



Liberator of Slaves (John 8)

Notes: Week Eight

John 8 (HCSB)

8 ¹ But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.

An Adulteress Forgiven

² At dawn He went to the temple complex again, and all the people were coming to Him. He sat down and began to teach them.

³ Then the scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman caught in adultery, making her stand in the center. ⁴ “Teacher,” they said to Him, “this woman was caught in the act of committing adultery. ⁵ In the law Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do You say?” ⁶ They asked this to trap Him, in order that they might have evidence to accuse Him.

Jesus stooped down and started writing on the ground with His finger. ⁷ When they persisted in questioning Him, He stood up and said to them, “The one without sin among you should be the first to throw a stone at her.”

⁸ Then He stooped down again and continued writing on the ground. ⁹ When they heard this, they left one by one, starting with the older men. Only He was left, with the woman in the center. ¹⁰ When Jesus stood up, He said to her, “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?”

¹¹ “No one, Lord,”^[a] she answered.

“Neither do I condemn you,” said Jesus. “Go, and from now on do not sin anymore.”^[b]

The Light of the World

¹² Then Jesus spoke to them again: “I am the light of the world. Anyone who follows Me will never walk in the darkness but will have the light of life.”

¹³ So the Pharisees said to Him, “You are testifying about Yourself. Your testimony is not valid.”^[c]

¹⁴ “Even if I testify about Myself,” Jesus replied, “My testimony is valid,^[d] because I know where I came from and where I’m going. But you don’t know where I come from or where I’m going. ¹⁵ You judge by human standards.^[e] I judge no one. ¹⁶ And if I do judge, My judgment is true, because I am not alone, but I and the Father who sent Me judge together. ¹⁷ Even in your law it is written that the witness of two men is valid. ¹⁸ I am the One who testifies about Myself, and the Father who sent Me testifies about Me.”

¹⁹ Then they asked Him, “Where is Your Father?”

“You know neither Me nor My Father,” Jesus answered. “If you knew Me, you would also know My Father.” ²⁰ He spoke these words by the treasury,^[f] while teaching in the temple complex. But no one seized Him, because His hour^[g] had not come.

Jesus Predicts His Departure

²¹ Then He said to them again, “I’m going away; you will look for Me, and you will die in your sin. Where I’m going, you cannot come.”

²² So the Jews said again, “He won’t kill Himself, will He, since He says, ‘Where I’m going, you cannot come’?”

²³ “You are from below,” He told them, “I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. ²⁴ Therefore I told you that you will die in your sins. For if you do not believe that I am He, ^[h] you will die in your sins.”

²⁵ “Who are You?” they questioned.

“Precisely what I’ve been telling you from the very beginning,” Jesus told them. ²⁶ “I have many things to say and to judge about you, but the One who sent Me is true, and what I have heard from Him—these things I tell the world.”

²⁷ They did not know He was speaking to them about the Father. ²⁸ So Jesus said to them, “When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and that I do nothing on My own. But just as the Father taught Me, I say these things. ²⁹ The One who sent Me is with Me. He has not left Me alone, because I always do what pleases Him.”

Truth and Freedom

³⁰ As He was saying these things, many believed in Him. ³¹ So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed Him, “If you continue in My word, ^[i] you really are My disciples. ³² You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

³³ “We are descendants ^[j] of Abraham,” they answered Him, “and we have never been enslaved to anyone. How can You say, ‘You will become free’?”

³⁴ Jesus responded, “I assure you: Everyone who commits sin is a slave of sin. ³⁵ A slave does not remain in the household forever, but a son does remain forever. ³⁶ Therefore, if the Son sets you free, you really will be free. ³⁷ I know you are descendants ^[k] of Abraham, but you are trying to kill Me because My word ^[l] is not welcome among you. ³⁸ I speak what I have seen in the presence of the Father; ^[m] therefore, you do what you have heard from your father.”

³⁹ “Our father is Abraham!” they replied.

“If you were Abraham’s children,” Jesus told them, “you would do what Abraham did. ⁴⁰ But now you are trying to kill Me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. Abraham did not do this! ⁴¹ You’re doing what your father does.”

“We weren’t born of sexual immorality,” they said. “We have one Father—God.”

