SMITH FOR CHRIST · TEACHING THE WORD · WATCHING THE TIMES

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN · STUDY NOTES · THURSDAY JAN 7

John 8 · week 8 of 21

Before Abraham Was Born, I Am · The O·I·A study for the week

READ MONDAY – WEDNESDAY · MEET THURSDAY EVENING, JANUARY 7

Read along Monday through Wednesday: the chapter with the Berean marks, observation, interpretation with the four voices, word studies and application.

THE WEEK

Monday	Read John 8 straight through, then again with a pen and mark it · Mon, Jan 4
Tuesday	Read the study notes; answer the Observe questions and count the key words · Tue, Jan 5
Wednesday	Interpret, Weigh the Teachers, the Word study and Apply · Wed, Jan 6
Thursday evening	Together: watch the John 8 part of the film, go through the worksheet, pray · Thu, Jan 7

KEY VERSE

> **JOHN 8:58 · NASB**
>
> *"Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am."*

The chapter opens with a woman about to be stoned and ends with stones in the hands of men who "believed." In between, Jesus makes His boldest claims: the Light of the world, the Son who sets men free, the great I AM.

SMITH FOR CHRIST PUBLISHING · BEREAN DASHBOARD STUDY

John 8

Before Abraham Was Born, I Am — O·I·A, integrated with the Deep Dive

OBSERVATION · INTERPRETATION · APPLICATION · 2026-11-10 · NASB 1995

"Seeking God diligently — examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so." — Acts 17:11

CHAPTER THEME

Jesus is who He says He is — the Light of the world, the Son who makes slaves free, the I AM who was before Abraham. The question John 8 asks me is not whether I have an opinion about Him, but whether I follow Him, stay in His word, and live like a son of the Father.

00 The Text

JOHN 8 (NASB95), MARKED

HOW THIS STUDY IS MARKED — God — His character & actions · Command / instruction · Key repeated word · Sin / warning · Promise / blessing · Time / place / contrast

1 But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.

2 Early in the morning He came again into the temple, and all the people were coming to Him; and He sat down and began to teach them.

3 The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman caught in adultery, and having set her in the center of the court,

4 they said to Him, "Teacher, this woman has been caught in adultery, in the very act.

5 "Now in the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women; what then do You say?"

6 They were saying this, testing Him, so that they might have grounds for accusing Him. But Jesus stooped down and with His finger wrote on the ground.

7 But when they persisted in asking Him, He straightened up, and said to them, "He who is without sin among you, let him be the first to throw a stone at her."

8 Again He stooped down and wrote on the ground.

9 When they heard it, they began to go out one by one, beginning with the older ones, and He was left alone, and the woman, where she was, in the center of the court.

10 Straightening up, Jesus said to her, "Woman, where are they? Did no one condemn you?"

11 She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said, "I do not condemn you, either. Go. From now on sin no more."]

12 Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, "I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life."

13 So the Pharisees said to Him, "You are testifying about Yourself; Your testimony is not true."

14 Jesus answered and said to them, "Even if I testify about Myself, My testimony is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going; but you do not know where I come from or where I am going.

15 "You judge according to the flesh; I am not judging anyone.

16 "But even if I do judge, My judgment is true; for I am not alone in it, but I and the Father who sent Me.

17 "Even in your law it has been written that the testimony of two men is true.

18 "I am He who testifies about Myself, and the Father who sent Me testifies about Me."

19 So they were saying to Him, “Where is Your Father?” Jesus answered, “You know neither Me nor My Father; if you knew Me, you would know My Father also.”

20 These words He spoke in the treasury, as He taught in the temple; and no one seized Him, because His hour had not yet come.

21 Then He said again to them, “I go away, and you will seek Me, and will die in your sin; where I am going, you cannot come.”

22 So the Jews were saying, “Surely He will not kill Himself, will He, since He says, ‘Where I am going, you cannot come’?”

23 And He was saying to them, “You are from below, I am from above; you are of this world, I am not of this world.

24 “Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins.”

25 So they were saying to Him, “Who are You?” Jesus said to them, “What have I been saying to you from the beginning?

26 “I have many things to speak and to judge concerning you, but He who sent Me is true; and the things which I heard from Him, these I speak to the world.”

