



Abide In My Word (Pt2)

Start your time together with someone's *Story of Faith* (a testimony of life before Jesus, meeting Jesus, joys and challenges now) or by sharing *Evidences of God's grace* together as a group (evidences of God at work to fulfill His purposes in & through us).

OPENING COMMENT

Jesus wasn't just a good man or a great man. He wasn't just a prophet or a super-prophet. The Jesus revealed in the Gospel of John is the Jesus who declares, "I AM" — nothing short of God. Orthodox Christian faith is built upon the rich doctrine of both the *Human* and *Divine* natures of Jesus Christ.

What big takeaway or truth from the Word stood out to you from Sunday's sermon?

READ THE TEXT: John 8:48-59

⁴⁸The Jews answered him, "Are we not right in saying that you are a Samaritan and have a demon?" ⁴⁹Jesus answered, "I do not have a demon, but I honor my Father, and you dishonor me. ⁵⁰Yet I do not seek my own glory; there is One who seeks it, and he is the judge. ⁵¹Truly, truly, I say to you, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death." ⁵²The 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.'" ⁵³Are you greater than our father Abraham, who died? And the prophets died! Who do you make yourself out to be?" ⁵⁴Jesus answered, "If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing. It is my Father who glorifies me, of whom you say, 'He is our God.'" ⁵⁵But 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. ⁵⁶Your father Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day. He saw it and was glad." ⁵⁷So the Jews said to him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham?" ⁵⁸Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am." ⁵⁹So they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple.



3 POINTED QUESTIONS, 3 EXTRAORDINARY RESPONSES

1.Q. Are you not a Samaritan and demon-possessed? (48)

1. Have you ever been called names or looked down upon for your faith in Jesus?
2. Read John 8:47. They accuse Jesus of being a demon-possessed Samaritan because He's telling them that they don't know God. In sharing your faith with others, how do you navigate the contentious issue (that Jesus faces here) in the exclusivity of Christ, Jesus as the only way of salvation?

1.R. Jesus denied those accusations and declared, *“if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death”* (51)

1. Read Acts 7:54-60 and 1 Thessalonians 4:13-14 and discuss the New Testament writers' view of death for the Christian.

II.Q. Are you greater than Abraham and the prophets? (53)

II.R. Jesus responded, *“Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day and he saw it and was glad”* (56)

1. Abraham looked forward to what Jesus would accomplish in the future as the pinnacle of the promise of God. He rejoiced about the arrival of Jesus as God's great redemptive rescue mission plan from eternity past. Abraham looked forward and rejoiced, we can look back at the finished work of Christ and rejoice. What responsibility do we have as Christians who believe Jesus saves? (Read texts like these if you want to insert them into the conversation Matthew 24:14; 28:18-20; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21)

III.Q. How could you possibly have seen Abraham? (57)

III.R. Jesus responds, *“before Abraham was, I AM”* (58)

1. David F. Wright condenses Arius' teaching on the nature of God to one short paragraph: *“The Father alone was really God; the Son was essentially different from his Father. He did not possess by nature or right any of the divine qualities of immortality, sovereignty, perfect wisdom, goodness and purity. He did not exist before he was begotten by the Father. The Father produced him as a creature. Yet as the creator of the rest of creation, the Son existed ‘apart from time before all things’. Nevertheless, he did not share in the being of God the Father and did not know him perfectly.”*



Discuss all the ways that you can think of that this view contradicts Christian doctrine?

2. If Jesus is not a created being like Arius contended, what do we make of a text like Colossians 1:15?

Read Colossians 1:15-18, 2:9, Psalm 89:27 and Galatians 4:4-7 for context (it is a title of honour and refers to Christ being given all "the rights and privileges of a firstborn son, especially the son of royalty who would inherit ruling sovereignty).

3. *History Lesson:* The teachings of Arius were officially condemned at the Council of Nicaea. It was at this council that the Nicene Creed was crafted. Here is the section of the creed that the Christian Church believe as pertaining to the Person of Jesus Christ. Read it to the group. Discuss any confusion or question anyone may have:
And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, begotten from the Father before all ages, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made; of the same essence as the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven; he became incarnate by the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary, and was made human. He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate; he suffered and was buried. The third day he rose again, according to the Scriptures. He ascended to heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again with glory to judge the living and the dead. His kingdom will never end.

4. Pastor Matt shared just a couple of the ways that our One God in Three Persons (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) uniquely answer our biggest problems:

A) Only the Triune God can be love above all things. Because before anything was created with the power of God, perfect love already existed amongst the Trinity. A monotheistic God would be power above all things, needing to create with his power in order to have something to love...

B) Only the Triune God can both rule and reign and sacrificially die. A monotheistic God can only show mercy with no consequence (and therefore be unjust) or hold everyone to unachievable standards (strict moralism). Our Triune God both paid the penalty for our sin through the sacrificial atonement of the Son, while satisfying the wrath and justice of God in order to be truly fair and loving.

Are there any other ways in which you have come to see the beauty, wonder, and grace of God in His Trinitarian nature?

SHARE & PRAY

- Praise God for who He is, for Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Praise Him for the ways each member of the godhead minister to you.
- Take some time to thank God for what He is doing in your lives.
- Conclude by spending some time praying for one another, the growth in grace you want to experience, and the needs among you.

