

Sticks and Stones

John 8:48-59

For the last two weeks, we have been reading John 8, and specifically a conversation that Jesus had with a crowd during the Feast of Booths. He has been explaining to them many truths about himself and concerning their spiritual condition.

There are those in the crowd who seem to accept some of the truths that Jesus has said but are later offended when Jesus contends that they are not free. If they are to be truly free, Jesus knows that they must abandon their cultural belief, that they are made right with God simply because of their heritage, and individually believe in Him as their Messiah.

A Slandering Statement, and An Incredible Offer (John 8:48-51)

At this point, the Jews have had enough. When they cannot debate Jesus on the content of his argument, they resort to personal attacks.

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."

The Jews Double Down

Instead of abandoning their world view and accepting Jesus's offer of eternal life, the Jews double down on their claim that He is demon-possessed.

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

The Jews ask Jesus a rhetorical question. Does He really think that He is greater than Abraham? Could Jesus possibly want them to believe that He is greater than the

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prophets? The Jews, who spoke, expected the answer of their hearts to be no, but with ironic flare, John records this knowing that the answer his readers will give is YES!

Jesus Answers

Jesus answered that He doesn't seek his own glory because he doesn't need to. God is the one who has glorified Jesus from the beginning. If they knew God, Jesus claims, they would know Him.

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."

Jesus Claims To Be God

With nothing left to say, the Jews pick up stones to kill Jesus but cannot because it is not the right time for Him to give His life.

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.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Voice of the Martyrs - This month's action pack items are twin flat sheets and toothbrushes (plain: no logos or words)

Grace Family Camping Trip to Ocotillo Wells - February 26th through 28th hosted by the Men's Ministry Team. Interested? Contact Al Lerma at amlermatelco@yahoo.com or 619-889-6892

Voice of the Martyrs - The VOM Advance conference has gone virtual. Come and join us on March 5th, beginning at 6:30 PM. You will be encouraged by stories and news from your brothers and sisters around the world.