27 They did not realize that He had been speaking to them about the Father.

28 So Jesus said, “When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me.

29 “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.”

30 As He spoke these things, many came to believe in Him.

31 So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, “If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine;

32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.”

33 They answered Him, “We are Abraham’s descendants and have never yet been enslaved to anyone; how is it that You say, ‘You will become free’?”

34 Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin.

35 “The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son does remain forever.

36 “So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.

37 “I know that you are Abraham’s descendants; yet you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you.

38 “I speak the things which I have seen with My Father; therefore you also do the things which you heard from your father.”

39 They answered and said to Him, “Abraham is our father.” Jesus said to them, “If you are Abraham’s children, do the deeds of Abraham.

40 “But as it is, you are seeking to kill Me, a man who has told you the truth, which I heard from God; this Abraham did not do.

41 “You are doing the deeds of your father.” They said to Him, “We were not born of fornication; we have one Father: God.”

42 Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and have come from God, for I have not even come on My own initiative, but He sent Me.

43 “Why do you not understand what I am saying? It is because you cannot hear My word.

44 “You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

45 “But because I speak the truth, you do not believe Me.

46 “Which one of you convicts Me of sin? If I speak truth, why do you not believe Me?

47 “He who is of God hears the words of God; for this reason you do not hear them, because you are not of God.”

48 The Jews answered and said to Him, “Do we not say rightly 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 “But I do not seek My glory; there is One who seeks and judges.

51 “Truly, truly, I say to you, if anyone keeps My word he will never see death.”

52 The Jews said to Him, “Now we know that You have a demon. Abraham died, and the prophets also; and You say, ‘If anyone keeps My word, he will never taste of death.’

53 “Surely You are not greater than our father Abraham, who died? The prophets died too; whom do You make Yourself out to be?”

54 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 and you have not come to know Him, but I know Him; and if I say that I do not know Him, I will be a liar like you, but I do know Him and keep His word.

56 “Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad.”

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 born, I am.”

59 Therefore they picked up stones to throw at Him, but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple.

Marked in the text

- **v3** “a woman caught in adultery” — Sin / warning
- **v5** “in the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women” — Time / place / contrast
- **v7** “He who is without sin among you, let him be the first to throw a stone at her” — Command / instruction
- **v9** “they began to go out one by one” — Time / place / contrast
- **v11** “I do not condemn you, either” — Promise / blessing
- **v11** “From now on sin no more” — Command / instruction
- **v12** “I am the Light of the world” — God — His character & actions
- **v12** “will have the Light of life” — Promise / blessing
- **v17** “the testimony of two men is true” — Time / place / contrast
- **v20** “because His hour had not yet come” — Time / place / contrast
- **v21** “will die in your sin” — Sin / warning
- **v24** “unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins” — Sin / warning
- **v28** “When you lift up the Son of Man” — Time / place / contrast
- **v29** “I always do the things that are pleasing to Him” — God — His character & actions
- **v31** “If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine” — Command / instruction
- **v32** “the truth will make you free” — Promise / blessing
- **v34** “everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin” — Sin / warning
- **v36** “if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed” — Promise / blessing
- **v44** “You are of your father the devil” — Sin / warning
- **v44** “he is a liar and the father of lies” — Sin / warning
- **v47** “He who is of God hears the words of God” — Command / instruction
- **v51** “if anyone keeps My word he will never see death” — Promise / blessing
- **v56** “Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day” — Time / place / contrast
- **v58** “before Abraham was born, I am” — God — His character & actions
- **v59** “they picked up stones to throw at Him” — Sin / warning
- **v16** “Father” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v32** “truth” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v33** “Abraham” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)

