

Before Abraham was, “I AM”

Week 3 Study Questions

[John 8:31-59](#)

In John 8, Jesus is speaking to a group of morally-upright people. They have checked every box and followed every religious rule, yet Jesus responds to them in an unexpected way. He challenges their perspective on how they try to receive Jesus on their own terms, identifying the true standard by which God evaluates character and warning them against finding their identity in Abraham rather than in the One who was, is, and will be.

Application

1. "This section of the discourse is addressed to those who believe and yet do not believe. Clearly they were inclined to think that what Jesus said was true. But they were not prepared to yield to Him the far-reaching allegiance that real trust in Him implies. This is a most dangerous spiritual state."
When Bill first read this quote by Leon Morris, what was your initial reaction regarding how accurately this represents your faith and spiritual state? After reflecting on the quote, in what ways do you feel or not feel prepared to yield to Jesus the far-reaching allegiance that *real* trust in Him implies? What does this look like in your own life?
2. While Jesus holds Himself out to the people, they reject Him because they are unwilling to accept the reality of who they are in their own minds—it is a part of the human condition to live constantly deceiving ourselves of our own frailty and sinfulness. In what ways do you distract yourself from the reality of who you really are? How have you seen in your past the ways you can deceive yourself of your brokenness?
3. A person's character is revealed by how he or she responds to Jesus. Jesus explains that the issue is not intellectual, or even theological, but rather willing unbelief. In our natural state, we are unbelieving. How are you currently struggling with unbelief? Do you respond to Jesus in humility and understanding of your brokenness or in a posture of defensiveness?
4. How do you try to negotiate the terms by which you follow Jesus instead of accepting Him as He is? In what ways do you attempt to dumb Him down so that He is less threatening and easier for you to understand? What is the thing you try to make of Him (e.g. a “family values Jesus,” a “social justice” Jesus, a “God and country” Jesus, a “prosperity Jesus,” etc.)?

Key Points

- We tend to remain out of touch with the reality of our situation, not able to admit that we are just one or two circumstances away from the most desperate situation we can ever imagine. But, as Jack (John) Miller puts it, “Cheer up! You’re a worse sinner than you ever dared imagine, and you’re more loved than you ever dared hope.”
- Everything that *is* flows through Him.
- Your character is not revealed by your external or cultural conformity to some standard but by how you receive Jesus on His terms.
- Our hope is not that we can justify that we are right, but to know we are free because the Son has set us free.

Scripture References

[Exodus 3:13-14](#)

[Revelations 3](#)

[John 6](#)