⁴² Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love Me, because I came from God and I am here. For I didn’t come on My own, but He sent Me. ⁴³ Why don’t you understand what I say? Because you cannot listen to ^[n] My word. ⁴⁴ You are of your father the Devil, and you want to carry out your father’s desires. He was a murderer from the beginning and has not stood in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he tells a lie, he speaks from his own nature, ^[o] because he is a liar and the father of liars. ^[p] ⁴⁵ Yet because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me. ⁴⁶ Who among you can convict Me of sin? If I tell the truth, why don’t you believe Me? ⁴⁷ The one who is from God listens to God’s words. This is why you don’t listen, because you are not from God.”

Jesus and Abraham

⁴⁸ The Jews responded to Him, “Aren’t we right in saying that You’re a Samaritan and have a demon?”

⁴⁹ “I do not have a demon,” Jesus answered. “On the contrary, I honor My Father and you dishonor Me. ⁵⁰ I do not seek My glory; the One who seeks it also judges. ⁵¹ I assure you: If anyone keeps My word, he will never see death—ever!”

⁵² Then the Jews said, “Now we know You have a demon. Abraham died and so did the prophets. You say, ‘If anyone keeps My word, he will never taste death—ever!’ ⁵³ Are You greater than our father Abraham who died? Even the prophets died. Who do You pretend to be?”^[q]

⁵⁴ “If I glorify Myself,” Jesus answered, “My glory is nothing. My Father—you say about Him, ‘He is our God’—He is the One who glorifies Me. ⁵⁵ You’ve never known Him, but I know Him. If I were to say I don’t know Him, I would be a liar like you. But I do know Him, and I keep His word. ⁵⁶ Your father Abraham was overjoyed that he would see My day; he saw it and rejoiced.”

⁵⁷ The Jews replied, “You aren’t 50 years old yet, and You’ve seen Abraham?”^[r]

⁵⁸ Jesus said to them, “I assure you: Before Abraham was, I am.”^[s]

⁵⁹ At that, they picked up stones to throw at Him. But Jesus was hidden^[t] and went out of the temple complex.^[u]

Footnotes:

- a. [John 8:11](#) Or *Sir*; [Jn 4:15,49](#); [5:7](#); [6:34](#); [9:36](#)
- b. [John 8:11](#) Other mss omit bracketed text
- c. [John 8:13](#) The law of Moses required at least 2 witnesses to make a claim legally valid (v. 17).
- d. [John 8:14](#) Or *true*
- e. [John 8:15](#) Lit *You judge according to the flesh*
- f. [John 8:20](#) A place for offerings to be given, perhaps in the court of women
- g. [John 8:20](#) The time of His sacrificial death and exaltation; [Jn 2:4](#); [7:30](#); [12:23,27](#); [13:1](#); [17:1](#)
- h. [John 8:24](#) Jesus claimed to be deity, but the Pharisees didn’t understand His meaning.
- i. [John 8:31](#) Or *My teaching*, or *My message*
- j. [John 8:33](#) Or *offspring*; lit *seed*; [Jn 7:42](#)
- k. [John 8:37](#) Or *offspring*; lit *seed*; [Jn 7:42](#)
- l. [John 8:37](#) Or *My teaching*, or *My message*
- m. [John 8:38](#) Other mss read *of My Father*
- n. [John 8:43](#) Or *cannot hear*
- o. [John 8:44](#) Lit *from his own things*
- p. [John 8:44](#) Lit *of it*
- q. [John 8:53](#) Lit *Who do You make Yourself?*
- r. [John 8:57](#) Other mss read *and Abraham has seen You?*
- s. [John 8:58](#) *I AM* is the name God gave Himself at the burning bush; [Ex 3:13-14](#); see note at [Jn 8:24](#).
- t. [John 8:59](#) Or *Jesus hid Himself*
- u. [John 8:59](#) Other mss add *and having gone through their midst, He passed by*

Holman Christian Standard Bible - *Study Bible*¹

John 8

8:12 Jesus as **the light of the world** (see note at [6:35,48](#)) develops further the affirmation in the prologue that Jesus was "the light of men" and that "that light shines in the darkness" ([1:4-5](#)). On this basis, Jesus exhorted His hearers to put their trust in the light while they had Him with them, so they might become "sons of light" ([12:35-36](#)). Jesus' concluding testimony is that He came into the world as light so that no one who believes in Him should remain in darkness ([12:46](#)). Yet, according to the evangelist, the verdict is this: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil ([3:19-21](#)).

phos

Greek Pronunciation [FOHSS]

