

## John 8:39-59 – The Devil’s Children

The parable of the sower is found in Luke 8:4-15. Jesus talked about seed sown on rocky soil. Luke 8:13 says that “they believe for a while, and in time of testing fall away.” This is why, in John 8:31, Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, “if you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples.” While the Gospel of John states that believing in Jesus results in eternal life, we must understand what this “believing” involves. Just believing that Jesus is a good man, a good teacher or a miracle worker falls short. A belief which does not endure also falls short. When John 8:30 says that “many believed in him”, let’s not jump to conclusions. What did they believe about Jesus? Did they continue in their belief? We should follow Jesus’ lead found in John 2:23-25. When many believed in his name when they saw the signs, Jesus did not entrust himself to them because he knew what people were like. Those whom the Father has given to the Son believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God and they continue in that belief. Jesus will not loose any of those whom the Father has given to him. (John 6:39)

Another word to consider is “Jews”. Sometimes John used “Jews” in a general way. An example is when Nicodemus was referred to as a “Ruler of the Jews.” At other times, John used “Jews” to refer to the Jewish religious leaders. In 1:19, “the Jews sent priests and Levites.” In 1:24 we learn that the priests and Levites had been sent from the Pharisees. In chapter 5, the religious leaders were the ones who wanted to kill Jesus and not the general Jewish population. It is interesting to note that Jesus was speaking in the temple. Only Jews were allowed in the temple. So, when John says “the Jews who had believed in him” it is possible that Jesus was singling out the Pharisees and other religious leaders. In chapter seven, the general public’s reaction to Jesus was all over the place and they had a lot of questions. In 8:31-59, Jesus’ discussion with the Jews who believed in him was different. These people were very sure of themselves and easily offended when Jesus implied that they were deficient. When Jesus said something difficult to the general public, they got confused and left. When Jesus said something difficult to the Pharisees, they got angry and wanted to kill him.

### **Read John 8:39-47.**

In 8:31-38, the people speaking with Jesus were offended when Jesus said that they would be free. They proudly proclaimed that they were descendants of Abraham and were never enslaved. Jesus said that they were slaves to sin and that they did what their father told them. They were again offended and stated that Abraham was their father. What evidence did Jesus give that Abraham was not their father? (8:39-41)

When Jesus questioned whether they were really children of Abraham, how did they respond? Who did they now say was their father? (8:41)

What evidence did Jesus give that God was not their father? (8:42-43)

Who did Jesus say was their father? What were the characteristics of their father? How were they like him? (8:44)

Why were they not able to believe? (8:45-47)

**Read John 8:48-59.**

After Jesus accused them of being the devil's children, what accusation did they make about Jesus? How did Jesus respond to their accusation? (8:48-50)

How did they respond when Jesus said that if anyone kept his word they would never see death? (8:51-53)

What did Jesus reveal about himself and his relationship with God the Father? What did Jesus say about "the Jews" and their relationship to God? (8:54-55)

What did Jesus say about himself and his relationship with Abraham that made the Jews want to stone him on the spot? What is the significance of Jesus saying "I am"? (8:56-59)

Note that the Jews wanted to kill the Son of God in the place where God chose his name to dwell on earth. (8:59)

Notice the contrast between how Jesus talked to the Samaritan woman and how he talked to the Jewish religious leaders. His words to the Samaritan woman were gracious but also contained words of correction when needed. How would you describe Jesus' discussion with the Jewish leaders in this passage? How do you account for the difference in how Jesus talked to people? What application does this have for us when we talk to different people about Jesus?