



Morningside Church

Sermon Discussion Guide

Title: Confrontation with Truth

Date: August 3, 2025

Scripture Text: John 8:31-59

Notes:

On March 5, 1770, the Boston Massacre happened. It was a confrontation between a mob of local colonists and nine British Soldiers. The soldiers were verbally abused and eventually pelted with clubs, stones and snowballs. Eventually, one soldier fired, prompting the others to fire without an order from the commanding officer. The gunfire killed three people and wounded eight others, two of whom later died of their wounds. Eight soldiers, one officer, and four civilians were arrested and charged with murder, and they were defended in court by attorney, and future U.S. president, John Adams. During his arguments for the defense, Adams made the statement “facts are stubborn things”. What he meant was, just because the truth may not sit well with us, or we prefer the circumstances be different, we can’t change what is true. In John 8 Jesus is confronted by a group of Jews who don’t like what Jesus has to say. Jesus told them that He spoke the truth, but they were not agreeable to it. When presented with truth, there are four ways in how we can handle it: intellectual challenge, emotional dilemma (head vs. heart), verbal assault, and physical attack. Let’s look at how these four stages play out in today’s passage.

I. Intellectual Challenge ([John 8:31-47](#))

Jesus and a group of Jews are debating Jesus’ teachings. Questions of authority, validity, heritage, and source of His statements are discussed. Jesus was very clear and direct – He spoke what God His father told Him to say. It was the truth. But the Jews did not agree and challenged Jesus’ statements. They were not open to the truth. They were not going to accept what He had to say regardless of the source.

- What did Jesus say made a true disciple in [vs. 31](#)?
- How can continuing in Jesus’ words help us understand the truth?
- The Jews claimed credibility because they were descendants of Abraham. Their heritage gave them privilege. Yet, Jesus’ point is that it’s not physical pedigree that brings privilege in God’s eyes but love for Christ. What are excuses people make today for not heeding the words of Christ?
- Jesus eventually tells them that they don’t hear His words because they are not of God but the devil. How can people be deceived by Satan, the father of lies?
- How can you arm yourself not to be deceived by Satan?



Morningside Church

Sermon Discussion Guide

Notes:

II. Emotional Dilemma ([John 8:41-43](#))

Having said that they were not acting as Abraham did ([vs. 40](#)), Jesus added: “You are doing the deeds of your father”. The Jews acting very defensively declared: “We are not born of fornication” perhaps implying that Jesus was. In [Hosea 2:4](#) God called Israel ‘children of adultery’ because they had forsaken him and gone after other gods. Jesus eventually tells them they don’t understand what He says because they chose not to hear what He says.

- In their hearts, the Jews probably knew Jesus was speaking the truth, but they refused to acknowledge it. What are similar emotional dilemmas we may face when confronted with the truth of God’s word?
- How can emotions like pride, controlling attitude, and concern of what others think create challenges for us to receive and act on God’s truth?
- Describe a time when you knew a truth from God’s word applied to your situation but chose to ignore it and do things your own way? How did that work out for you?

III. Verbal Assault ([John 8:48-57](#))

Running out of excuses, the Jews resort to name calling. They call Jesus a Samaritan and demon possessed. Being called a Samaritan would have been an intense insult for a Jew. And claiming He was demon possessed was an attempt to discredit Him. Jesus corrects them and continues by describing the offer of eternal life He brought.

- The Jews started calling Jesus names and continued to attempt to poke holes in His statements. What are examples of names Christians are called today.
- The truth in Jesus’ day is no different today. How can we address the perceptions the culture might have about Christ?
- Regardless of the accusations by the Jews, Jesus’ focus was glorifying God. How can we have the same focus today? What are challenges for you to glorify God?

IV. Physical Attack ([John 8:58-59](#))

“Our Redeemer graciously turns their gaze away from his body and draws it to contemplation of his divinity. He says, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.’ ‘Before’ indicates past time, ‘I am’ present time. Because divinity does not have past and future time but always is, he did not say, ‘I was before Abraham’ but ‘Before Abraham was, I am.’ Truth always exists, because nothing begins before it in time or comes to an end after it.” (Gregory the Great)

- When everything else failed, the Jews turned to violence. The culture may respond similarly, but the truth of God’s word cannot be silenced!