

John 8: v.12-59 - Jesus is the Light of the world.

<sup>12</sup> Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

<sup>13</sup> The Pharisees therefore said to Him, "You bear witness of Yourself; Your witness is not true." <sup>14</sup> Jesus answered and said to them, "Even if I bear witness of Myself, My witness is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going;

but you do not know where I come from and where I am going. <sup>15</sup> You judge according to the flesh; I judge no one. <sup>16</sup> And yet if I do judge, My judgment is true; for I am not alone, but I *am* with the Father who sent Me.

<sup>17</sup> It is also written in your law that the testimony of two men is true. <sup>18</sup> I am One who bears witness of Myself, and the Father who sent Me bears witness of Me." <sup>19</sup> Then they said to Him, "Where is Your Father?"

Jesus answered, "You know neither Me nor My Father. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also." <sup>20</sup> These words Jesus spoke in the treasury, as He taught in the temple; and no one laid hands on Him, for His hour had not yet come.

<sup>21</sup> Then Jesus said to them again, "I am going away, and you will seek Me, and will die in your sin. Where I go you cannot come." <sup>22</sup> So the Jews said, "Will He kill Himself, because He says, 'Where I go you cannot come'?"

<sup>23</sup> And He said to them, "You are from beneath; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. <sup>24</sup> Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am *He*, you will die in your sins."

<sup>25</sup> Then they said to Him, "Who are You?" And Jesus said to them, "Just what I have been saying to you from the beginning. <sup>26</sup> I have many things to say and to judge concerning you, but He who sent Me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I heard from Him."

<sup>27</sup> They did not understand that He spoke to them of the Father. <sup>28</sup> Then Jesus said to them, "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am *He*, and *that* I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things.

<sup>29</sup> And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him." <sup>30</sup> As He spoke these words, many believed in Him.

<sup>31</sup> Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.

<sup>32</sup> And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

<sup>33</sup> They answered Him, "We are Abraham's descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How *can* You say, 'You will be made free'?" <sup>34</sup> Jesus answered them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin.

<sup>35</sup> And a slave does not abide in the house forever, *but* a son abides forever. <sup>36</sup> Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed. <sup>37</sup> "I know that you are Abraham's descendants, but you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you.

<sup>38</sup> I speak what I have seen with My Father, and you do what you have seen with your father.” <sup>39</sup> They answered and said to Him, “Abraham is our father.” Jesus said to them, “If you were Abraham’s children, you would do the works of Abraham.

<sup>40</sup> But now you seek to kill Me, a Man who has told you the truth which I heard from God. Abraham did not do this. <sup>41</sup> You do the deeds of your father.” Then they said to Him, “We were not born of fornication; we have one Father—God.”

<sup>42</sup> Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me. <sup>43</sup> Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word.

<sup>44</sup> You are of *your* father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *resources*, for he is a liar and the father of it.

<sup>45</sup> But because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me. <sup>46</sup> Which of you convicts Me of sin? And if I tell the truth, why do you not believe Me? <sup>47</sup> He who is of God hears God’s words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God.”

<sup>48</sup> Then the Jews answered and said to Him, “Do we not say rightly that You are a Samaritan and have a demon?” <sup>49</sup> Jesus answered, “I do not have a demon; but I honor My Father, and you dishonor Me.

<sup>50</sup> And I do not seek My *own* glory; there is One who seeks and judges. <sup>51</sup> Most assuredly, I say to you, if anyone keeps My word he shall never see death.” <sup>52</sup> Then the Jews said to Him, “Now we know that You have a demon!

Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and You say, ‘If anyone keeps My word he shall never taste death.’ <sup>53</sup> Are You greater than our father Abraham, who is dead? And the prophets are dead. Who do You make Yourself out to be?”

<sup>54</sup> Jesus answered, “If I honor Myself, My honor is nothing. It is My Father who honors Me, of whom you say that He is your God. <sup>55</sup> Yet you have not known Him, but I know Him.

And if I say, ‘I do not know Him,’ I shall be a liar like you; but I do know Him and keep His word. <sup>56</sup> Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw *it* and was glad.”

<sup>57</sup> Then the Jews said to Him, “You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?” <sup>58</sup> Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.”

<sup>59</sup> Then they took up stones to throw at Him; but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

## Introduction

If you are following the series in John’s Gospel you may wonder why I am leaving out Chapter 8: v. 1-11.

1. Chapter 8: v. 12 follows directly after Chapter 7: v. 52.( Original writings)

These are the early Greek manuscripts that have been passed down to us. There are some exceptions, however in the early Coptic gospels, and many Latin writings these verses are missing.

