

Do You Know Who Your Father Is?

It is the Gospel of John Chapter 8 from where I derive the thoughts that have resulted in the subject question. After the episode regarding the woman caught in adultery, Jesus resumed His teaching in the Temple yard. The Scribes and Pharisees were there along with His many disciples. His first message as He resumed His teaching was to proclaim Himself to be the light of the world. This caused His opponents to again interrupt and challenge this claim because it lacked the testimony of two or more witnesses. When Jesus brought God His Father into the discussion, the issue of fatherhood became the prime focus of what followed. The gist of it in the context of our subject was a discourse regarding who was the father of whom.

The Jews, recalling the rumor that circulated at the time of Jesus' birth, claimed that Jesus was the product of adultery, while they were all the unadulterated seed of Abraham. Refusing to believe that Jesus was born of a virgin and therefore the fulfillment of prophecy regarding the Messiah, they long ago had woven a tale about a Romans soldier as being His real father. On the other hand, it had become a traditional belief that all who could claim Abraham as their ancestor were automatically God's chosen to eternal life. Jesus admitted that they were the "seed of Abraham" (Jesus was also), however in John 8:44 He tells the Pharisees and Scribes that "*Ye are of your father the devil*" By the authority of Christ Jesus, this established the fact that their spiritual father was actually Satan, and not God. Of course, they were greatly angered and offended by such a "ridiculously" accusation.

How could Jesus claim that their father was the devil? Because they followed him in their evil ways of lusts, lies, pride, etc., instead of believing Him and the Father God who sent Him. The Jews could not understand this because they were focused only on the physical realm such as being Abraham's seed, and could not recognize their own hypocrisy. Their tradition had convinced them that as Abrahams seed, they were automatically saved, and thus were immune to Satan's powers. However, they had no

problem attributing Satan's power to anyone who disagreed with their "righteous" conduct and teachings.

As we delve further into Jesus' teachings, we must draw the conclusion that spiritually speaking, the whole world is divided into two peoples, those whose Father is God through their belief and faith in Jesus, and those whose father is Satan. This division was well established by Jesus in many of His teachings. Read 1John 3:7-10 where John also nails down this fact quite firmly. *7 Little children let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. 8 He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. 9 Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. 10 In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.*"

From verse 7 of 1John 3, we learn that one who does righteousness is righteous even as Jesus is righteous. The Greek word for righteous is the same as for being justified and of course being justified means having received salvation and therefore having become a son or daughter of God.

By far, these verses are not among the easiest to understand. Verse 7 tells us that those righteous things are righteous. Unless one has the indwelling Holy Spirit, that is unless one is a born of God Christian, then there is no possibility of doing anything that is righteous in God's eyes. Verse 9 where it speaks of the righteous not being able to sin, must be taken in the broader biblical context. I believe that it can be understood two ways. First, having been saved, they cannot sin any sin that will take away their salvation. Second, we must consider the many Scriptural references to the fact that saved souls do sin, and continue to sin. This seeming inconsistency with verse 9, is explained by the fact that the truly saved cannot sin deliberately and consistently. They hate their sins, confess them, and are then freed from the debilitating effects of them. Thus, those who sin as described in verse 9 are not redeemed souls.

From all of this we can surely conclude that everyone in the world has a spiritual father that is either God or Satan. Many of the world's people believe in many gods or some singular God who is not the God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob. They believe that their god is the real god. However, unless their god is the God of the Holy Bible, the Triune God who Authored the Holy Bible, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, their god is nothing more than a human concoction imagined into existence through the influence of the father of lies. As the father of lies, he becomes the father of those who believe his lies. Thus, the most important question anyone can ask regarding their own eternal destiny is, do you know which one is your father?

Scripture, with great certainty and clarity provides only these two choices, there is no third choice. Who will admit that Satan is their father? Essentially no one. Only those who are born-again and therefore justified through a true saving faith in Jesus have the right to call our Creator God, the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob as their spiritual Father. Because the rest of the world cannot make that claim, it is evident that Satan is their spiritual father with whom they will spend eternity, like it or not. They cannot and will not believe this because they refuse to accept the truth of the God -Authored Book called the Holy Bible, and the truth about Jesus who is its central theme and focus.

How can all of this be? How can anyone be a son or daughter of Satan, spiritually or otherwise? Why isn't there a third choice? What about all of the good virtuous people of the world who never heard of Satan, or who do know of him, and want nothing to do with him? Has God given Satan some sort of authority or power to be a spiritual father of all human beings not born-again through Jesus? The answer to these questions involves an understanding of what happened in the Garden of Eden and its subsequent ramifications. As we all know, Satan persuaded Eve to exercise her free will to act contrary to God's will, which by definition was a sin. Adam of course, then knowingly followed suit. Thus sin entered and contaminated every aspect of the perfect sinless world that God had created. God had previously pronounced death for them if they were to introduce to the world a will other than His, which again by definition constituted sin. We all know this story and what continued to happen thenceforth as sin proliferated.

A major problem had been created by that first sin. God's perfect world was no longer perfect, nor were His son or His daughter, His prized creation, a creation He had made spiritually in His own image. With sin in his heart, mankind was no longer of God's image, and thus no longer acceptable or qualified to be His son or daughter, as had been the case prior to sin. Thus sinful mankind and the entire fallen world were given over to Satan, the father of sin. Man, having forfeited his right to be a son of God was given over as a stepson to Satan the one with whom he now has a closer spiritual resemblance.

However, God has never stopped loving His creation, and wants man to return to Him, but man cannot do this by himself. Therefore, God provided him with a Savior, Jesus, who will restore man if only he will confess and repent, and seek restoration of his adoptive sonship to the Father through Christ Jesus.