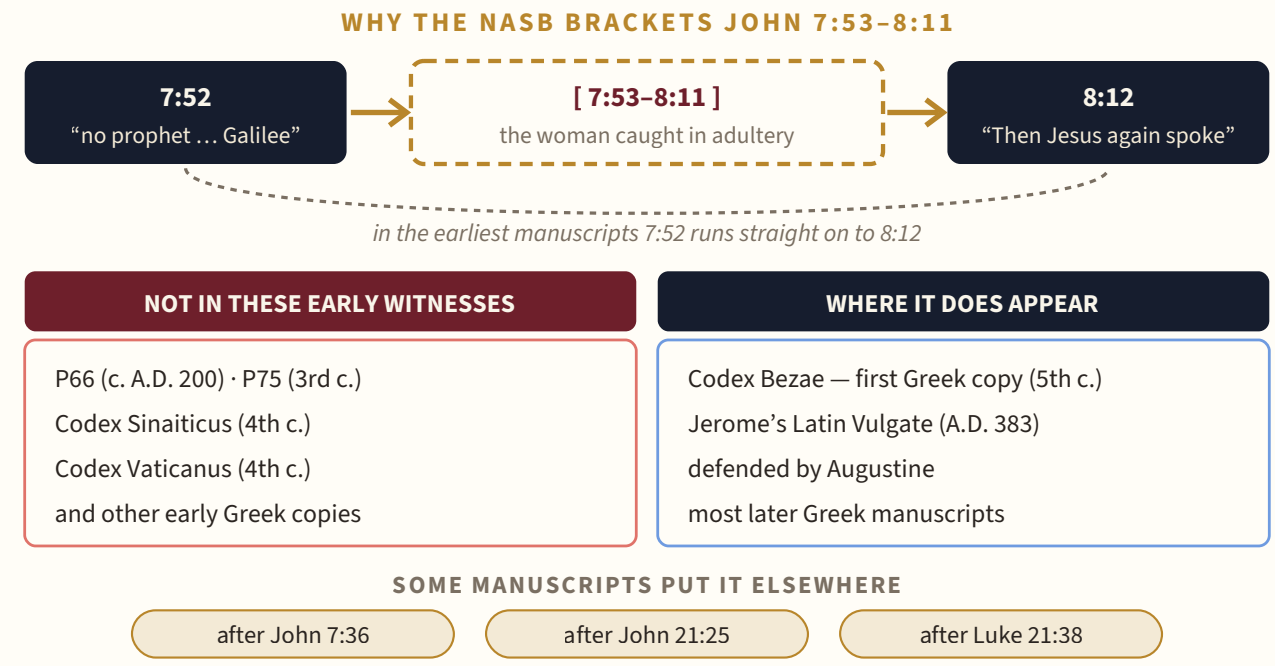
01 Observation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 8:24

"Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for ⚠unless you believe that I am He, ⚠you will die in your sins."

FIGURE · THE BRACKETED PASSAGE



The earliest copies of John go from 7:52 straight to 8:12; the story of the woman is found in later manuscripts, not always in the same place.

Setting. Still in the temple in Jerusalem, at or just after the Feast of Booths (John 7). The NASB brackets 7:53–8:11 — the woman caught in adultery — because the earliest manuscripts of John do not contain it; the bracket closes at the end of verse 11. From verse 12, "Jesus again spoke to them"; verse 20 places the words "in the treasury, as He taught in the temple." The chapter ends with Jesus going out of the temple (v59).

Structure:

- [7:53]–8:11 — **the woman and her accusers (bracketed):** Mount of Olives, then the temple at dawn (vv1–2). Scribes and Pharisees bring a woman "caught in adultery, in the very act" to test Him (vv3–6). He writes on the ground; "He who is without sin among you, let him be the first to throw a stone at her" (v7). They leave one by one, oldest first (v9). "I do not condemn you, either. Go. From now on sin no more" (v11).

- vv12–20 — **the Light of the world:** the claim (v12); "Your testimony is not true" (v13); Jesus and the Father as two witnesses (vv14–18); "Where is Your Father?" (v19); in the treasury, and no one seized Him (v20).
- vv21–30 — **die in your sins:** "where I am going, you cannot come" (vv21–22); from below / from above (v23); "unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins" (v24); "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He" (v28); "many came to believe in Him" (v30).
- vv31–36 — **truth and freedom:** "If you continue in My word … the truth will make you free" (vv31–32); "never yet been enslaved" (v33); the slave of sin; the son remains; "free indeed" (vv34–36).
- vv37–47 — **whose children:** Abraham's descendants who seek to kill Him (vv37–40); "we have one Father: God" (v41); "If God were your Father, you would love Me" (v42); "You are of your father the devil" (v44); "He who is of God hears the words of God" (v47).
- vv48–59 — **I AM:** "a Samaritan and have a demon" (v48); "if anyone keeps My word he will never see death" (v51); "Abraham died" (vv52–53); "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day" (v56); "before Abraham was born, I am" (v58); stones, and He goes out of the temple (v59).

