

TRUE CHILDREN OF GOD

Q: True or False? “How you relate to someone depends on who you understand them to be.” What are some examples? Ever make some embarrassing incorrect assumptions?

John 8:31–59 (ESV)

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 free?’”

³⁴ Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices 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.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Are the people Jesus is talking to in verses 31-59 the same as those mentioned in verse 30?
2. Many people quote verse 32. However, Jesus places a condition on this verse. What is it?
3. How have you been set free from sin by the truth of Jesus Christ?
4. The people respond that they are already free because they had never been a slave to anyone. Was this true? What was Jesus' response to their claim? To whom are they enslaved? Who is their father?
5. Are we surrounded by people who are enslaved? Are we burdened for them? What should we be doing for them?
6. Jesus' opponents also claim to have both Abraham and God as their father. According to Jesus, how does their conduct contradict their claim (v. 39-47)? Why is our conduct the truest test of our beliefs?
7. In v. 42 Jesus says "*If God were your Father, you would love me.*" Note that he doesn't say "*obey me*." Is there any significance?
8. What is the mark of someone who is "of God"? Read John 8:47. If someone were to look at your life, would they be able to say that God was your father? What would need to change for people to know that you are a child of God?
9. When we follow our own desires, who do we declare as our father?
10. What is significant about the Jews statements in v. 48? How does Jesus respond?
11. From verse 56, why would Abraham rejoice to see Jesus' day?
12. Why is verse 58 so important? Why do the Jews pick up stones to kill Jesus after this, how did they understand his statement?