

Universal Fatherhood—a Lie!

by C.H. Spurgeon

C.H. Spurgeon passionately refutes the doctrine of universal fatherhood, emphasizing that true children of God are born again and bear the nature of their heavenly Father, contrasting sharply with those who follow the devil as their father.

Scripture: John 8:38, John 3:16, John 3:3, John 8:44, Romans 8:7, 1 John 3:1, Genesis 18:25, Psalm 2:7

Topics: "Divine Fatherhood", "Spiritual Regeneration"

Description

In this compelling sermon, C.H. Spurgeon challenges the popular notion of universal fatherhood by emphasizing the biblical truth that only those born again are truly children of God. He contrasts the divine fatherhood of God with the fatherhood of the devil, revealing the spiritual realities behind these two families. Spurgeon calls believers to recognize their true nature in Christ and to live out the character of their heavenly Father with holiness and truth.

Transcript

"I speak that which I have seen with My Father: and you do that which you have seen with your father." John 8:38.

THESE were the words of Christ to those who beset Him round about with angry eyes and cruel tongues. Our Lord declared that He had been with His Father before He spoke with those wicked Jews. And, indeed, He had been, for He was with the Father before the worlds were formed. He saw all that the Father did and He helped in doing it—"Without Him was not anything made that was made." He was the Father's eternal delight. The relationship of father and son among man implies that one exists before the other, but it is not so implied in the relationship of the eternal Father and Son. We know not how to explain this great mystery, for the terms Father and Son are only the nearest approximation that can be given to our poor understandings of the relationship which exists between them. Yet is the Father eternal and the Son eternal—the Son coequal and coeternal with the Father. Our Lord had an existence before He was born of Mary—He had an everlasting existence. His goings forth were from of old, even from eternity. Though He is unto us the Child born and the Son given, yet He is equally, "the Everlasting Father," who was and is and ever shall be One with the eternal God.

We learn, from what Christ said, that He knows all the Father's mind. He understands the very essence of the Godhead. He is acquainted with the purposes that are kept secret from men and angels. As God, He knows what none of us can know till the day shall declare it and there is nothing in the Father's heart that

is hidden from Him. As the Son of Man, He knew not all things, for He grew up as a child and increased in knowledge. And He said, "Of that day and that hour knows no man, no, not the angels which are in Heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." But as Divine, He is acquainted with all the Father's heart, mind, will, desire, purpose and plan. The very heart of God is read by His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who dwells in it and is One with Him.

We ought to be very grateful that the Son of God has come into the world and told us all that we need to know concerning the Father. "I speak," He says, "that which I have seen with My Father." First He saw it all with such an eye as no one else has—and then He came here and spoke of it all, or as much of it as it was possible and wise for man to receive. Let us rejoice in the preaching of Christ, because He testified what He had seen. What He said was no theory, no guesswork—He revealed facts and that which He has told us concerning God is stamped with the solemn seal of Infallible Truth, for Christ cannot err or make mistakes. He has told us what He has seen and testified what He has known. Oh, for Divine Grace to receive His witness! He that does receive it shall live forever—He that rejects it shall die the death that never dies!

Then, at the back of this follows another very consolatory thought—that if Christ's teaching is, indeed, the revelation of what He has seen with the Father, then we are quite certain, since God is never inconsistent with Himself, that there is nothing in the secret purpose and design of God which is contrary to the Gospel which Christ has revealed. When I read, therefore, "Whoever will, let him take the water of life freely," I need not fear lest any doctrine of election or predestination will be in conflict with that invitation! If I hear Christ say, "He that believes on Me has everlasting life," I may be quite sure that it is so. There is nothing in the sealed Book of the Divine Decrees that is contrary to the open Book of Divine Revelation. There is no passage in the mysterious roll of destiny that, rightly understood, can conflict in any degree with any part of the Volume which the Spirit of God has given us. This ought to make us very glad. I may sit down and pore over the tremendous mysteries of fixed fate, foreknowledge, predestination and the like until I confuse my mind and make my spirit heavy with a thousand gloomy thoughts about things I cannot understand—but what a mercy it is to say, "He has said, 'He that believes and is baptized shall be saved.' "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.'" It cannot be that God is keeping back in His mind something that is contrary to what He has spoken—"God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent: has He said, and shall He not do it? Or has He spoken and shall He not make it good?" I rejoice to know that neither has Christ seen wrongly, nor is there anything which He has seen which would conflict with what He has said to us!

