Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

**Who Is Your Father? Truth?**

**John 8:42-59**

Judica – Lent V

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Who is your father? Do you share the faith of Abraham, do you trust in the One God promised to send – His anointed – His Christ? In other words, are you a believing Christian?

Jesus begins our text saying, “If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and I am here. I came not of my own accord, but He sent me. Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to hear my word. You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires.”

Do you understand the Jesus is talking to those who are supposedly believers? He is speaking to “the Jews,” the descendants of Abraham. These are those who were supposed to be the leaders of ‘the Jewish church” of that day. These are those which were supposedly looking for “redemption of Israel” and the coming of the Son of David. But here He stood in their midst and they did not want anything to do with Him.

Jesus makes things very simple, black and white. Either God is your Father or Satan is!

Do you understand what His meaning is? According to Jesus, there is no middle ground. As He says in another place, you are either for Him or against Him. There are numerous warnings from God throughout His Scripture which proclaim the same thing.

Today, many claiming to be Christians declare that the differences between Christian denominations do not matter, “As long as we all have the same Jesus, no matter what differences we have in doctrine, it is no big deal.” Some go even further, proclaiming that Jews and Muslims also worship the same God we do, claiming that since we all believe in the God who spoke to Abraham, just as Christians do, we have the same God. Are they correct? Is that true? From initial outward appearances, it seems fairly obvious that if we all believe in the God of Abraham, then we all worship the same God.

That is false, it ***not*** the case. I know, some are thinking that is just Pastor Jerabek’s over-exaggeratedly-conservative opinion. That is **not** the case. I would like to agree with their position, it would keep some peace. To our fleshly sensibilities it would be the more accommodating attitude to have.

But that is **not** the case. And it is not the case because Jesus Himself says something completely different. He declares, “The one who hears you hears Me, and the one who rejects you rejects Me, and the one who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me.” (Luke 10:16) And in another place He states, “The one who rejects Me and does not receive My words has a judge; the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day.” (John 12:48)

Why is that? John’s Gospel help answer that question. *So the Jews gathered around him (Jesus) and said to Him, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly.” Jesus answered them, “I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in My Father's name bear witness about Me, but you do not believe because you are not among My sheep. My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. I and the Father are one.”* (John 10:24-30)

Jesus plainly declares that He and the Father are one! You cannot have one without the other! You cannot have the Father without the Son. That is Truth!

As Jesus said, and as you well know, Satan is the Father of lies. Satan wants us to believe lies, for the more lies we believe, the easier it is to draw us away from Christ. If He can deceive us and draw us from Christ, then he has won. Satan’s winning is not a good thing, it is an eternally damning thing.

Satan wants us on friendly terms with those who teach falsehood, for it was his falsehood first. And his falsehood comes in many areas, including perversions of Christianity. Yes, there are false versions of Christianity, versions which if followed may have eternally damning consequences. What? You do not believe me? Listen to what God inspires Paul to write to the church in Galatia – and therefore to you.

*I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed. For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ. (Gal. 1:6-10)*

There are different “gospels” out there, in other words, versions of the Word of Christ are not truly the Gospel. Those who teach these different versions, versions different than what you have contained in the Scripture, are to be accursed. To be accurse is to be damned – if they do not repent of what they are teaching.

Jesus also speaks about some who claim to speak in His name but speak falsehood. He declares that some who come claiming to speak in His name will be held accountable on the last day. Matthew’s Gospel records the words of Jesus:

*“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’* (Matt. 7:21-23)

Yes, Jesus is talking about those who did things in His name – in the name of Christ – claiming to be Christians. To depart from Him on “that day,” the last day, is to be sentenced to eternity in hell.

Some Christians teach that those from all religions, including non-Christians faiths simply believe in the same god but with different names. Some Christians teach that you need the right works as well as faith in Jesus in order to be saved, you have to do your part. These beliefs are Satan’s lies.

Christianity is the easiest thing in the world, and yet it is most difficult. It boils down to confessing you are a sinner incapable of saving yourself, trusting that God in Christ Jesus has paid your redemption price. This is not however something you can do, it is the Holy Spirit who works such faith in you to believe.

Dear friends, who is your Father? Is God your father, or is the devil? Do you hear Jesus’ words, or do you follow your own desires – as the devil tempts you to do?

A few chapters before our text, Jesus said some things which upset people. Satan was at work in the hearts of some to doubt God’s Word. In fact, Satan is using the same tool to delude people today.

*The Jews began to argue with one another, saying, “How can this man give us His flesh to eat?” So Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in yourselves. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. For My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also will live because of Me. This is the bread which came down out of heaven; not as the fathers ate and died; he who eats this bread will live forever.”….*

*As a result of this, many of His disciples withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore. So Jesus said to the twelve, “You do not want to go away also, do you?” Simon Peter answered Him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life. We have believed and have come to know that You are the Holy One of God.”* (John 6:52-58; 66-69)

How many people today still stumble over this same problem. Do you and I eat the flesh of Christ in the supper do we drink His holy, precious blood? Many church bodies falsely believe this holy meal is a representation of His body and blood, and there is no forgiveness dispensed in the meal. Sadly, Satan has spread lies in their midst – Satan is their father.

So I ask you now, who is your Father?

God is your Father, and He requires you: to be obedient; to meditate upon His Word; to listen to Him; to avoid those who would lead you astray; to love Him above all things; to love your neighbor; and, to expect good things from Him.

Who is your Father? Is it truth?

Your Father sent the Lamb – His only Son – to be the sacrifice that brought Isaac back from the dead, and gives unto you life eternal.

Truth is Jesus the spotless Lamb of God. Jesus was without sin, without blemish. He offered Himself to God as the sacrifice for your sin and mine, to purify us – and our consciences – from dead works. He alone is different than you, than me, than anybody who has, who is, or who will walk this earth in human flesh.

He is the Truth, Who loved His Father even more than His own life.

He is the Truth, Who loved His father, and was obedient unto Him – even to the point of death upon the cross.

Hear the truth about you! Your heavenly Father loved you so much that He was willing to sacrifice His only Son unto death so that you might join Him for all eternity – as the children of your heavenly Father.

The Father glorified the Son by raising Him up on the third day.

This Father is your Father.

He still sends the Lamb, His Son to you.

The Father still cares for you – from the font, from the lectern, from this pulpit, from this altar, and in every word of blessing that you hear which comes in the stead and by the command of Christ.

Live in this truth.

Live in Christ!

Be children of your Father in faith unto life everlasting. Amen.