



got life?

The Gospel of John A Bible Study with Stan Key

WHO'S YOUR DADDY?¹

John 8:1–59

I. Like Father, Like Son

A. In the image of _____.

In the beginning, Adam and Eve reflected the image of their Creator. They were thus holy and good. *Like Father, like son.* When they sinned, this image was not destroyed, but it was severely _____.

B. In the image of _____.

When Adam had a son, he bore the image of his earthly father. *Like father, like son.*

When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God...³ When Adam had lived 130 years, he fathered a son in his own likeness, after _____, and named him Seth. (Genesis 5:1–3)

This means that _____ of Adam's descendants have his spiritual DNA. They are born with a _____ nature, a heart _____ on sinning, an _____ to see the truth, and an _____ to choose the right. *Like father, like son.*

- “The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that _____ intention of the thoughts of his heart was _____ evil _____” (Gn 6:5).
- “The heart is _____ above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?” (Jer 17:9).
- “For out of the _____ come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander” (Mt 15:19).

C. In the image of _____.

Upon reflection, one realizes that the situation is even _____! Because Satan is the “father” of the original sin Genesis 3, we discover that our spiritual heritage goes back further than the sinful Adam and Eve! Our real spiritual father is the devil! In the Genesis account, two characteristics of Satan are highlighted:

1. He is a _____. God said that if Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit they would “surely die” (Gn 2:17). The _____ words of the serpent reveal his character:

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast.... He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’” And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the

¹ “Who’s your daddy?” is a slang expression used in a wide variety of contexts, usually with a boastful claim of dominance over the intended listener:

- Music—“The Zombies” (1968) song “Time of the Season” (“What’s your name? Who’s your daddy?...”)
- Movies and culture—Denzel Washington, in “Remember the Titans,” uses the line to show dominance over two athletes.
- Sports—Duke basketball of the 1990s, Indiana basketball (“Hoosier daddy?”), Pedro Martinez 2009 World Series, etc.
- Video Games—“Who’s Your Daddy?” is the title of an online multiplayer game.

tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.” But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” (Genesis 3:1–5)

He lies about:

- The _____ of what God has said: “Did God actually say...?”
- The _____ of what God has said: “You shall not eat of any tree in the garden.”
- The _____ of sin. “You will not surely die.”
- The _____ and intentions of God (he implies God has sinister motives). “...your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God...”

2. He is a _____.

Because Satan knew that the wages of sin was _____ (cf. Rm 6:23), in tempting Adam and Eve to eat the forbidden fruit he was clearly intending to kill them! Furthermore, Genesis 4:1–8 reveals the distinctive fingerprint of Satan in how he inspired Cain to kill his brother. “Sin is crouching at the door” (Gn 4:7; see I Jn 3:12). Satan’s murderous nature means that his intentions with humans is always to: _____, _____, and _____ (see Jn 10:10).

D. John 8 helps us to understand who are the children of the God and who are the children of the devil. Discerning who one’s daddy is may be _____ than you think!

II. Examining the text.

Jesus, what should we do with this woman? Let the one without sin cast the first stone. The sin that condemns Jn 8:1–11	Jesus, who are you and where did you come from? I am the light of the world... unless you believe that I Am, you will die in your sins. The sin that blinds Jn 8:12–30	We aren’t slaves so how can you say we need to be freed? Abide in my word... and the truth will set you free. The sin that enslaves Jn 8:31–38	Abraham is our father but who are you? Your father is the devil...Before Abraham was, I am. The sin we inherit from our true father Jn 8:39–59
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Notes on the text:

A. The woman taken in adultery (Jn 8:1–11).

1. Because these verses are not found in the earliest manuscripts of John, most scholars believe that the story was not part of the original gospel but was added later. Even if it is not part of what John wrote, it has the ring of truth and we will consider it as part of the whole.
2. The Pharisees are “testing” Jesus. The real “trial” here is not of the woman, but of Jesus! They have laid a trap: if Jesus opposes her execution then he is soft of Moses but if he supports it he will be usurping Roman law and thus guilty of treason.