I want you, dear Friends, to look at the text and to notice two or three things that come out, as it were, incidentally. The first is that the doctrine of the universal fatherhood of God is a lie. That is clear enough from this passage, "I speak that which I have seen with My Father: and you do that which you have seen with your father." Then, there are two fathers, and there are two sets of children—there is a Father whom Christ calls, "My Father." And there is another father whom He calls, in speaking to the Jews who hated Him, "your father." The prayer beginning, "Our Father, which are in Heaven," was never meant to be used by everybody. In the mouth of the ungodly, it is altogether out of place, for God is not their Father. "You must be born again" before you can be the children of God. The Scripture statement is clear and distinct—"As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." We are constantly spoken of as being begotten again, regenerated and adopted by God—all of which is a farce and a nullity if men are by creation and by their first natural birth,

the children of God. It is not so! "We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies in the Wicked One." "Behold, what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God"—and the distinction is set forth between "us" who have received this "manner of love" and the multitude who are still the seed of the Wicked One. This truth needs to be proclaimed very forcibly and the axe must be laid to the root of that deadly upas tree of universal fatherhood, for all manner of mischief will result if unconverted men are led to believe that they are already the sons of God. They are not so until they have been Divinely translated out of the kingdom of Satan into the Kingdom of God's dear Son.

Another fact that is incidentally taught us here is that there is a devil. A great many of the devil's servants are so disrespectful to their lord that they even deny his existence and Satan, himself, is so self-denying in this respect that he denies his own existence and sets other people to do the same. Men squeezed the Lord's prayer very hard when they made it read, "Deliver us from evil," for it is pretty clear that it ought to be, "Deliver us from the Evil One." There is a distinct enunciation of a great master-power of evil, a dread personality, "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others," until Grace brought us out from that terrible state! They who have started on the road to Heaven know that there is a devil, for they have had many an evil thought that came not from themselves or from their fellow men—strange, dark, mysterious thoughts which have rushed upon them from the infernal regions and nowhere else!

And those who have stood foot to foot with Apollyon, as Christian did, know full well that he is neither a myth nor a dream, but an awful and powerful adversary from whom may God deliver us from day to day! Even His errand boys, his imps, are terrible enough, for Paul was hard put to it when he was vexed by a messenger of Satan who buffeted him. But as for Satan, himself, when he comes to fight with a soul, woe to that man unless he has the almighty power of God to enable him to bear up in the day of battle! Our Lord Jesus Christ here speaks of Satan as being just as real as the Father is—"I speak that which I have seen with My Father: and you do that which you have seen with your father." Then He says, in the 44th verse, "You are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father you will do." I quite expect, one of these days, to meet a man who will tell me that I have neither eyes, nor ears, nor head, nor body, nor soul, nor anything else! Sometimes I have said to myself, "Surely, the course of doubting can go no further! Men have reached the uttermost absurdity of unbelief." But, Brothers and Sisters, we know, to our joy, that there is a Father in Heaven—the God and Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and, sometimes, we also know to our terror that there is another father of another family, against whom we fight in full assurance of victory, rejoicing that "the God of peace shall bruise Satan under our feet shortly."

Still, those are not the main Truths of God I want to bring out of the text. Let them be laid by to be thought upon, but think, now, of this Truth—that nature is the root of character. That is the doctrine taught in this text—that conduct is the result of nature, for Christ says, "I speak that which I have seen with My Father." And to His enemies He says, "You do that which you have seen with your father." A child talks according to his nature. Has he good training at home? Does he live with godly parents? Hear him prattle and you will soon find out where he came from. Listen to another child who has lived in very different circumstances—one who has been brought up amid evil of every kind. As you hear him talk, you learn from what kind of family he came. It is the real nature of a person which produces the conversation and the conduct. It is not good actions that make a good man—it is the good man who does the good actions. It is not the sweet apples that make the tree sweet, but it is the sweetness of the sap, the excellence of the tree, which produces the good apples. So, you see, there is a great deal more to be done than to alter

your talk and your actions! Our very nature has to be changed! That is the Truth of God I want to bring out before I close my discourse.