2. All the early Church Fathers leave out this passage, they don’t deny that it is a true story but it doesn’t fit into the context of the story at the Feast of the Tabernacles.

3. Where some scholars in the past have included the passage, they have all put it in different places, therefore the unity of the Holy Spirit is absent in where it should go.

It is clear that the event happened and it was written down, but does not appear to be part of John's Gospel as it was originally written by John. Although it is a good story and undoubtedly true, we are not going to include it in this series.

It would be helpful for you to have a detailed explanation of why I have chosen not to preach on these verses now, in the context of John's Gospel.

Please go into the following web site:

[www.desiringgod.org/sermons/neither-do-i-condemn-you--3](http://www.desiringgod.org/sermons/neither-do-i-condemn-you--3)

John Piper will explain things fully to you.

I believe the whole Bible as the inspired word of God and the text in question whether it is meant to be in John's Gospel or not, does not alter the reliability of God's word.

I am not calling into question God's word, I am just being faithful to the research I have done on this subject.

The most reliable evangelical scholar on John's Gospel and the New Testament, a man by the name of Don Carson believes that the passage is not part of John's Gospel as it was originally written. It was added later.

I hope you will go on to John Piper's web site and come to your own conclusion.

My job is not to persuade you on this issue but to faithfully preach and teach the text I have chosen this morning. John 8: v. 12-59.

What we need to understand is that Jesus is still at the "Feast of Tabernacles" where the two main illustrations and themes were "Water" and "Light". Last week we dealt with the water illustration and this week will deal with the light illustration.

In the Old Testament "Light" has lots of symbolic meanings.

In the story of the Exodus of God's people from Egypt, God's pillar of light led them to freedom.

You will remember during the 10 Plagues of Egypt that God brought thick darkness over all the land of Egypt for 3 days. (Exodus 10: v. 21-29) However God's children, the Israelites had light in their dwellings. God gave light to His children, but darkness to the Egyptians.

In Isaiah Chapter 42: v. 6-7.

<sup>6</sup> "I, the Lord, have called You in righteousness,  
And will hold Your hand; I will keep You and give You as a covenant to the people, As a light to the  
Gentiles, <sup>7</sup> To open blind eyes, To bring out prisoners from the prison, Those who sit in darkness  
from the prison house.

God promises a servant who will be a light for the Gentiles. This servant will open blind eyes and bring out prisoners from prison and release people who sit in darkness.

Without physical light we can't see physically, and without spiritual light, we are left in spiritual darkness.

1. The light of the world speaks out – v. 12-30.

In v. 12 it says, "Then Jesus spoke to them again..... This shows us clearly that this is a response to what happened in v. 45-52 of chapter 7. Jesus declared to the people that He was the light of the world. He said this at the end of the festival.

During the festival, the Temple was ablaze with light. Special torches were lit in addition to the golden lamps that light the temple. Jerusalem is on a hill and the lights in the Temple were so bright that you could see them from the surrounding countryside.

After the lights were put out Jesus stood up and said "I am the light of the world, He who follows me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

**a) In v. 13-20 Jesus repeats the fact that He is God in human form.**

In v. 14 Jesus said that He knew where He had come from, (Heaven) and He knew where He was going. (Back to Heaven)

Jesus had the assurance of spiritual things, although He was truly man, as well as truly God. If we know and love Jesus as our own personal savior, we too can have the assurance of spiritual life and the assurance of where we are going when we die. This is very important because we are all going to die one day and we need to have the assurance in our hearts where we are going.

The hard thing is to admit where we came from. We came from Adam and Eve, therefore we are born with a sinful nature and need to be forgiven for our sins.

This is very hard for people to do today. Our pride and our own selfish thinking blocks the way to the truth about our own identity.

It says very clearly in Romans 5: v. 12.

<sup>12</sup> When Adam sinned, sin entered the world. Adam's sin brought death, so death spread to everyone, for everyone sinned.

In v. 15-18 Jesus defends His judgment. He points to the fact that the Jewish Law said that the testimony of two men is true. Jesus declares that He bears witness of the fact that He is the Son of God, and God in Heaven also declares that this is correct.

(Mark 1: v. 11)

<sup>11</sup> Then a voice came from heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

In v. 19 Jesus is critical of the Jewish leaders. He says you don't know me or my Father. If you knew Me you would know my Father also. Jesus declares here that He is the same as the Father. Therefore declaring Himself to be the same as God.

The Jews couldn't accept that Jesus was God, standing before them. Unless we accept that Jesus is God, in human form, we can't be saved from our sin.

