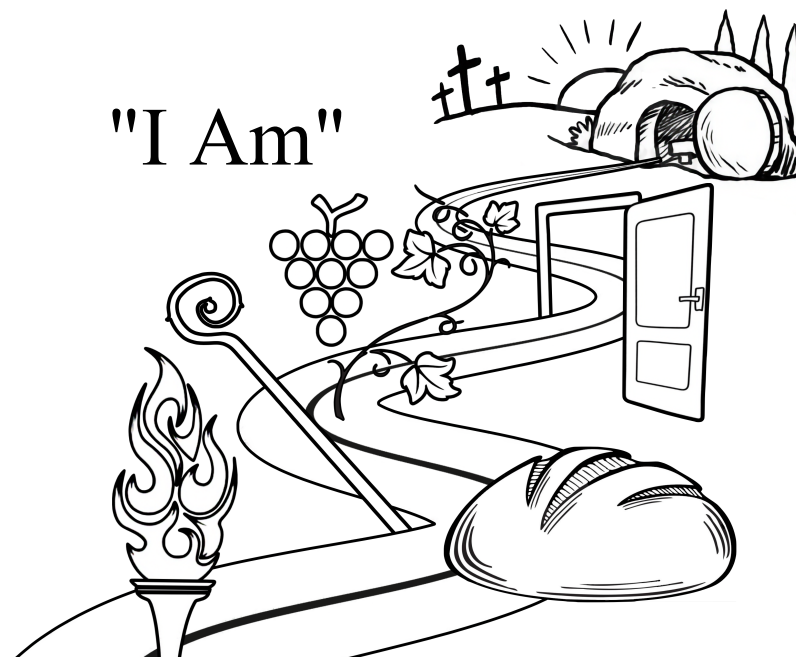


Read John 8:48-59 (*see narration insert*)

1. Discuss the correlation between the Jews' attitude toward Samaritans (illegitimate half breeds) and the rumors of Jesus' parentage.
2. What kind of death is Jesus talking about in vv. 51-53?
2. How does this lesson reveal aspects of Jesus' character or mission?
3. Note Jesus' departure. Can you recall other instances where Jesus left in the same manner?
3. Discuss the parts of this passage that made you wonder, or question.
4. What is Jesus revealing to you about "abiding in him?"



a study of
The Gospel According to John

Summer 2025

Lesson 10

John 8:12-59

"You are a bastard!"—the Leaders
"..and your Father is the Devil!"—Jesus

[1] Jason Ripley, Associate Professor of Religion St. Olaf College,
Northfield, MN. Working Preacher, [https://
www.workingpreacher.org/commentaries/revised-common-
lectionary/reformation-day/commentary-on-john-831-36-19](https://www.workingpreacher.org/commentaries/revised-common-lectionary/reformation-day/commentary-on-john-831-36-19)

[2] The Message Copyright © 1993, 2002, 2018 by Eugene H.
Peterson (John 8:58)

REVIEW:

The following are just a few of the spiritual truths introduced by John's author so far:

- Jesus is God, and was with God, speaking the Word into creation.
- Jesus became human and lived among his people, the Jews.
- Jesus is the revelation of God to humanity, and brings to light these things about God:
 - a. Jesus as Lamb of God and Messiah: God is about to deal with the sin of the cosmos, through Jesus.
 - b. God's Kingdom is one of over-flowing abundance.
 - c. Jesus is the new temple where God is worshiped.
 - d. Jesus is the bridegroom to the faithful, wooing those who are lost, in order to be forever married to and part of God's family.
 - e. One must be spiritually alive (born of the spirit) and "present" to see God's kingdom, and participate in God's activities.
 - f. I AM statements: Messiah, Light of the World, Bread of Life

VOCABULARY:

Judeans (Ἰουδαῖος, ioudaios): Translated often as "Jews" but referred to as decedents of Judah, who settled in the south of Israel. As opposed to those from northern Israel - Galileans

Offspring (σπέρμα, sperma): seed, life produced by seed (vv31,37)

Child(ren) (τέκνον, teknon): son, daughter, (denoting descendants), part of a family structure

Abide (μένω, menō): to stay, remain, live, dwell

Dualism: The concept of reality being composed of two fundamental, often opposing, principles or substances, such as good vs. evil or spirit vs. matter. Opposing dualism of cosmic forces, like God and Satan, are in a state of opposition, conflict, or struggle with each other.

BRIEF HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT:

"This week's passage, touching on truth and freedom, is as politically and religiously fraught as modern debates today, and the passage as a whole has all the vitriol of a social media flame war, culminating in an attempt to kill Jesus." [1] The world hasn't changed. Chapters seven and eight of John's Gospel are filled with charged words, associations, and accusations exchanged between Jesus and the Judeans. The "Jews" mentioned here are most likely composed of religious leaders—since the action takes place in Jerusalem, the center of Jewish faith—and anyone from southern Israel, Judea. Some are believers, many are curious, and many come to believe. As usual, Jesus' authority is questioned.

According to Jewish law, a man needs two witnesses to testify to the truth. For Jesus, those witnesses are himself and his Father. Jesus persuades some to believe (v.30), but he also stirs up more hostility by challenging their assumptions about the link between following Jesus and knowing truth and freedom. The debate becomes so intense that it ends with the Judeans calling Jesus a bastard and a son of a bitch (v.41), and Jesus retorting that they are spawn of Satan! Thinking of themselves as offspring of Abraham, the situation explodes as Jesus states: "Believe me, I am who I am long before Abraham was anything." [2] inciting the crowd to pick up stones to kill him, and once again, he slips away and disappears.

These two chapters mainly take place in the Temple during the annual Festival of Booths (Sukkot: celebration of liberation from Egypt). With the religious requirement for every male to travel to Jerusalem and live in booths for a week, the festival sometimes erupted in violence and uprisings against the Roman occupation. "Most scholars believe that [John's Gospel] was composed sometime between 70 and 135 CE, the dates marking the first and last wars between Judea and Rome. Living in the rubble (literal, social, political, and theological) of the destruction of Herod's temple in 70 CE and hurtling toward the destruction of Jerusalem and the exile of Jews that resulted from the end of the Bar Kochba revolt in 135 CE, John's Gospel finds itself enmeshed in the turbulence and tumult of the interwar period." [1] This the situation in which John's congregation lives.

Read John 8:12-30 (see narration insert)

1. What is Jesus referring to by "I am going away?"
2. Discuss the various examples of the dualism going on here.
3. Look at the other times John's Gospel talks about being lifted up: John 3:14 and John 12:32. How is John 8:28 different?
4. What makes you wonder in this passage?

Read John 8:31-47 (see narration insert)

1. How are verses 31 and 32 intrinsically linked – can you have one and not the other?
2. How does one "abide in Jesus?"
3. List some of the times when the Hebrews lived in slavery.
4. Discuss Jesus' "Slave/Son" metaphor.
5. From what are we free?
6. Discuss the breakdown in communication in vv. 37-47 – what words trigger anger?
7. Does Jesus believe in Satan?
8. What makes you wonder in this passage?

Read Insert: Jesus Parentage: A section from the *Toledot Yeshu* (the "Life Story of Jesus")