I. Note, first, that OUR BLESSED LORD PROVED HIS OWN PARENTAGE BY WHAT HE SAID. "I speak that which I have seen with My Father."

Though I cannot put my thoughts into words as I would like, it seems so beautiful to me that our Lord Jesus Christ should be called the Holy Child Jesus and that all His life-teaching should be, as it were, a child telling what He has seen at home. You have sometimes heard a pretty little guileless child telling out all that it has seen while with its father and mother—disclosing even the innermost secrets of the family with naivete and sweetness. And you have, perhaps, laughed heartily as you have seen how everything has been laid bare by that little talker's tongue. Now transfer that idea, on a sublime scale, to Christ. He comes, as the Holy Child Jesus, not to tell us of the grandeur of God, but as though He condescends to take upon Himself our child-nature in its immaturity. He tells us, as a child, what He has seen with the Father! It is such a blessed way of letting us know the secrets of God's heart for the Only-Begotten, the Well-Beloved, to come and tell us, who are made by Grace the younger members of the family, all that He has seen with the Father.

When we listen to Christ, we say at once that He speaks to us words of love. "Never man spoke like this Man." He was Tenderness, itself. He spoke so winsomely and His words were so full of affection that, "the common people heard Him gladly." Yes, and even the publicans and sinners drew near to Him to hear Him! The first words of hope they ever heard fell from His dear lips. The teachers of the Law were chilly and cold, and they froze up every thought of joy in the poor sinner's soul, but the words of Christ were warm with brotherly affection, for He spoke of what He had seen with the Father! What had He seen with the Father but love—love unutterable, love illimitable, love that endures forever, for "God is Love"!

Yet did Christ also speak words of justice. God is not so much Love that any true attribute which ought to be found in a perfect Character is absent and, therefore, God is Just. True Christianity is never dubious about the justice of God. The Lord abhors sin, He cannot endure it. He "will by no means clear the guilty." The tone of the chapter I have read to you [see Exposition at end of sermon] seems severe and so it should be when spoken to hypocrites like those scribes and Pharisees. Do you expect God to treat them with anything but severity? When our Lord Jesus Christ declares that the wicked shall be cast into Hell, "where their worm dies not, and the fire is not quenched." When He says, "these shall go away into everlasting punishment," you see the sternness of Divine Justice! Turn back to the Old Testament and see whether this is not the Jehovah who was the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob—the righteous God who burned up Sodom and Gomorrah and destroyed Pharaoh and his hosts in the Red Sea. I confess that I have been as ready to tremble at the words of Jesus as at the tempest, fire and smoke of Sinai's burning hill, for Love, when it speaks terrible things, makes them more awful because of love! Nothing causes the darkness of the tempest to stand out so terribly as that one bright flash of lightning that makes it afterwards seem darker than before. And when, in the gentle words of Christ, we see the gleam of God's wondrous love, we feel confounded before the terror of many of His warnings because He speaks that which He has seen with His Father—He keeps back nothing. He proclaims the God of Love, but He proclaims that God who shall come and shall not keep silent and who shall judge the nations in righteousness—and smite the wicked with a rod of iron!