3. There is something suspicious about the Pharisees in that the male partner in this illicit liaison is not included in the impromptu trial! According to Moses, he should be executed as well (Lv 20:10).
 4. This is the only reference to Jesus writing anything! And it is in sand... thus, it can't be preserved. Though there is much speculation about what he actually wrote², we simply do not know.
- B. The light of the world (Jn 8:12–30).
1. When the words “I am” (*ego eimi*) occur in John, it often has an object: “I am the bread of life,” “I am the light of the world,” “I am the door,” etc. However, on several occasions, the words stand alone, without an object (Jn 4:26; 6:20; 13:19; 18:5–8). Three of these absolute usages of “I am” occur in this chapter:
 - “Unless you believe that I am, you will die in your sins” (Jn 8:24).
 - “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am” (Jn 8:28).
 - “Before Abraham was, I am” (Jn 8:59).
 2. Though many believe in Jesus (Jn 8:30), it is a shallow faith that will not last (vv. 31, 48, 59). True disciples abide in Jesus' words (Jn 8:31; cf. Jn 15:4–6; II Jn 9).
- C. The truth will set you free (Jn 8:31–38).
1. The claim that they have “never been enslaved to anyone” (Jn 8:33) is absurd. They had been enslaved on numerous occasions in history (in Egypt, in Babylon, etc.).
 2. How does truth liberate someone? Mainly, by breaking the power of a lie.
- D. You are children of the devil (Jn 8:39–59).
1. When the Jews say, “we were not born of sexual immorality” (Jn 8:41), they may have been making an allusion to Jesus' questionable birth.
 2. We reflect the nature of our parents. This is true for Jesus (Jn 8:14, 16, 18, 23, 29, etc.). But it is equally true for the people to whom Jesus is talking. Jesus acknowledges their genetic pedigree (Jn 8:37) but shows that their behavior reveals their true spiritual ancestry (Jn 8:39–44). For Jesus spiritual pedigree is more important than genetic descent. Behavior is proof of your ancestry. Origin determines character.
 3. The proper grammatical way to claim pre-existence would have been to say, “Before Abraham was, I was” (Jn 8:59). In using the present tense, Jesus is making a brazen and blatant claim to deity by attributing the Divine Name to himself (see Ex 3:13–14; Isa 43:10).

III. Light on a dark subject.

Though several themes can be traced through this passage (light, truth, fatherhood, witnesses, Jesus' identity, etc.) our focus will be on the theme of _____. The word “sin”³ is used some seven times but the concept is found throughout. This chapter helps us to better understand the _____ of sin and more importantly, its _____!

² Some suggest he wrote the sins of the accusers. Others suggest he wrote a Bible reference. Other think he was perhaps just doodling, giving time for his words to sink in.

³ Greek, *harmartia* (noun) and *harmartano* (verb): missing the mark.

A. The nature of sin.

1. Sin is not just based in our actions, but in our _____ (Jn 8:1–11).

The woman taken in adultery was “caught in the act” (Jn 8:4). Her behavior made it clear that she was a sinner. However, Jesus sees sin not just in outward behaviors but also in inner attitudes and motivations. Speaking to very religious people he said, “Let him who is without sin among you, cast the first stone” (Jn 8:7). Name the sins of the Pharisees:

- _____.
- _____.
- _____.
- _____.
- _____.
- _____.

2. Sinners _____ they are sinners (Jn 8:12).

To sin is “to walk in darkness” (Jn 8:12). But the darkness is not caused by the absence of light! The light of the world is here! The darkness is caused by _____. Increasing the brightness makes no difference for one who is blind. _____ The most important reality to comprehend about sin as darkness is that you can't see what you can't see; you don't know what you don't know. In other words, the most dangerous part of being a sinner is _____ (Jer 17:9). Tax collectors and prostitutes get into the kingdom of God before religious people do (Mt 21:31) not because their sins are “less serious” but because they know they are dirty, rotten sinners! Thus, there is _____ for them.

3. Sin always leads to _____ (Jn 8:21, 24).

We see this graphically portrayed in how adultery is a capital offense in the Torah. But Jesus is talking to the Pharisees. All sin, like all _____, if left untreated, will ultimately lead to death (Rm 6:23).

4. Sin is a form of _____ (Jn 8:31–38).

“Everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin” (Jn 8:34; see Rm 6:16; II Pt 2:19). Sin is more than walking in darkness; it is walking in chains! And just as people who are blind don't know they are blind, so people who are slaves don't know they are slaves! “We are the offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, ‘You will become free?’” (Jn 8:33).

Cornelius Plantinga⁴ outlines the “Dynamics of Addiction” as a way to help illustrate the slavery that comes from sin:

- a. _____ of pleasurable and therefore habit-forming behavior, plus escalating tolerance and desire.
- b. Unpleasant aftereffects of such behavior, including withdrawal symptoms and _____.
- c. _____ to moderate or quit, followed by relapses and attendant feelings of guilt, shame, and general distress.