Repeated words, with counts:

- "Father" (capital F, God) ×12 — vv16, 18, 19 (×3), 27, 28, 38, 41, 42, 49, 54; "father" (lowercase) ×8 — vv38, 39, 41, 44 (×3), 53, 56 — twenty in all, the chapter's great question.
- "Abraham / Abraham's" ×11 — vv33, 37, 39 (×3), 40, 52, 53, 56, 57, 58.
- "know / knew / known" ×13 — vv14 (×2), 19 (×3), 28, 32, 37, 52, 55 (×4).
- "speak / spoke" ×12 — vv12, 20, 26 (×2), 27, 28, 30, 38, 44 (×2), 45, 46.
- "true / truly" ×9 — vv13, 14, 16, 17, 26, 31, 34, 51, 58 ("Truly, truly" ×3 — vv34, 51, 58).
- "sin / sins" ×8 — vv7, 11, 21, 24 (×2), 34 (×2), 46.
- "die / died / death" ×8 — vv21, 24 (×2), 51, 52 (×2), 53 (×2).
- "testify / testifies / testimony" ×7 — vv13 (×2), 14 (×2), 17, 18 (×2).
- "truth" ×7 — vv32 (×2), 40, 44 (×2), 45, 46.
- "where" ×7 — vv9, 10, 14 (×4), 21; "hear / heard" ×7 — vv9, 26, 38, 40, 43, 47 (×2).
- "judge / judging / judgment / judges" ×6 — vv15 (×2), 16 (×2), 26, 50; "condemn" ×2 — vv10, 11.
- "word" ×6 — vv31, 37, 43, 51, 52, 55.
- "believe / believed" ×5 — vv24, 30, 31, 45, 46; "sent" ×5 — vv16, 18, 26, 29, 42; "seek(s)" ×5 — vv21, 37, 40, 50 (×2).
- "free" ×4 — vv32, 33, 36 (×2); "slave(s) / enslaved" ×3 — vv33, 34, 35.
- "glory / glorify / glorifies" ×4 — vv50, 54 (×3); "demon" ×3 — vv48, 49, 52; "kill" ×3 — vv22, 37, 40.
- "I am He" ×2 — vv24, 28; and the bare "I am" of v58; "Light" ×2 — v12.

Contrasts: condemnation ⟷ "I do not condemn you" (vv10–11). Darkness ⟷ the Light of life (v12). From below ⟷ from above; of this world ⟷ not of this world (v23). Slave ⟷ son; the house for a time ⟷ forever (v35). Abraham's descendants ⟷ Abraham's children (vv37–39). God as Father ⟷ the devil as father (vv42–44). Truth ⟷ lies (vv44–45). Honor ⟷ dishonor (v49). Never see death ⟷ Abraham died (vv51–53). Abraham came to be ⟷ "I am" (v58).

Shape of the chapter: a bracketed scene of mercy (1–11), then five rounds of claim and objection (12–20, 21–30, 31–36, 37–47, 48–59), each one sharper, until "I am" meets the stones. Those who "believed" in verse 31 are the ones holding rocks in verse 59.

Chapter theme (my words): Jesus tells the truth about who He is and who we are. He is the Light, the Son, the I AM; we are slaves of sin who need Him to set us free. Only those who stay in His word find out how free they really are.

02 Interpretation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT MEAN?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 8:58

"Jesus said to them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am.'"

FIGURE · I AM HE — I AM



Read down the steps: each "I am" goes further, until verse 58 uses the bare name of God — and the crowd answers with stones.