Yet notice always about our blessed Master this trait in the character of His speech, that He always speaks words of Truth. To Christ's sermons there need never be appended any list of errata. He has

neither left anything out, nor left anything in by mistake. Nearly 19 centuries have tried and tested the teachings of Jesus and perhaps this century, with all its unbelief, does the Character of Christ more honor than any century that has gone before it! And certainly the influence of Christ is felt, today, in places of which people little dream. I heard one say that when our soldiers, in the fight in Egypt, stopped to put water to the lips of the thirsty enemies whom a century ago our troops would have slain at once, it was because the Christ was shadowing them! They felt His influence, though possibly most of them were not Christians at all. Everywhere the Christ is putting down barbarism in some form or other and helping to amend the character of men—they are girded by Him though they have not known Him! He has never had to alter or to revise His teaching, though our explanation of the teaching has had to be corrected. There have been prophets and teachers, not sent of God, who, to establish a system of doctrine, or a sect or denomination, have had to keep back or to exaggerate something or other, but it was not so with Christ—He spoke the Truth of God, the whole Truth and nothing but the Truth of God, for He had been with the Father, and as a child He told out what He had seen in the Father's House.

Thus I might keep on bringing out various points about our Lord's teaching, but I will only mention one other. And that is, the supreme holiness of the words of Christ Jesus Christ, with all His gentleness and love, never tolerates sin. That narrative in this chapter, in which He said to the adulteress, "Neither do I condemn you," has never made any other woman commit adultery and it has never helped a single conscience to find delight in unhallowed lust. No, the brightness of that glorious tenderness is as the shining of a crystal! It is so pure in its tenderness that while it is gentle with the sinner—and may we always be so—yet it is all the more severe with the sin from its very gentleness! Christ never helps us to be selfish, or to excuse ourselves, or to be hypocritical, covering up our sin with a cloak of godliness. No, but His teaching is pure, transparent righteousness from beginning to end. And we feel as if we could bow down before Him and worship Him with the same adoration with which the cherubim and seraphim salute the Father and say to Christ, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God and Savior, our very hearts do worship You!" The teaching of Jesus is thus holy because He speaks the things which He has seen with His Father.

II. Now I go to my second head which is that, like their Lord, CHRIST'S PEOPLE SHOULD ALSO DISPLAY THEIR PARENTAGE. They should speak what they have seen with their father and brothers and sisters. You and I are not the children of God if it is not so with us. We begin to suspect the parentage of any who have no resemblance to their reputed parents—no family trait or feature whatever! And certainly in spiritual things, he who is in no respect like Christ, may begin to suspect that he is not a true-born child of God, but merely bears the name, and has not come by supernatural descent from the Most High.

Notice, first, that children of God have, in a measure, the Nature of their Father. We are not full-grown yet, some of us are very tiny babes, and it is not always easy to detect the Father's likeness in His infants. That likeness comes out as the child grows and as the man appears. We are struck, sometimes, with the similarity between father and son, though we could scarcely trace it while the boy was but little. It is so with us in relation to our Heavenly Father. In regeneration, the Nature of God is imparted to us—not, of course, that high and incommunicable Essence of the Godhead which belongs to God, alone—but the Character and disposition of God become ours. Did not the Apostle Peter write, "Simon Peter, a servant and an Apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, according as His Divine power has given unto us all things that pertain unto life and Godliness, through the knowledge of Him that has called us to glory and virtue: whereby are given unto us

exceeding great and precious promises: that by these you might be partakers of the Divine Nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust"?

The Spirit of God, in regeneration, creates in man a third principle which, I believe, was not there before. He is only body and soul until this miracle is worked, but then he becomes body, soul and spirit—he rises into a higher sphere and enters into another world into which he could not have come before. "The natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." "The first man, Adam, was made a living soul" and we are made in his likeness. "The last Adam was made a quickening Spirit"—and when we, by being born again, receive His likeness, we then participate in that quickening and rise into the Nature and Image of God! There is a "living and incorruptible seed which lives and abides forever" and which becomes our life in that day when, by the power of the Spirit of the eternal God, we are "begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." This is a deep mystery and blessed are they who need not merely talk of it, because every day they know its power! Now, where there is the Nature of God, there will be a likeness to God, and you and I must have a measure of likeness to our great Father, or else it cannot be right for us to say that we are born of Him.

