

## Those Who Can't Accept the Truth resort to Violence

John 8:48-59

Facilitator: Rev Vera Rhyne

### **I. Biblical Background**

Unlike the synoptic gospels that focus on Jesus's doings, John's Gospel focus more on Who Jesus is, the deity of Jesus. (John 20:30-31, "Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name"). John's Gospel from the beginning informs us that Jesus was God who existed prior to and was God's agent in creation. (Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth"). (John 1:1-3; and 28, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known"). It was not because Jesus was a good teacher, a moral man, a good preacher, or some other reasons as to why the Jews wanted to do him harm but it was because unapologetically, in word and deed, by verbal proclamation and confession, and by prophetic and miraculous demonstration he claimed to be God.

We see that some of the Jewish leaders refused to accept the truth. They refused to accept the deity of Jesus as God. When people adamantly refuse to accept and believe the truth, they will resort to ungodly actions. They can be hostile, slanderous, hateful, hurtful, and even murderous. We see these actions throughout and to the end of Jesus' ministry. The more Jesus taught and preached the truth, the more Jewish leaders plotted and planned to bring harm and eventually death to Him.

Their actions were not surprising to Jesus for he knows the hearts and minds of all people. (John 2:24, "But Jesus would not entrust himself to them, for he knew all people. He did not need any testimony about mankind, for he knew what was in each person.") and

(Matthew 9:4. “Knowing their thoughts, Jesus said, “Why do you entertain evil thoughts in your hearts?”). The good news is for those that accept the truth are freed by the Son of Man, God himself from eternal condemnation and bondage. Accepting Jesus for who he is gives us life and life more abundantly. It gives us an eternal home.

## II. The Lesson: Those Who Can't Accept the Truth resort to Violence

1. **VV. 48-51.** Previously Jesus had posed three questions and responses to the Jews concerning their lack of belief and accepting the truth that He is God. He asked, “Why is my language not clear to you?” He then responded, because you are unable to hear what I say.” He further stated that they belong to their father, the devil and want to carry out his desires. The devil was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he is speaking his native language for he is not only a liar but a father of lies. Jesus last two questions were, “Can any of you prove me guilty of sin? If I am telling the truth, why don't you believe me?” He then responded to his questions with this answer, “Whoever belongs to God hears what God says. The reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God.” At this point, the Jews are very frustrated, angry, infuriated and outdone. In their arrogant ways, they pose a question that seems more like a statement, “Aren't we right in saying that you are a Samaritan and demon possessed?” Calling a Jew a Samaritan was a racist insult and put down. Samaritans were not highly thought of by the Jews. In fact, the Jews despised them and had no socialization with them but Jesus had shown compassion and love toward them. Jesus knew the hearts and intents of the Jews, he did not address the foolishness of him being a Samaritan. He, however, address the seriousness of them saying that he was demon possessed.

Saying a holy God was demon possessed. They did not know what they were saying because they did not know Jesus. Jesus further responded that he honored his Father but they dishonor him. Jesus was not seeking glory for himself. He had come to the will of the Father. He lived a life so the Father could get the glory. (John 5:41-42, “I do not accept glory from human beings, but I know you, I know that you do not have the love of God in your hearts”). Jesus further stated that, “Very truly I tell you, whoever obeys my word will never see death.”

**2. VV. 52-53.**

The Jews became more outraged over Jesus saying that those who obeys his word will never see death. They declared, “Now we know that you are demon possessed!” Because they acted and talked like their father the devil, who is the father of lies, as usual they twisted the Word. Jesus said never see death, they stated, never taste death. It is certain that everyone will die a physically death. For the Word of God clearly states that we all have an appointed time to die physically but if we are believers in Jesus Christ we shall live eternally. For Jesus said to Martha after raising her brother Lazarus from the grave, “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die.”

That is good news for those who believe in Jesus. (Hebrews 9:27-28; “Just as people are destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.”) (Ecclesiastes 9:5, “A time to be born and a time to die”).

The Jews twisting the Word to their own lack of understanding and belief saying that Jesus said, you will never taste death. They questioned Jesus asking him if since Abraham and prophets died, is he greater than them.

**3. VV. 54-56.**

Jesus stated that he had not come to glorified himself. Jesus was about his Father’s business and fulfilling his purpose for which he had come. He wasn’t trying to make a name for himself. He knew his Father would glorify him. Jesus told the Jews that they did not know the Father and if he said he didn’t know Him, he would be a liar like they are. If Jesus had denied the Father, he would had in essence denied himself. For he and the Father are one. When Jesus stated that Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing his day; he saw it and was glad. Jesus was the fulfillment of God’s promise made to Abraham. (Hebrews 11:13, “All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance, admitting that they were foreigners and strangers on earth”). If the Jews were truly Abraham’s children, they would have been rejoicing to see and to

believe on Jesus as the Son of God, the Messiah, and the Savior of the world instead of trying to harm Jesus.

4. **VV. 57-59.**

Jesus really blew them away when he stated that before Abraham was born, **I am**. They knew that Jesus was not yet fifty years old and yet how could it be that he was before Abraham. It is at this moment that Jesus boldly claimed to have existed before Abraham. This is a declaration that he is the eternal God -- **The I AM** who was first mentioned in Exodus 3:13-14, "Moses said to God, "Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, "The God of your fathers has sent me to you, and they ask me, "What is his name?" Then what shall I tell them?" God said to Moses, "**I AM WHO I AM**. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: **I AM** sent me to you." Because the Jews understood that to be the name of God and he was claiming to be God, they accused him of blasphemy. The punishment for blasphemy to be stone to death. So they picked stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself and slipped away from the temple grounds. **Those Who Cannot Accept the Truth resort to Violence.**