⁴ From *Not the Way It's Supposed to Be: A Breviary of Sin* (Eerdmans, 1995), p. 145.

- d. Attempts to ease this distress with new rounds of addictive behavior.
 - e. Deterioration of work and relationships, with accompanying _____, delusions, and self-deceptions.
 - f. Gradually increasing preoccupation, then _____.
 - g. _____ in addictive behavior (one's will has become enslaved).
 - h. A tendency to draw others into the web of addiction, people who support and enable the addiction (co-dependents).
5. Sin is a _____ issue (Jn 8:39–47).

Sin not only blinds people to their blindness and their bondage, it also makes them unaware of who their _____ is. The Jews naively believed that *Abraham* was their father (Jn 8:33, 39) and that they were children of *God* (Jn 8:41). But their behavior confirms that, in reality, their father is *the devil*! Two factors make this irrefutable:

You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a _____ 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 _____ and the father of lies. (John 8:44)

The Jews were seeking to kill Jesus (Jn 8:37, 40, 59). Not only that, they don't believe the truth Jesus is speaking precisely because it is the truth! "*Because* (not "although") I tell you the truth, you do not believe me" (Jn 8:45). Just as the Father in heaven cannot lie, so the devil cannot tell the truth.

B. The cure for sin.

1. When sin is exposed, the overwhelming temptation is to do what Pharisees have always tried to do. These simply do not work:
 - a. _____ "Sin? What sin?"
 - b. Rationalize. "Life's been hard lately, and therefore I..."
 - c. Justify. "My peer group was just pushing me too hard to go along..."
 - d. _____ "If my parents hadn't divorced, then..."
 - e. Deny. "I didn't do anything."
 - f. Practice some form of _____.
 - g. Kill the _____.
2. This chapter gives a better way:
 - a. Love _____ and walk in it (Jn 8:12).

"If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son _____ us from all sin" (I Jn 1:7). The only way to defeat the bondage of a lie is with a _____! Only truth can set you free! But this demands humility. The first step to victory over sin is the humble acknowledgment that:

 - I am blind and ignorant and _____ my true condition.
 - I am a slave to sin.
 - I am a child of the devil.

- I am a _____!
- b. _____ in Jesus (Jn 8:24, 28).
“Unless you believe that I Am, you will die in your sins... When you have lifted up the Son of Man, they you will know that I am...” (Jn 8:24, 28).
The cure for sin is not behavior modification; but believing in the forgiveness and cleansing that come from the cross where “the Lamb of God _____ the sin of the world” (Jn 1:29).
- c. Be _____.
The only way to change our genetic code so that the _____ of Adam and Satan does not dictate our character and fix our destiny is to be born of the Spirit (Jn 3:1–8).
- d. _____ in Jesus and in his words (Jn 8:31–32, 51).
True faith in Jesus involves much more than mental acknowledgment of certain facts. It means we live in him, walk with him, and keep his commandments.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What did you learn from this lesson about the nature of sin?
2. What did you learn about the cure for sin?
3. If sin makes us blind and deceives us about our true condition, what hope can any of us every have to see things clearly?
4. Is there any sin in your life that is making you a slave? Which of the characteristics of addiction may be present in your life?
5. Is it really possible to change one's spiritual DNA?

Lord, We Are Vile, Conceived in Sin

Isaac Watts

(Sung to the tune of *Sweet Hour of Prayer*)

*Lord, we are vile, conceived in sin,
And born unholy and unclean;
Sprung from the man whose guilty fall
Corrupts his race, and taints us all.
Soon as we draw our infant breath
The seeds of sin grow up for death;
The law demands a perfect heart,
But we're defiled in every part.*

*Behold, we fall before thy face;
Our only refuge is thy grace:
No outward forms can make us clean;
The leprosy lies deep within.
No bleeding bird, nor bleeding beast,
No hyssop branch, nor sprinkling priest,
Nor running brook, nor flood, nor sea,
Can wash the dismal stain away.*

*Jesus, thy blood, thy blood alone,
Hath power sufficient to atone;
Thy blood can make us white as snow;
No Jewish types could cleanse us so.
While guilt disturbs and breaks our peace,
Nor flesh nor soul hath rest or ease;
Lord, let us hear thy pard'ning voice,
And make these broken hearts rejoice.*