There was no one good enough to pay the price of our sin. Only Jesus could do this, He is 100% Holy, because He is God.

Our sin is so awful to God, that it required a perfect person to make us perfect in God's eyes.

**b) In v. 21 – 30 Jesus repeats statements that declare His divine mission and destiny.**

In v. 24 Jesus is very hard hitting in His statement. He says that the Jews will die in their sins if they don't believe that Jesus has come from Heaven and is God in human form. He goes on to say that when He is lifted up, they will know that He is God.

We know from the rest of John's Gospel and all the other gospels that the mission of Jesus was to come to this earth to die for the sins of the world. God sent Jesus as the only rescue plan for mankind. There is no other rescue plan available for mankind. Jesus is the only rescue plan.

There was ample evidence for the Jews when Jesus died on the cross. There was 3 hours of complete darkness during the daylight time. The veil in the temple which was about 4 inches thick, (12mm) was torn in two from top to bottom. The curtain was as high as this building.

The significance of the Temple curtain being torn in two was important.

This curtain was the barrier between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies, where the presence of God dwelt. Only the high Priest was allowed into this area, once a year, to make atonement for the people's sins.

Now that the curtain was torn into two, we can enter into the Holy place with God and be in His presence because of the death of Jesus on the cross. We don't need a Priest anymore to pray for us. We can believe in Jesus and talk to God Himself.

The soldiers at the cross believed Jesus was God. (Luke 23: v. 47)

If we don't want to die in our sins, we need to believe in Jesus too. We need to believe that Jesus is God and He came to this earth to die for our own personal sins, past, present and future.

The Jews were very offended by this teaching and so are we before we put our faith and trust in Jesus. We are proud people and we don't want to admit that we need Jesus. We want to live our life the way we want to live it.

You can do this, but you will never be really happy and fulfilled in your heart.

If you refuse the offer of eternal life with Jesus now, you will face the challenge of eternal punishment when you are raised from the dead later.

Will you take a step of faith and believe in Jesus today?

In v. 30 it tells us that many people believed in Jesus at this stage.

Perhaps you will be one of them today.

## 2. The Light of the world exposes the false faith of the Jewish people. (v. 31-59)

Jesus first of all addresses the Jews who believed in Him. (v. 31-32)

Jesus doesn't just accept people who say that they believe, He tests their faith. Jesus says to the people, is your faith real.

Jesus gives a number of tests to check out genuine faith.

a) If you abide in my word, you are my disciples. What does Jesus mean by that?

In the context of what is happening here in this passage we can take its meaning to be a number of things.

Firstly discipleship begins with belief - You must believe in the words of Jesus about Himself.

Secondly it means constantly remaining in the words of Jesus and this involves 4 things.

1. Listening to the words of Jesus. A disciple listens for the voice of Jesus and doesn't take action until his voice is confirmed. It is not easy to wait for the voice of Jesus in any given situation.
2. It involves learning from Jesus. The Greek word for disciple is actually a learner. All his or her life a disciple should be learning more about Jesus.
3. It involves meditating on the words of Jesus. To remain in the words of Jesus means to constantly study what Jesus says. The words of Jesus can be very penetrating. Therefore we need to fully understand all that He says.
4. It involves obeying the words of Jesus. We do not study the Bible for academic or intellectual satisfaction. We study the Bible to find out what God wants us to do. A Disciple is a learner who learns in order to do. Jesus requires action from knowledge that we receive from Him.

In v. 32 Jesus tells us what should result from abiding in His word and becoming a disciple?

Jesus tells us that discipleship should result in freedom. It should result in freedom from the following.

Freedom from fear – When you are walking with Jesus, you should not be afraid. Jesus promises never to leave us or forsake us. (Hebrews 13: v.5 & Deut. 31:v. 6)

It should bring freedom from self – becoming a disciple should involve denying self and following Jesus. It says in Matthew 16: v. 24-26 these words.

<sup>24</sup> Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. <sup>25</sup> For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.

<sup>26</sup> For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?

It should bring freedom from other people. Sometimes our lives can be controlled by what other people think of us. It was H.G. Wells who once said that the voice of our neighbors sounds louder in our ears than the voice of God.

A true disciple ceases to care what other people think and say and only care about what God says in His word. Christians can be very critical of other people, which is very sad. God is not pleased when we try to please others and leave Him out.

Finally a true disciple is set free from sin. It not only sets us free from the penalty of sin, but enables us by the Holy Spirit to be cleansed from the pollution of sin.

Paul says in 2 Corinthians 7: v. 1 these words.

Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

If Paul felt that he needed cleansing, how much more we need the cleansing blood of Jesus in our lives.

In Acts chapter 2 the disciples were “filled” with the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:4) Later on in Acts 4: v.8 Peter was filled again. Why did he need to be filled again? Basically because we all leak, even Peter. Every day we are tempted to go our own way in the sinful flesh. We need to surrender to God's Holy Spirit each day.

In Ephesians 5: v. 18 Paul tells us not to be drunk with wine but be filled with the Holy Spirit. By Paul using an illustration from drunkenness he explains to us that being filled with the Holy Spirit is a matter of control.

As an ex-policeman I have arrested a lot of drunken people when I was young. They were controlled by the alcohol. They either got silly or got angry and aggressive. They let the alcohol control their actions. When we are filled with the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit controls our actions.

We will never be sinless (one word) but we can sin- less (two words). We can certainly reduce greatly the sinful life, by letting the Holy Spirit control our lives. How do we do this?

Firstly we surrender our whole life to Jesus and ask for His help to live in His Holy Spirit each day. It is a once and for all surrender, but a daily walk with God's Holy Spirit. It is like being a soldier for Jesus. It is a disciplined life, a dutiful life and a demanding life. However it is a blessed life, with Jesus as our manager and the Holy Spirit as our helper.

It is the life of a disciple of Jesus.

#### We now move on to v. 33-47 – Q. Who is the Jew's Father?

The Jewish leaders are concerned to defend their identity and their actions. In v. 33 they say that they are Abraham's descendants and have never been in bondage to anyone.

That is not strictly true because they were slaves in Egypt for 400 years, in bondage to the Egyptians. However they did keep their identity as Jews which was good. Jesus focuses upon their sinful nature, rather than upon their identity as God's chosen people.

Jesus says that if we commit sin we are a slave to sin. We can't help it, we are held captive by the sin.

The Jewish people couldn't understand that they needed Jesus. They thought that their identity as God's people was enough.

Jesus is very hard- hitting (direct) with the Jewish people in v. 44. He tells them that their Father is not God, but the "DEVIL". Jesus tells them that their Father is a murderer and a liar.

Jesus says to them in v. 47 that if God was really their Father then they would listen to His words. They don't hear his words in their heart because their hearts are evil.

This is a very difficult thing for most people to understand if they are not Christians.

I hope that we understand it?

#### Finally we have v. 48 – 59 – Q. Who is Jesus's Father?

The Jewish leaders now resort to discrediting Jesus. They don't like what Jesus has said, therefore they start to attack him verbally.

In counselling terms this is called "Displacement" When a boat goes into water it pushes a little bit of water out of the way. When we are hurt by someone, we want to hurt some- body else. It is not always the person who has hurt us. It is part of our sinful nature. It is a defense mechanism in our sinful nature. We all do it at some time, although we shouldn't.

Well the Jews were certainly displacing their anger upon Jesus. They said he was a Samaritan and had a demon. Two very bad insults.

Jesus then set out to explain who His Father was.

This is what He said about His Father.

- a) He honored His Father and didn't seek His own Glory.
- b) His Father God honors Him.(Jesus)

- c) He knows the Father (God) and keeps the Father's word.
- d) Abraham rejoiced in the fact that Jesus was here on earth doing the Father's will.
- e) Jesus said that before Abraham was alive, he was alive. The Hebrew name for God was "I AM"  
( Exodus 3:14)

After Jesus declared Himself to be God, the Jewish people who were there got angry and were about to throw stones at Jesus but He slipped away into the crowd.

#### Application for the people at that day and for us at O.I.C.

To the people at that time it was very difficult to be faced with a challenge to their religion. They had been worshipping God and keeping all the festivals for thousands of years. They had a history of being God's chosen people. They felt special and privileged.

However they couldn't accept the sinful nature of their hearts and they couldn't accept that Jesus had come to rescue them from their sin. Pride and self-sufficiency were their biggest obstacles.

To us here at O.I.C. in Japan the application is no different. If we are not a Christian we have to come to terms with the fact that we have a sinful nature and need to be rescued by Jesus. There is no other rescue plan by God for our sinful nature.

If we claim to be a Christian then we need the same gospel to re-shape our thinking and our lives. If we are honest we battle sometimes with our sinful nature. We don't always want to admit our mistakes and say sorry to God and to other people if we displace our anger upon them. Don't be enslaved by the sinful nature but be set free by Jesus. It is His Holy Spirit who helps us not to sin and follow Jesus.

We must be honest with ourselves and with Jesus and His Holy Spirit, then we can make progress in the Christian life.