Is John 7:53–8:11 Scripture? — said plainly. The NASB prints it in brackets with a note that later manuscripts add it. The facts: it is absent from the earliest Greek copies of John (P66, P75, Sinaiticus, Vaticanus); the first Greek manuscript that has it is Codex Bezae; Jerome kept it in the Vulgate and Augustine defended it; some manuscripts put it after John 7:36, after John 21:25 or after Luke 21:38. Guzik: "it seems unlikely that this portion was part of the original text of John's gospel." Sproul: "Frankly, the best gospel of John manuscripts from antiquity do not include this story" — yet he reports that scholars also broadly judge it authentic and apostolic, and he preached it: "Whether it belongs here in John's gospel, at the end of Luke 21, or somewhere else, I leave for the ages." Spurgeon and Henry expound it as it stood in their Bibles (Henry even notes a phrase in v6 that "most copies have it not"). My position for the men I teach: we read it, we learn from it, we tell the truth about its history, and we don't build any doctrine on it alone. Nothing in it contradicts the rest of Scripture — Jesus says the same thing to the man at Bethesda: "do not sin anymore" (5:14).

What was the trap (vv3–6)? The Law required death for both the adulterer and the adulteress (Lev 20:10), and the witnesses' hands first (Deut 17:7). The man is missing. Sproul sees a vise between Rome and Moses: if Jesus says "stone her," He defies Rome, which reserved capital punishment; "If He says, 'Don't stone her,' He is in trouble with the Jewish authorities."

What did He write? No one knows. Guzik: "an endless source of speculation." Henry: "It is impossible to tell, and therefore needless to ask, what he wrote." Sproul quotes Calvin: "When God closes His holy mouth, let us desist from inquiry." I won't guess either.

"I do not condemn you, either" — is that soft on sin? No. Henry is careful that Christ would not take the office of a civil judge, "no judge nor divider"; Spurgeon, that "He condemned the sin, his own pure and holy life was the best condemnation of that." The order is the gospel: no condemnation, then "From now on sin no more." Pardon is not the reward for changing; it is the power to change.

The Light of the world (v12) and the two witnesses (vv13–18). Beside the great lamps of the feast (Guzik: lit "in the court of the women"), Jesus claims to be what the pillar of fire was to Israel (Exod 13:21) — light for the way. The Pharisees object that self-testimony proves nothing; Jesus answers with their own Law of two witnesses: Himself and the Father. Guzik: "those two witnesses exist; they are Jesus and His Father." Sproul: Jesus is not only a witness to the truth but truth incarnate; the problem is that they do not know the Father.

"I am He" (vv24, 28). The NASB italicizes "He" because the Greek has only *egō eimi*. Guzik: "The 'He' is rightly in italics and added by the translators" — the bare "I am" is "a claim to deity." Sproul: words that "call back to a title of God in the Old Testament." The background is Isaiah 43:10 — "that I am He." The stakes: "unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins." Sproul: "The only other way you can die is to die in your sins."

"When you lift up the Son of Man" (v28). "Lifted up" in John always means the cross (3:14; 12:32–34). Guzik: it "had nothing to do with 'exalting' Jesus in ways we normally think." Yet the cross is where He is most clearly seen. Henry: "When the Son of man was crucified, the Son of man was glorified."

Believers who pick up stones (vv30–59). Verse 30 says "many came to believe in Him," and verse 31 addresses "those Jews who had believed Him." By verse 59 they are reaching for rocks. Spurgeon: "There is such a thing as a temporary faith; beware of it." Sproul: "We must possess what we profess." Real disciples continue (*menō*) in His word.

What kind of freedom (vv32–36)? They claimed never to have been slaves — with Egypt, Babylon and Rome in their history. Jesus means a deeper bondage: "everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin." Guzik: "Slavery to sin is the worst kind of slavery, because there is no escape from our self." Sproul: "By nature you're slaves, you're slaves to your own wicked desires." Spurgeon: "we are not only free from, but we are free to." Henry: "Those whom Christ makes free are free indeed." The truth that frees is a Person — the Son (v36; 14:6).

