

COMMUNION SERIES ON THE GOSPEL OF JOHN **HOW TO KNOW YOUR REAL FATHER** John 8:31–59

When controversies arise over child support, inheritance, social welfare benefits, or for immigration/adoption reasons, when it is called for, a very reliable method is paternity testing. Here, DNA samples are taken from the presumptive father and child and compared. The accuracy in case of genuine genetic parentage is said to be up to 99.99%, though never 100%.

Our passage today shows Jesus revealing the spiritual equivalent of paternity testing. As he winds up this discussion with people who showed a fickle faith in Him, He teaches us how to know our real father, and ends up showing why His method is 100% reliable:

1. FAMILIAL DESCRIPTIONS: JESUS REVEALS WHAT A TRUE CHRISTIAN LOOKS LIKE (vv. 31-37).

- 1) He holds on to [lives by] the teachings of Jesus.
- 2) He will know the Living Truth personally, the One who sets people free.
- 3) He is no longer a slave of sin.
- 4) He has room for the Word in his heart.

“Truth” is the Good News revealed in and through Christ. Because of truth’s intimate connection with Jesus, true disciples must not only hear His words: they must be united with Him who is the truth. Legalism thinks that knowing the Law makes a man free; the Bible insists that the Law points to Jesus (John 5:39, 46), Himself the truth (John 14:6) and the One full of grace and truth (John 1:14).

2. FATAL DECEPTIONS: JESUS REVEALS THAT PEOPLE WHO LOOK RIGHT AND SOUND RIGHT MAY NOT BE RIGHTEOUS AT ALL: (vv. 38-47)

Self-deceived people have the following characteristics:

- 1) They oppose those who speak the truths of God.
- 2) They have no love for Jesus.
- 3) They are unable to really hear Jesus.
- 4) They show a semblance to “the other father.”

In summary: they cannot hear Christ because they do not belong to God.

3. FULL DISCLOSURE: JESUS REVEALS WHY HE IS WORTH LISTENING TO (vv. 48-59)

- 1) Whoever keeps His Word will never die.
- 2) He is glorified (and vouched for) by the Father.
- 3) He knows the Father personally. For him to deny this would be lying.
- 4) Abraham (and the rest of the OT believers) recognized him and looked forward in faith to his arrival.
- 5) Before Abraham existed, he was always God.

Why is Jesus reliable? Why is He worth listening to? Why should we follow Him and build our life on His Word? Because He is God.

Final Thoughts:

Why does it matter? It matters more than anything that you and I be certain of who our spiritual father is. Will there be a greater tragedy than to hear your presumed Father say when it is too late – “I never knew you”? That is painful when it happens in this life, but it is permanent when it happens in the next. Make sure about your lineage today.