

## THE GOSPEL FOR TODAY

### GFT-20 "WHO ARE YOU?"

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**JOHN 8:25-26** "So they said to Him, "Who are you?" Jesus said to them, "Just what I have been telling you from the beginning. <sup>26</sup> I have much to say about you and much to judge, but HE who sent me is true, and I declare to the world what I have heard from Him."

Seven times in **THE BOOK OF THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST**, we find this statement: "Let him who has ears **HEAR what the Spirit says to the Churches.**" After one of Jesus' Parables He said, "Let the one who has ears **HEAR...**" Well, we know we all have ears, so of course we heard. BUT did we really HEAR? If we will not truly "listen" to what is said, we will not really "hear" the message.

**That is exactly where Jesus is in this account found in JOHN 8.** He has told the Jewish Leaders, and the crowds, time and again who he is, where He has come from, what He was sent to say. **But they are NOT listening, and they are NOT hearing.**

Many times, we speak the truth to family, friends, co-workers, and even strangers but they are not listening, and they are not hearing. Our response... Keep Speaking!

#### "WHO ARE YOU?"

**John 8:-27-25** So they said to Him, "Who are you?" Jesus said to them, "Just what I have been telling you from the beginning. <sup>26</sup> I have much to say about you and much to judge, but HE who sent me is true, and I declare to the world what I have heard from Him."

<sup>27</sup> They did not understand that He had been speaking to them about the Father.

- Jesus has told them time and again WHO He is... they will not Listen ... SO they will not Hear...
- There is much Jesus could say, but He will ONLY say what His Father has given Him to Say / Judge
- "Much to judge..." – Here again, Jesus is not using "judge" in a legal sense, but as the broader meaning of "making a determination or decision as to what is true"
- The one who sent Him was The Father... His words were from the Father... HIS "Words / Determinations / Declarations" are True
- Because Recognition of the "True God" was far from them... Neither would they recognize the Truth of His Words..

<sup>28</sup> So Jesus said to them, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and that I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the Father taught me."

- ONLY after "THE CROSS" will they see that HE is THE MESSIAH... but only IF they will believe... and MANY WILL NOT
- His Teaching... His Works... His Death and Resurrection are all according to the Father's purpose...
- THIS was His Mission: Why He Came... Why He Spoke... Why He Suffered... Why He Died...
- HE was obedient unto Death on a Cross...

**PHIL 2:8** And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

**HEB 12:2** "looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God."

JOHN 3:14-15 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, <sup>15</sup> that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

JOHN 12:32 And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.”

<sup>29</sup> “And HE who sent me is with me. HE has not left me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to HIM.”

- His Death PLEASED the Father... [ For some, this is a “hard” verse to read / understand ]  
Isa 53:10 Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush HIM; HE has put him to grief; when HIS soul makes an offering for guilt [ A SIN-OFFERING ], HE shall see HIS offspring; HE shall prolong HIS days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in HIS hand [ accomplish its purpose ].

<sup>30</sup> As He was saying these things, many [in the crowd] believed in Him.

8:31-38 So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed Him, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples,

<sup>32</sup> and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

- Within the larger crowd were not only Pharisees, but also SOME who believed...
- This promise of “freedom” would only be available to those who believed...
- The Disciple... is the one who abides in His WORD... They are the ones who will know the TRUTH... AND that TRUTH will set them free... FREE from bondage to THE LAW, to SIN, and to DEATH

<sup>33</sup> 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?’”

- This is a different group from the ones who believed as can be seen from their contentious and unbelieving response that follows...
- Their blindness does not allow them to see their bondage and slavery to the “power of sin and death” ... which the doctrines of man CANNOT overcome...

<sup>34</sup> Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin. <sup>35</sup> The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever.

- The Slave – One who does NOT abide in His Words and leaves the place of Freedom for Bondage...
- The Son – One who abides in the Word and continues in a place of freedom from Bondage...
- As Abraham’s sons they must consider which son they are: [See GAL 3:16; 26; HEB 3:6]
  - ISHMAEL – “the slave does not remain in the house forever”... Ishmael rejected the God of Abraham... and forsook the Promise – The Offspring of Abraham
  - ISAAC – “the son remains forever” - Isaac accepted the God of his Father and continued “Living by the Promise” – The Son of Abraham

<sup>36</sup> So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. – As the Son sent from the Father, He speaks the Words that will allow them to live in the Promise of Freedom

<sup>37</sup> I know that you are offspring of Abraham; yet you seek to kill me because my word finds no place in you.

<sup>38</sup> I speak of what I have seen with my Father, and you do what you have heard from your father.”