"Your father the devil" (v44) — is Jesus being harsh? He is telling the truth that sonship is shown by likeness. Sproul: "You are the children of the one you obey," and "We are volunteers in the kingdom of darkness." Guzik cites Alford: "one of the most decisive testimonies for the objective personality of the devil." This is not a word against the Jewish people — Jesus, His disciples and the first church were Jews, and God's promises to Israel stand (Rom 11:1–2, 25–29). It is a word to every religious man, in any nation, who claims God and acts like the murderer and liar.

"Before Abraham was born, I am" (v58). Abraham *came to be*; Jesus *is*. Henry: "he does not say, I was, but I am." Spurgeon: "he claimed the Godhead, he declared that he was certainly God, self-existent from all eternity." Sproul calls it the most dramatic of all the I AM sayings. Guzik: the voice of the covenant God at the burning bush (Exod

3:14). The stones in verse 59 settle the question of what they heard: blasphemy carried the death penalty (Lev 24:16). And Abraham "rejoiced to see My day" (v56) — he saw the promise from a distance (Heb 11:13) and was glad.

Word study (Greek):

- **without sin — *anamartētos* (G361):** sinless; only John 8:7.
- **condemn — *katakrinō* (G2632):** pass the sentence against (vv10–11; Rom 8:34).
- **light — *phōs* (G5457):** light; God's self-revelation (v12; 1:4–9).
- **treasury — *gazophylakion* (G1049):** the offering chests, Court of the Women (v20; Mark 12:41).
- **I am — *eimi* (G1510):** *egō eimi* with no predicate (vv24, 28, 58).
- **lift up — *hypsoō* (G5312):** raise high; in John always the cross (3:14; 8:28; 12:32, 34).
- **continue — *menō* (G3306):** remain, abide (vv31, 35).
- **make free — *eleutheroō* (G1659):** set free; John 8:32, 36; Rom 6:18, 22; 8:2, 21; Gal 5:1.
- **indeed — *ontōs* (G3689):** really, actually (v36).
- **murderer — *anthrōpoktonos* (G443):** man-killer; only John 8:44 and 1 John 3:15.
- **rejoiced — *agalliaō* (G21):** leaped for joy (v56).
- **was born — *ginomai* (G1096):** came into being — set against "I am" (v58).

Key insights to carry (from the Deep Dive):

1. **Honesty about the text honors the text** — the bracket is there for a reason, and we can say so.
2. **No condemnation, then "sin no more"** — pardon first, then holiness (8:11).
3. **Only the sinless could throw the first stone** — and He didn't (Guzik).
4. **The Light was spoken beside the lamps** — in the treasury, at the feast (8:12, 20).
5. **"I am He" — the "He" is not in the Greek** (vv24, 28; Isa 43:10).
6. **The cross is where He is known** (v28) — crucified and glorified (Henry).
7. **Believing is not the same as continuing** (vv30–31, 59) — beware a temporary faith (Spurgeon).
8. **The worst slavery is to self** (Guzik); the Son makes free *ontōs*, really (v36).
9. **You are the child of the one you obey** (Sproul; vv39–47).
10. **Not "I was" but "I am"** (v58) — and the stones prove they understood.

Cross-references: Gen 3:4; 22:8, 18; Exod 3:14; 13:21; Lev 20:10; 24:16; Deut 17:6–7; 19:15; Ps 27:1; Isa 9:2; 42:6; 43:10; 49:6; Matt 7:3–5; Mark 12:41–43; Luke 1:47; 21:38; John 1:4–9; 3:14; 5:14; 7:37–38; 12:32–34; 14:6; 15:4–10; Rom 5:12; 6:17–18; 8:1, 34; 11:1–2, 25–29; Gal 5:1; Heb 11:13; 1 John 1:7; 3:8, 12, 15.

03 Application

HOW DOES IT CHANGE ME?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 8:36

"So △ if the Son makes you free, ☆ you will be free indeed."

FIGURE · WHOSE CHILDREN ARE YOU?

JOHN 8:37–47	WHAT A TRUE CHILD DOES	WHAT THEY WERE DOING
ABRAHAM	"do the deeds of Abraham" (v39)	"seeking to kill Me … this Abraham did not do" (v40)
GOD	"If God were your Father, you would love Me" (v42)	"you cannot hear My word" (v43)
THE DEVIL	Jesus speaks what He has seen with His Father (v38)	"a murderer from the beginning … a liar and the father of lies" (v44)
HEARING	"He who is of God hears the words of God" (v47)	"you do not hear them, because you are not of God" (v47)

Sproul: "You are the children of the one you obey."

