

Daily Bible Study Commentary by Pastor Steve

We're excited to have you digging deeper into the Word. The best way to use this study guide is to read the Bible verse(s) first, then Pastor Steve's commentary. God bless you.

John 8:27

v27: John's statement here can be confusing. He literally says these men did not know Jesus spoke "of the Father" to them. It seems impossible to think that they didn't know He was speaking to them about God or that He was saying God had sent Him. It's far more likely this statement means these opponents refused to acknowledge that the Father was the source of the things Jesus said. In other words, they knew He claimed to speak the Father's words, but they didn't really know it. They didn't believe He came from heaven; they didn't believe His words were from God. To them He was an imposter, promoting Himself.

John 8:28

v28: Jesus knew they distrusted His motives. They thought He was an ambitious man who was trying to promote himself, but He also knew He was going to do something in the near future which would shatter that false assumption. Some of these men would be among those who would arrange to have Him crucified. They would arrest Him on the Mount of Olives and drag Him before their religious courts. He would not respond the way an ambitious man would respond. He would not try to defend Himself or beg for mercy. They would insult Him and hit Him, but He would not fight back. They would hand Him over to the Romans to be executed, but He would not curse them or rail against God. Instead He would respond exactly the way Isaiah said He would, "He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth; like a lamb that is led to slaughter, and like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, so He did not open His mouth" (Isa 53:7).

John 8:28-29

v28 (continued): Jesus told these men that something was going to happen that would change their minds about Him. He said, "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am, and I do nothing from Myself, but just as the Father taught Me, these things I speak" (literal). In other words, no self-promoting, ambitious man would willingly permit himself to be treated the way you will treat Me. My complete surrender to the will of the Father is going to become indisputably clear when I am crucified. My true motive will be exposed beyond the shadow of a doubt. **v29:** The crucifixion would prove His complete surrender to the Father, but it would also reveal the Father's complete approval of Him. Though many in Israel would initially believe that the shameful way He was executed (the cross) proved that the Father rejected Him (Isa 53:4, 8), His resurrection on the third day would prove otherwise. By raising Jesus from the dead, the Father vindicated His Son. He declared, in the most unmistakable terms, that Jesus always did the things that pleased Him.

John 8:30-31

vs30-31: Though many of the religious leaders and Pharisees rejected Jesus, John now tells us that their rejection of Jesus was not universal. He says, "As He was speaking these things, many believed in Him" (literal). And in case we had any doubt that these "many" included religious leaders and Pharisees, John added, "Therefore Jesus said to the Jews who believed in Him..." Again as we've often pointed out, in this context the term "Jews" does not mean the Jewish people in general but rather the religious leaders and highly observant Pharisees. In light of such hostility toward Jesus and the theological debate going on among them, it's amazing that many of these believed.

John 8:31

vs31 (continued): Many religious leaders were mixed into the crowd listening to Jesus that day, and it was especially to these leaders that Jesus spoke when He predicted His crucifixion and said it would prove to them His complete submission to the Father (v28). The response to His words was remarkable: Many believed in Him. It may have been the sincerity with which He spoke about His approaching death or a sudden recognition that the Bible does indeed speak of a suffering Messiah that moved their hearts, but in that moment, John says, "...many believed into Him..." (literal). Recognizing what had happened, Jesus spoke to these new believers and said, "If you remain in My word you are truly My disciples" (literal).

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John 8:31

v31 (continued): The fact that He said, "If you remain..." tells us that Jesus did not consider an initial burst of faith to be sufficient to qualify someone to be called His disciple. He did not discount the sincerity of new faith but cautioned those in the crowd who had taken this step that their relationship with Him, which began by "believing into Him," must now lead to a lifetime of obedience to His teaching. Only those who continued to believe and obey what He taught them would He consider to be His disciples. That He meant, when He used the term "disciple," someone who is saved rather than someone who is merely a student, becomes evident in the next few verses (vs32-36). He will go on to explain that true disciples hold the role of sonship in God's family, and then He contrasts those "sons" with "slaves" who because of their slavery do not remain in God's family "unto the age" (the age to come).

John 8:32

v32: Those who believed the revelations He was proclaiming about Himself and who were willing to submit to Him by obeying His teachings, Jesus said would not only receive salvation, but they would also discover a truth which would set them free from slavery to sin (v34). He said, "You will know the truth [about Me and what I have made possible for you] and the truth will free you" (paraphrase). But in that statement He did not specify which truth is the truth that sets us free; however, in this context He must be speaking about the truth of who He is and what He has done for us. He said if someone "remains" in that truth by continuing to believe and obey, that person will grow in their understanding of that truth which will bring to them a greater and greater freedom from sin. In effect, He said obedience to the gospel will lead to a deeper understanding of it which will lead to greater freedom from sin. So true discipleship will always lead to moral cleanness.

John 8:33

v33: When He first made this statement Jesus didn't identify the specific bondage from which His disciples would be set free. He merely said, "The truth will free you" (v32). That ambiguity allowed some in the crowd to take offense to His statement. They considered the suggestion that they needed freedom to be an insult. In effect they replied, "How dare you suggest that we are not free. We are Abraham's seed and have never been enslaved to anyone" (paraphrase). It seems certain that those who said this were not those in the crowd who had newly believed. They must be those who did not believe. That group was about to enter into a bitter confrontation with Him (vs37-59).

John 8:33

v33 (continued): Their claim that those who had descended from Abraham had never been enslaved is so inaccurate it is hard to grasp what they meant. The sad truth is apparent to anyone who looks back over the history of the nation. Abraham's descendants were often enslaved by oppressive foreign governments (Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece, Syria). In fact at the time these words were spoken, Israel was enslaved to Rome. The leaders who made that claim may have meant that in spite of the fact that they had endured centuries of oppression, true Jews had never renounced their faith. There was always a core of men and women who resisted being assimilated by the godless cultures which dominated them ("remnant"). But even so, it is hard to argue that, at least outwardly, they had never been slaves (Ne 9:27-31, 36-37).