Next, the children of God, when they are in a right state of heart, live with their Father. If you send your children away to school and they never come home to see you, they may grow up with very little of your characteristics, for they are apt to be impressed by those with whom they live. Those who are born of God live with God. Moses said, "Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations." And the Apostle John wrote, "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ." It is our delight to go to our Father and to speak with Him. We dwell in God, even as Christ said to His disciples, "Abide in Me, and I in you." You cannot live with a man without growing more or less like he is and, certainly, no child of God can live with God and contemplate the Person and Character of Christ so as to abide in Him without becoming changed into His image, "from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

Children have a natural gift of imitation, so God's children imitate their Father. Paul's words, in Ephesians 5:1, should read, "Be you imitators of God, as dear children." It is very curious to see how children will imitate their parents. Was there ever a preacher whose boy did not stand on a chair and try to preach? Was there ever a man who laid bricks, or used a saw, who has not caught his children doing the same sort of thing? Was there ever a girl who did not seem to know what she would come to in being a nurse of little children and, therefore, naturally took to nursing a doll? It is the habit of children to imitate—they cannot help it. Well now, if we are the children of God and if we dwell with God, the instinct of imitation will certainly manifest itself and we shall try to be doing, in our small way, those deeds of kindness and love, those acts of righteousness and holiness which God is doing! And it will be said of us in our measure, "You do that which you have seen with your father."

Then, in addition, God's children tell what they hear. There is, in a child, the instinct is always to tell what it hears. I am afraid that I have not lost that instinct, myself, though I am no longer a child. I never like to be entrusted with anybody's secrets and I generally give people notice that if they want them published abroad, they have only to communicate them to me. It stops me from being bothered with a lot of things that will be sure to get known without my telling them! Children cannot keep a secret! It is no use to tell them to do so. If there is any family secret at all, the children must not only be put to bed at night, but they must be kept in bed all day, for, "little pitchers have large ears," and they also have a great gift of running over! Children tell just the very thing that you do not want them to say—and say it just at the very time when you would rather they not have it said! So, the children of God must tell what they have seen of their

Father. As soon as ever they have heard of the great Father's love, something makes them want to run outside and find somebody to whom they can say, "Did you ever hear this wonderful story?" Perhaps that "somebody" has no sympathy with them, but he is bound to hear what they have to say—and then off they go to someone else to ask whether he ever heard this good news. Though they may be ridiculed and laughed at, yet these dear children of God will keep telling the blessed tale. The more a man has learned of Christ, the more, I believe, he will want to tell the endless and unreliable story of what he has seen with the Father!

I have known some professedly Christian people who hardly like to be spoken to about the things of God, but it ought not to be so. Let the dear children talk about their Lord as much as ever they like—at the street corners, if they please, or at the dinner table. Anywhere and everywhere, a good word for God ought never to be out of season. Surely, there is no place where a word about the precious Savior will be out of order! What if we do, sometimes, cast pearls before swine? We have so many of them that we can afford to let the wretched creatures munch one or two—and if they turn and tear us, we can endure even this in the hope that, afterwards, they may be sorry for it and God may tear and renew their hearts! Therefore, do not be bashful, you who know the Lord, but say with emphasis, "I must speak that which I have seen with my Father."

III. Now I have to finish on the gloomy side of the subject, namely, that THE DEVIL'S FAMILY PARTAKE OF THE DEVIL'S NATURE and they are sure to speak that which they have seen with their father, too.

For instance, there are some who are very spiteful and speak with enmity, especially of Christian people. They cannot stand them—they have never a good word for them. They denounce their motives if they cannot find fault with their actions. I do not wonder that they do, because their father did a long while ago. One of his names is, "the accuser of the brethren," and it was said to him of old, "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed." There is always that enmity and we expect to see it, so we are not surprised. But we are grieved for any of you who, by your speech, betray your hatred of the people of God and so reveal the fact that you are children of Satan. One said, "I would like to kill all Christians. I hate them! I cannot endure them, especially if they are very earnest. I would have such fellows hung." Did not one say, the other day, of a certain minister, that he wished he had been killed in the accident? Yes, he did, and that is the feeling that some have toward those who are true Christians. What said the Jews concerning Paul? "Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live." That is the way the devil's children still talk, for they hear it at home with their father. Did Satan ever have a good word for our Father? No. Then he will never have a good word for His children. When, sometimes, he has spoken a true word, he has tried, with fiendish malice, to undermine the cause of Christ by praising it. But you remember how Paul and Silas would not let the devil praise them—they stopped his mouth directly. The highest compliment the devil can pay to virtue, is to hate it. It is the unconscious homage that evil must pay to goodness to loathe it, even as Satan loathes all that is good and right.