- They are NOT following the words of Abraham as their father – Words of Promise and Freedom
- They are following the words of ISHMAEL, as if he was their father... rejecting the Words of Promise

**8:39-47** 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,<sup>40</sup> 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.*

- *“The works Abraham did...” - He heard and believed the Voice of God... THE PROMISE OF GOD...*
- *You have heard and DO NOT Believe... – Abraham accepted the Promise of God having had no previous association with Elohim as the One True God*

<sup>41</sup> *“You are doing the works YOUR father did.”*

- *Obviously, Jesus is not talking about Abraham... Is it “Ishmael?” That seems to flow with the previous context... although Jesus is now making that association as to “the Devil”*
- *Jesus has changed the analogy from ISAAC & ISHMAEL ... to GOD & THE DEVIL... – It is difficult to assess who Jesus is alluding to, but the “the Devil” not “God” is the source of their behavior in response to Him*
- *The emphasis is to a “spiritual descendance NOT a physical one” – Of course they were physically descended for Abraham, BUT they are NOT following his Faith...*

*They said to Him, “We were not born of sexual immorality. We have one Father—even God.”*

<sup>42</sup> *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.*

- *Their refusal to hear the Words of the Son betray their lineage... IF they were of Abraham’s lineage “spiritually” they would receive and believe... BUT they are not... SO they don’t*

<sup>43</sup> *Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to hear my word.*

- *They don’t understand because they don’t like what Jesus is saying... They have determined their response before they have even heard Him...*

<sup>44</sup> *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.*

<sup>45</sup> *But because I tell the truth, you do not believe me.*

- *They willingly listen to the lies of “The Devil” but refuse to hear the Words of the Son sent from God*

<sup>46</sup> *Which one of you convicts me of sin? If I tell the truth, why do you not believe me?*

- *If Jesus was lying, He would be guilty of sin... YET no one can step forward to make an accusation that proves He is making false claims*
- *If He is NOT lying ... WHY won’t they Believe?*

<sup>47</sup> *Whoever is of God hears the words of God. [ The Words that Jesus has spoken ] The reason why you do not hear them is that you are not of God.”*

**8:48-59** *The Jews answered Him, “Are we not right in saying that you are a Samaritan and have a demon?”*

<sup>49</sup> *Jesus answered, “I do not have a demon, but I honor my Father, and you dishonor me.*

- *No one in their right mind would have thought of telling the Jewish Leaders they were, “not of God”*
- *What being a Samaritan has to do with having a “demon” reflects an extreme prejudice and hatred...*
- *Jesus had told them “they were of the Devil” ... NOW they respond accusing Him of having a “demon”*

<sup>50</sup> *Yet I do not seek my own glory; there is One who seeks it, and He is the Judge. If He were lying it would be to take “glory” for himself... BUT it is The Father who has declared that Jesus words are from the Father*

<sup>51</sup> *Truly, truly, I say to you, if anyone keeps my word, ... he will never see death.* Jesus returns to the very heart of the matter... the question of receiving Eternal Life as the result of believing Jesus' Words

<sup>52</sup> *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.’*

- Eternal Life was not necessarily a “doctrine” they understood... However, they DID believe in a existence after death that would be lived in peace with God - “Abraham’s Bosom”
- BUT one had to “die” first... The idea that one could enter that life w/o death was a “mystery”

<sup>53</sup> *Are you greater than our father Abraham, who died? And the prophets died! Who do you make yourself out to be?”*

- This was not reasonable to their minds... Natural knowledge cannot attain to the spiritual truths that are often declared in GOD’S WORD – They must be accepted by faith until “revelation and understanding” are gained...

<sup>54</sup> *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.’*

- You make the declaration “He is our God” – But you refuse to accept the One HE glorifies as His Son

<sup>55</sup> *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.

<sup>56</sup> *Your father Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day. He saw it and was glad.”*

GAL 3:8 *And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the Gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, “In you shall all the nations be blessed.”*

GEN 15:4-6

GEN 17:4-7

GEN 20:13-14 *And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him was a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. <sup>14</sup> So Abraham called the name of that place, “The LORD will provide”; as it is said to this day, “On the mount of the LORD it shall be provided.”*

- The Lord will Provide – Jehovah-Jireh (Yahweh-‘ireh) “I AM Your Provision”

<sup>57</sup> *So the Jews said to Him, “You are not yet fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham?”*

<sup>58</sup> *Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.”*

Gen 12:1-3

<sup>59</sup> *So they picked up stones to throw at Him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple.*

## **The Hitchens Interview:** (from THE PORTLAND MONTHLY, January 2010)

Author of, **GOD IS NOT GREAT...How Religion Poisons Everything**

**Marilyn Sewell:** The religion you cite in your book is generally the fundamentalist faith of various kinds. I'm a liberal Christian, and I don't take the stories from the scripture literally. [I don't believe in the doctrine of atonement \(that Jesus died for our sins, for example\)](#). Do you make any distinction between fundamentalist faith and liberal religion?

**Christopher Hitchens:** I would say that if you don't believe that JESUS of Nazareth was the CHRIST and MESSIAH, and that he rose again from the dead and by his sacrifice sins are forgiven, **you're really not in any meaningful sense a Christian**.

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