HCSB Translation light

Uses in John's Gospel 23

Uses in the NT 73

Focus Passage [John 8:12](#)

The word *phos* is seldom used in the literal sense in the NT. Most often it is a metaphor referring to holiness, purity, or godliness. Jesus used the term in the Sermon on the Mount to describe His disciples and the holy standard of conduct that He expected them to model to the world ([Mt 5:14-16](#); [6:23](#)). In John's Gospel, however, Jesus Himself is "the light," as stated in the Prologue ([1:4-5](#)) and in Jesus' own words ([8:12](#); [9:5](#)). In this case, *the light* is revelatory and reflects God's character or holiness. In other words, *the light* refers to God's revelation or disclosure of Himself to the world in the incarnation ([1:4-9](#)). Incredibly, those in darkness prefer the darkness, at least until they accept the truth of God's revelation in His Son and believe in *the light* ([3:19-21](#); [8:12](#); [12:46](#)).

8:13-14 The Pharisees' challenge and Jesus' response continue the acrimony of [5:31-47](#). Again, Mosaic stipulations were in view ([Dt 17:6](#); [19:15](#)).

8:14, 18 On Jesus' testimony about Himself, see note at [5:31-47](#).

8:15 Jesus' statement may echo [1Sam 16:7](#). People rejected Jesus because He did not come with regal fanfare, but appearances can be deceiving ([Isa 53:2-3](#)).

8:17 On the testimony of two witnesses, see notes at [Dt 17:6-7](#); [19:15](#).

8:20 On the timing of Jesus' **hour**, see note at [2:4](#).

8:24, 28 These statements hint at Jesus' deity (see note at [6:35,48](#)).

8:28 On the lifting up of Jesus, see note at [3:14](#).

8:33 The OT extols the blessings of being **descendants of Abraham** ([Ps 105:6](#); [Isa 41:8](#)).

¹ Jeremy Royal Howard, ed., *HCSB Study Bible*, (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2010), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, Under: "John 8".

8:35 The contrast between **son** and **slave** may allude to Abraham's sons through Sarah and Hagar ([Gen 21:1-21](#); see [Ex 21:2](#)).

8:35-36 On Jesus as the life-giving **Son**, see note at [3:16-18](#).

8:37-38 Even in the OT, physical descent from **Abraham** was insufficient to establish one's lineage ([Jer 9:25-26](#); cp. [Rm 2:28-29](#); [9:7](#); [Gal 4:21-31](#)).

8:39-58 On children of God, see note at [3:3-8](#).

8:41 Though the OT calls the Israelites God's children ([Ex 4:22](#); [Dt 14:1-2](#); [32:6](#); [Isa 63:16](#); [64:8](#); [Jer 31:9](#); [Mal 2:10](#)), John said only those born of God (through faith) are God's children ([Jn 1:12-13](#); [3:3-8](#)).

8:44 The Devil is **a murderer from the beginning**. He incited Cain to kill Abel ([1Jn 3:15](#)). He **has not stood in the truth** is a possible reference to Satan's fall ([Isa 14:12](#)). At the fall of Adam and Eve, he blatantly contradicted God's word ([Gen 3:3-4](#); cp. [Gen 2:17](#)).

8:46 Jesus always did what pleases God ([v. 29](#); [Isa 53:9](#)).

8:48, 52 On the accusation that Jesus had a demon, see note at [7:20](#).

8:56 Jesus' statement refers to Abraham's joyful anticipation of the coming of the Messiah. See the later affirmation in [12:41](#) that Isaiah saw Jesus' glory.

8:58 On Jesus' **I am** statements, see note at [6:35,48](#).

8:59 Stoning was the prescribed punishment for blasphemy ([Lv 24:16](#); cp. [Dt 13:6-11](#); [Jn 10:31-33](#); [11:8](#)). However, this was never to be enacted by mob violence ([Dt 17:2-7](#)). In the OT, righteous men like Moses ([Ex 17:4](#)), Joshua and Caleb ([Num 14:10](#)), and David ([1Sam 30:6](#)) were nearly stoned. As on previous occasions, Jesus evaded arrest ([Jn 7:30,44](#); [8:20](#); see note at [2:4](#)). His withdrawal from the Jews strikes a note of judgment similar to the removal of God's favor from King Saul ([1Sam 15:23](#)).



A section of the Pool of Siloam discovered in 2005. Pottery indicates this section of the pool was in use in the first century.