Beside this, the devil's children frequently speak untruths. There are some who lie in trade and some who lie in jest—they call them, "white lies." If this is the case with anybody here, do not deceive yourself, my Friend. You know who was a liar from the beginning and the father of lies—and they who cannot or will not speak the Truth of God are the children of that ancient liar—and they will have to go home to their father one of these days. They are not the children of God, for God's children abhor a lie! When their word is once given, they will stand to it even to their own hurt. If you are not true, you have not been with the great Father of Truth and you must have learned falsehood from the great father of lies.

There are some, too, who are wickedly proud—proud of their person, proud of the rags they wear, proud of their abilities, proud of their station, proud of their ancestors, proud of I know not what—too haughty, almost, to come near a commonplace person. Yes, they learned that of their father, for Lucifer is the very prince of pride! "By that sin fell the angels." And in that sin live those who are like the fallen angels. I beseech you, fling away all pride! May God help you soon to be rid of it altogether!

Then there is another trait which is common enough in many persons and that is, self-will. They are not going to be ruled and governed and tied to their mother's apron strings. They will have their own way. If they suffer for it, they will do as they like and be their own master. Yes, and they learned that from their father, for that is the way he talked of old. "Better," he said, "to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven," according to Milton, and Milton has but put into words the spirit of that fallen one. He is rebellious, he cannot endure authority, he will not yield to God—the word, "obey," is one which he cannot stand. Oh, let those who are living in disobedience to God, in utter carelessness, as lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, self-seekers who never give a thought to what they owe to their Creator and their Lord—let them understand that all this betrays whose children they are and where they were brought up! Does anybody get angry at my speech and say, "I will hear no more of it"? That is like your father, too! And do you gnash your teeth and bite your tongues? That is like your father, too—"You do that which you have seen with your father."

What shall be the conclusion of my discourse? Why, my drear Friends, that it is of very little use for you to try and change your outward character, your language and so forth, first. What you need is for your nature to be changed. When the fountain is made sweet, the streams will be sweet, but, until the source is sweetened, that which comes out of it will still be impure. "You must be born again." Do you ask, "How can that be?" Well, there is a very amazing connection between being born again and believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. Read the third chapter of John's Gospel and note how our Lord not only said to Nicodemus, "You must be born again," but He also said, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up: that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life." Believe in Christ and you are born again! That act of faith is an indication that the new birth has taken place. The moment that God gives you the Grace to trust yourself with Christ, He has also renewed your nature! That act of trusting in Christ is like the first snowdrop that tells us that spring is near. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you are a new person in Christ. Then live with your Father and go out and tell all what you have seen with your Father, and God bless you, for Christ's sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C.H. SPURGEON: JOHN 8:12-39

Verses 12, 13. Then spoke Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: He that follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. The Pharisees—These wasps were always stinging Him! When He drove them away once, they quickly returned to attack Him again, "The Pharisees—

13-15. Therefore said unto Him, You bear record of Yourself- Your record is not true. Jesus answered and said unto them; Though I bear record of Myself, yet My record is true: for I know from where I came, and where I go; but you cannot tell from where I come, and where I go. You judge after the flesh; I judge no man. He did not come for that purpose the first time. He will come, a second time, to judge all mankind.

16. And yet if I judge, My judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent Me. You see, Brothers and Sisters, how our Lord Jesus claimed to be God, for He put Himself here in such a connection

with God as would be quite inconsistent for any mere man. This is what Paul meant when He said that Christ "thought it not robbery to be equal with God," He thought it not a prize to be grasped, for it was already His.