Jesus tests every claim to a father by what the son does — Abraham's deeds, God's love, the devil's murder and lies, and whether a man hears.

Promise to trust — "I do not condemn you, either." I know men who were dragged into a public place and had their sin read out — in a courtroom, in a newspaper, in front of their kids. Some of them still hear the crowd. I've heard my own. I tell them honestly that this story is bracketed in our Bibles, and then I tell them what the whole Bible says just as plainly: "there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Rom 8:1). The Judge who alone could throw the stone put it down.

Command to obey — "From now on sin no more." Mercy is not permission. Jesus did not say, "Go, it doesn't matter." He said, "Go. From now on sin no more." Pardon is the power to change, not a pass to stay the same. This week I will name the thing I keep going back to and, with a brother, cut off the road back to it.

Sin to confess — picking up stones. I can be quick to grab a rock — the man who relapsed, the brother who failed, the one whose sin is uglier than mine. Verse 9 says they left "one by one, beginning with the older ones." The longer I live, the more I should know my own heart. I confess my stones.

Example to follow — the Light, and following Him. "He who follows Me will not walk in the darkness" (v12). Following is a daily walk, not a one-time decision. I want to bring the hidden things into His light before they grow in the dark.

Command to obey — continue in His word. The men who "believed" in verse 31 held stones in verse 59. I have seen jailhouse faith evaporate in the parking lot on release day. Real freedom comes to the man who stays in the word — daily, when it's dull, when it convicts him.

Promise to trust — free indeed. "Everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin" — I don't have to be told; I've lived it. But "if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed." Not free in name. Really free. Spurgeon is right: free from, and free to.

Truth to live in — whose son am I? Jesus tested every claim to a father by the son's deeds. Sproul: "You are the children of the one you obey." My family resemblance shows in what I do with the truth, how I treat the man in front of me, and whether I hear God's words.

Questions for the table (from the Deep Dive):

1. Which voice condemns me most loudly — my own, someone else's, the accuser's? What does Jesus say to that voice in 8:10–11? (8:10–11; Rom 8:1) *Pardon first, then "sin no more" — never the other way around.*
2. When I'm quick to pick up a stone against another man, what sin of my own am I ignoring? (8:7–9; Matt 7:3–5) *"He who is without sin among you …"*
3. Where am I still walking in darkness — a habit, a secret, a resentment — that I need to bring into His light? (8:12; 1 John 1:7) *The follower "will not walk in the darkness."*
4. Am I continuing in His word, or did I believe once and drift? What does staying put look like for me this week? (8:31–32) *A temporary faith is not a saving faith (Spurgeon).*
5. What chain still holds me, and have I ever asked the Son — not my willpower — to make me free indeed? (8:34–36; Rom 6:18) *Habits are the chains which slaves wear; the Son breaks them.*
6. If someone judged my father by my deeds this week, whom would they say I belong to? (8:39–44; 1 John 3:8) *You are the children of the one you obey (Sproul).*

Worship. Before Abraham was born, He is. The God who spoke from the burning bush stood in the temple treasury and said, "I am." The Light of the world walked into the darkness of the cross so that men who walk in darkness could have the Light of life. He who is without sin did not throw the stone — He took the stones.

Prayer. Lord Jesus, You are the I AM, the Light of the world, the Son who sets slaves free. Thank You that You do not condemn me. Now give me the power to go and sin no more. Shine into the places I have kept dark. Keep me in Your word when my faith feels thin. Break the chains I could never break, and make me free indeed. Make me look like my Father, so that the men around me see Your family in me. Take the stones out of my hands. Amen.

Scripture: New American Standard Bible® (NASB), © 1960–1995 The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission. · Teacher material summarized from David Guzik (Enduring Word), R.C. Sproul (Ligonier), C.H. Spurgeon and Matthew Henry — see John-8-Deep-Dive-Four-Voices.pdf for sources. · Importable: the companion .md carries the berean-study block.