The Apologetics Study Bible²

John 8

8:14 Earlier Jesus accepted, for the sake of argument, the Jewish belief that self-testimony was illegitimate ([5:31](#)). Here He pointed out explicitly what had been true all along, that He did in fact tell the truth about Himself, whether or not anyone else supported Him. And in [verse 18](#) He did go on to provide another witness.

8:15-16 Jesus was not contradicting Himself in the span of two verses—first not judging, then judging. Rather, He passed judgment on no one of His own accord; His judgment was always mirroring the Father's judgment ([v. 16](#)).

8:30-31 In [verses 30-31](#), various listeners seem to have believed in Jesus, but by the end of the chapter they were ready to stone Him. As [verse 31](#) stresses, appearance of belief must be matched by perseverance in following Jesus and His teaching. Much of the belief attested to in [verse 30](#) was probably superficial. There may also have been a narrowing of the audience Jesus was addressing, starting in [verse 48](#)—"the Jews" here may include some of the authorities who had never claimed to believe in Him at any level.

8:33 Of course the Jews had frequently been slaves—in Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, and Persia as well as under Greece and now under Rome. Presumably they were claiming here that they were never spiritually enslaved.

8:44 Surely this was the height of anti-Semitism? Actually, Jesus was calling only one specific group of Jews sons of the devil. Jesus was a Jew, as were all His first followers. The OT prophetic books contain many equally sharp rebukes (e.g., [Jr 9:7-9](#)), and they are certainly not anti-Semitic.

8:58 This is not bad grammar but an allusion to the divine name "I AM" of *Yahweh*, God of Israel ([Ex 3:14](#)). The Greek text uses the present tense, and thus the Jehovah's Witnesses' New World Translation is wrong to render it, "I have been," as if Jesus were claiming only to have existed some time before Abraham.

² Ted Cabal, ed., *The Apologetics Study Bible: Understanding Why You Believe*, (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2007), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 1587-1589.

NLT Life Application Study Bible³

John 8

8:3-6 The Jewish leaders had already disregarded the law by arresting the woman without the man. The law required that both parties to adultery be stoned ([Leviticus 20:10](#); [Deuteronomy 22:22](#)). The leaders were using the woman as a trap so they could trick Jesus. If Jesus said the woman should not be stoned, they would accuse him of violating Moses' law. If he urged them to execute her, they would report him to the Romans, who did not permit the Jews to carry out their own executions ([18:31](#)).

8:7 This is a significant statement about judging others. Because Jesus upheld the legal penalty for adultery, stoning, he could not be accused of being against the law. But by saying that only a sinless person could throw the first stone, he highlighted the importance of compassion and forgiveness. When others are caught in sin, are you quick to pass judgment? To do so is to act as though you have never sinned. It is God's role to judge, not ours. Our role is to show forgiveness and compassion.

8:9 When Jesus said that only someone who had not sinned should throw the first stone, the leaders slipped quietly away, from oldest to youngest. Evidently the older men were more aware of their sins than the younger. Age and experience often temper youthful self-righteousness. But whatever your age, take an honest look at your life. Recognize your sinful nature, and look for ways to help others rather than hurt them.

8:11 Jesus didn't condemn the woman accused of adultery, but neither did he ignore or condone her sin. He told her to leave her life of sin. Jesus stands ready to forgive any sin in your life, but confession and repentance mean a change of heart. With God's help we can accept Christ's forgiveness and stop our wrongdoing.

8:12 To understand what Jesus meant by "the light of the world," see the note on [1:4](#), [5](#).

8:12 Jesus was speaking in the Treasury—the part of the Temple where the offerings were put ([8:20](#)) and where candles burned to symbolize the pillar of fire that led the people of Israel through the wilderness ([Exodus 13:21, 22](#)). In this context, Jesus called himself the light of the world. The pillar of fire represented God's presence, protection, and guidance. Likewise, Jesus brings God's presence, protection, and guidance. Is he the light of *your* world?

8:12 What does it mean to follow Christ? As a soldier follows his captain, so we should follow Christ, our commander. As a slave follows his master, so we should follow Christ, our Lord. As we follow the advice of a trusted counselor, so we should follow Jesus' commands to us in Scripture. As we follow the laws of our nation, so we should follow the laws of the Kingdom of Heaven.