17, 18. It is also written in your Law that the testimony of two men is true. I am One that bear witness of Myself and the Father that sent Me bears witness of Me. He did that by the miracles which Christ worked and they proved that He was, indeed, sent of God.

19. Then said they unto Him, Where is Your Father? Jesus answered, You neither know Me, nor My Father: if you had known Me, you should have known My Father also. They thought they knew His reputed father, Joseph. They thought they also knew all about Christ, the carpenter's Son, but there is more in Christ than carnal eyes can ever see. There is more in Christ than the most enlightened understanding, if it is but natural understanding, can ever perceive. These blind bats, the Pharisees, neither knew Christ nor the Father. If they had known Him, they would have known the Father, for Christ is "the brightness of His Glory and the express Image of His Person."

20. These words spoke Jesus in the treasury, as He taught in the Temple: and no man laid hands on Him; for His hour was not yet come. Like our Lord, every child of God is immortal till his work is done. This ought to divest us of every kind of fear. The enemy cannot lay hands upon a Christian until his Lord wills it—and when his hour has come, then it behooves not the child of God to resist the Father's will.

21. Then said Jesus again unto them, I go My way and you shall seek Me, and shall die in your sins: where I go, you cannot come. Oh, what a terrible sentence is that! I pray that the Lord may never say that to any of us, "Where I go, you cannot come." That would be the death-knell of all our hopes and would make our life one long banishment. Blessed be His name! We who have sought Him and have found Him, by His Grace, know that. We shall not die in our sins and where He has gone, we shall also go!

22, 23. Then said the Jews, Will He kill Himself? because He says, Where I go, you cannot come. And He said unto them, You are from beneath; I am from above. You are of a groveling nature. Your thoughts rise out of the abyss where every evil dwells.

23, 24. You are of this world; I am not of this world. I said therefore, of you, that you shall die in your sins: for if you believe not that I am He, you shall die in your sins. If you have no faith in Christ as the Son of God, "you shall die in your sins." What an awful thing it will be to die in your sins! What ceremonies for your eternal burial! What a robe of fire in which to lie down for your long sleep and then to find no sleep because of it! "You shall die in your sins." I would like this short, stern sentence to ring in the ears of every unbeliever. These are not my words, but Christ's own Words—the Words of the most loving and tender Savior—"If you believe not that I am He, you shall die in your sins."

25-29. Then said they unto Him, Who are You? And Jesus said unto them, Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning. I have many things to say and to judge of you: but He that sent Me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of Him. They understood not that He spoke to them of the Father. Then said Jesus unto them, When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall you know that I am He, and that I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father has taught Me, I speak these things. And He that sent Me is with Me. This made Christ's life so calm, so deeply joyous amid all its sorrow—"He that sent Me is with Me." Servant of God, can you say the same? If so, it is your joy, your confidence, your strength! God grant that we may, each one of us, realize that blessed Presence of our Lord!

29. Thee Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him. Christ could truly say that. Oh, that it might be true of us, too!

30, 31. As He spoke these words, many believed on Him, Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on Him, If you continue in My Word, then are you My disciples indeed. "If you became My disciples because of what I said, will you believe what I shall yet say? Are you prepared to take in still further revelations and to receive whatever I shall teach you? If so, 'then are you My disciples indeed'"

32. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. Some who heard this message of our Lord caught at it—they were always on the watch for anything to quibble at and contradict and, therefore—

33, 34. They answered Him, We are Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how say You, You shall be made free? Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whoever commits sin is the servant of sin. Or, "the slave of sin." There is the test of your position—if you do the devil's dirty work, you are his servant. If you delight in sin then you can hear your fetters clank if the ears of your conscience are but open—"Whoever commits sin is the servant of sin."

35-37. And the servant abides not in the house forever: but the Son abides always. If the Son, therefore, shall make you free, you shall be free, indeed. I know that you are Abraham's seed. "I know what a boast you make of that."

37-39. But you seek to kill Me because My Word has no place in you. I speak that which I have seen with My Father: and you do that which you have seen with your father. They answered and said unto Him, Abraham is our father. Jesus had admitted that, as a matter of temporal descent, but He denied it as a matter of real fact.

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