8:13, 14 The Pharisees thought Jesus was either a lunatic or a liar. Jesus provided them with a third alternative: He was telling the truth. Because most of the Pharisees refused to consider the third alternative, they never recognized him as Messiah and Lord. If you are seeking to know who Jesus is, do not close any door before looking through it honestly. Only with an open mind will you know the truth that he is Messiah and Lord.

³, *Life Application Study Bible*, (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1988), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 1768-1771.

8:13-18 The Pharisees argued that Jesus' claim was legally invalid because he had no other witnesses. Jesus responded that his confirming witness was God himself. Jesus and the Father made two witnesses, the number required by the law ([Deuteronomy 19:15](#)).

8:20 The Temple Treasury was located in the Court of Women. In this area, 13 collection boxes were set up to receive money offerings. Seven of the boxes were for the Temple tax; the other 6 were for freewill offerings. On another occasion, a widow placed her money in one of these boxes, and Jesus taught a profound lesson from her action ([Luke 21:1-4](#)).

8:24 People will die in their sins if they reject Christ, because they are rejecting the only way to be rescued from sin. Sadly, many are so taken up with the values of this world that they are blind to the priceless gift Christ offers. Where are you looking? Don't focus on this world's values and miss what is most valuable—eternal life with God.

8:32 Jesus himself is the truth that sets us free ([8:36](#)). He is the source of truth, the perfect standard of what is right. He frees us from continued slavery to sin, from self-deception, and from deception by Satan. He shows us clearly the way to eternal life with God. Thus, Jesus does not give us freedom to do what we want, but freedom to follow God. As we seek to serve God, Jesus' perfect truth frees us to be all that God meant us to be.

8:34, 35 Sin has a way of enslaving us, controlling us, dominating us, and dictating our actions. Jesus can free you from this slavery that keeps you from becoming the person God created you to be. If sin is restraining, mastering, or enslaving you, Jesus can break its power over your life.

8:41 Jesus made a distinction between illegitimate children and true children. The religious leaders were descendants of Abraham (founder of the Jewish nation) and therefore claimed to be children of God. But their actions showed them to be true children of Satan, for they lived under Satan's guidance. True children of Abraham (faithful followers of God) would not act as they did. Your church membership and family connections will not make you a true child of God. Your true father is the one you imitate and obey.

8:43 The religious leaders were unable to understand because they refused to listen. Satan used their stubbornness, pride, and prejudices to keep them from believing in Jesus.

8:44, 45 The attitudes and actions of these leaders clearly identified them as followers of Satan. They may not have been conscious of this, but their hatred of truth, their lies, and their murderous intentions indicated how much control the devil had over them. They were his tools in carrying out his plans; they spoke the very same language of lies. Satan still uses people to obstruct God's work ([Genesis 4:8](#); [Romans 5:12](#); [1 John 3:12](#)).

8:46, 47 In a number of places Jesus intentionally challenged his listeners to test him. He welcomed those who wanted to question his claims and character as long as they were willing to follow through on what they discovered. Jesus' challenge clarifies the two most frequent reasons that people miss when encountering him: (1) They never accept his challenge to test him, or (2) they test him but are not willing to believe what they discover. Have you made either of those mistakes?

8:51 When Jesus says those who obey won't die, he is talking about spiritual death, not physical death. Even physical death, however, will eventually be overcome. Those who follow Christ will be raised to live eternally with him.

8:56 God told Abraham, the father of the Jewish nation, that through him all nations would be blessed ([Genesis 12:1-7](#); [15:1-21](#)). Abraham had been able to see this through the eyes of faith. Jesus, a descendant of Abraham, blessed all people through his death, resurrection, and offer of salvation.

8:58 This is one of the most powerful statements uttered by Jesus. When he said that he existed before Abraham was born, he undeniably proclaimed his divinity. Not only did Jesus say that he existed before Abraham; he also applied God's holy name (*I AM*—[Exodus 3:14](#)) to himself. This claim demands a response. It cannot be ignored. The Jewish leaders tried to stone Jesus for blasphemy because he claimed equality with God. But Jesus *is* God. How have you responded to Jesus, the Son of God?

8:59 In accordance with the law given in [Leviticus 24:16](#), the religious leaders were ready to stone Jesus for claiming to be God. They well understood what Jesus was claiming, and because they didn't believe he was God, they charged him with blasphemy. It is ironic that *they* were really the blasphemers, cursing and attacking the very God they claimed to serve!