



## BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of Dan Duncan

John 8: 37-47

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"Two Children"

TRANSCRIPT

Thank you Seth. That was a good introduction to our text, titled *Two Children*, John chapter 8, verse 37 through verse 47. Remember, Jesus is in the temple and He has been talking to a large group of Jewish people. Some are believing, but others are hostile. And He's addressing that hostile group at this point, beginning with verse 37. He says to them,

<sup>37</sup> I know that you are Abraham's descendants; yet you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you. <sup>38</sup> I speak the things which I have seen with My Father; therefore you also do the things which you heard from *your* father."

<sup>39</sup> They answered and said to Him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you are Abraham's children, do the deeds of Abraham. <sup>40</sup> But as it is, you are seeking to kill Me, a man who has told you the truth, which I heard from God; this Abraham did not do. <sup>41</sup> You are doing the deeds of your father." They said to Him, "We were not born of fornication; we have one Father: God." <sup>42</sup> Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and have come from God, for I have not even come on My own initiative, but He sent Me. <sup>43</sup> Why do you not understand what I am saying? *It is* because you cannot hear My word. <sup>44</sup> You are of *your* father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth

in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *nature*, for he is a liar and the father of lies. <sup>45</sup> But because I speak the truth, you do not believe Me. <sup>46</sup> Which one of you convicts Me of sin? If I speak truth, why do you not believe Me? <sup>47</sup> He who is of God hears the words of God; for this reason you do not hear *them*, because you are not of God."

John 8: 37-47

This is a stern warning to them and it is a stark revelation of the nature of man apart from the grace of God. May God bless His Word and bless our time of study in it ; and may we have what the Psalm, Psalm 51:6, speaks of; "truth in the innermost being". This is how we get it—through God's Word.

*(Message)* Early in John Bunyan's Christian classic, *Pilgrim's Progress*, he tells a parable about two boys. *Christian* is in the house of *Interpreter* and in one of the rooms he saw two children; the older, *Passion*, the younger *Patience*. *Passion* wanted everything—now! So a bag of treasures was brought to him and poured out in front of his feet—and then he laughed at *Patience* for having nothing. But soon all *Passion's* treasures were wasted and he had only rags. *Patience* was willing to wait for the best things, the glory of the next world that will never wear out.

*Passion* and *Patience* represent two kinds of people: And there are only two kinds of people in this world, two types. The early chapters of the Bible show that division among brothers: Cain and Able, Abraham and Nahor, Isaac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau. Brothers but different: One a believer, the other a non-believer.

John 8 shows the same division. Jesus was talking to a crowd divided between those who believed in Him and those who did not. In verses 37 through 47 He spoke directly to those who did not believe. In verse 43 He asks them, "Why do you not understand what I am saying?" He knew the reason. He really asked the question in

order to explain the next question He raised—their unbelief, “*It is because you cannot hear My word.*” (vs43b). They did not believe in Him because they could not understand His instruction. Their minds were darkened. They needed to be enlightened.

That's the reason for the division of the human race. Sin, the fall, has resulted in the complete inability of human nature to hear God's Word; to understand His Word. And that explains the human condition—the reason people don't believe the Gospel. It doesn't excuse it, and Jesus wasn't excusing it, He was exposing the problem so that they might understand and seek the solution.

The only solution is grace. Jesus revealed the problem to them to condemn them so that hearing their guilt and being convicted, they would seek help, seek God's grace while there was still time.

He was direct with them. It may seem harsh as we've read through this, and as we will study through it, but He had to be harsh. This was a hard crowd, seemingly implacable in their unbelief. They thought they were righteous. In verse 33, they declared that they were “Abraham's descendants”, which was a way of saying that, ‘They weren't pagans. They were privileged. They were right with God. They were God's people.’

[There's probably no one more difficult to talk about salvation and the Gospel than the self-righteous. Difficult, because they cannot see their need. They see themselves as privileged. They see themselves as ‘being well’. They see themselves as ‘righteous’ in their mind.]

So now, in verse 37 Jesus answers their claim to be ‘children of Abraham’. He answers their claim to ‘be well’, and ‘right with God’; He acknowledges that they were. “I know that you are Abraham's descendants”, He says; meaning ‘You are his physical descendants. There's no doubt about that.’ But that's never been enough. Twice in the Book of Deuteronomy Moses told Israel, “Circumcise your hearts.” (Deu 10:16, 30:6), Jeremiah gave the same counsel, ‘Be born again. Repent.’ Spiritual life is not inherited. Being related to godly ancestors is a privilege, but it's not sufficient. Jesus told

Nicodemus, "the teacher of Israel", (vs10), you'll remember, "You must be born again, become a new creation." (vs7).

It happens in Christian homes as well: Children are born into a believing family and they grow up in the church; go to youth group; hear the Bible read to them, perhaps every evening at dinner; and parents teach them prayers at night. They live in a godly environment but without personal faith; without trusting in Christ—and that can result in a false confidence.

That was the condition of these Jewish men. They had great blessings. They had a great ancestor in Abraham. But they were not like Abraham. Their hearts were full of murder, "...you seek to kill Me" (vs37b), Jesus said. They had been plotting His death since chapter 5, (you'll remember), when He healed the lame man.

And here Jesus exposed their conspiracy; and He explained the reason for it, "...His word had no place in them." (vs37c); they were not spiritually receptive to them. They rejected Him, they rejected His teaching. But what they rejected was not just His words, but His Father's Words, the revelation of God, as He says in verse 38, "I speak the things which I have seen with My Father."

Jesus was obedient to His heavenly Father in revealing what His Father had showed Him. And by rejecting Him, they were obedient to their father, (who Jesus will say is not Abraham, but the devil). Now they probably didn't know at this point what Jesus meant by "your father," but they could sense, I think, that it wasn't flattering. They knew it wasn't what they meant when they spoke of their father. So again, they repeat their claim that 'Abraham was their father.' (vs39). And Jesus answered, "If you are Abraham's children, do the deeds of Abraham." (vs39b).

Now deeds don't make a person, they reveal a person. In His Sermon on the Mount in Matthew chapter 7, Jesus said, "Every good tree bears good fruit; but the bad tree bears bad fruit." (vs17). "You will know them by their fruits." (vs20). —He was also saying that here.

Abraham's children prove they are that, they are his children, by behaving as Abraham did. What did Abraham do? He received the Word of God and he obeyed the LORD. Principally "...he believed...", with the result that he was obedient in his life. But his great act, his defining act, is that in Genesis 15:6; and it was an act of faith. Abraham, "believed in the LORD, and He reckoned it to him for righteousness." The LORD counted his faith as the means to righteousness. It was through faith and faith alone, that Abraham received the imputed righteousness of God—the alien righteousness of God.

Abraham was a man of faith—and obedience. Obedience was the proof that his faith was genuine. Later, when the LORD commanded him to, 'take Isaac, his son whom he loved, to Mt. Moriah and offer him up as a burnt offering.' (Gen 22:2). And you know the story: Abraham obeyed; he didn't question the LORD; he obeyed. And of course, the LORD did not require that of him. But it was as though he had done it; he was that obedient.

Over the course of Abraham's life, from the time God called him out of darkness in Ur of the Chaldeans and he heard the voice of God, he believed and obeyed. The LORD's Word had a place in him, so that, in Isaiah 41, verse 8, the LORD called Abraham, "My friend."

That could not be said of these men arguing with Jesus for they wanted to kill Him. And that is characteristic of every unbeliever, everyone who has not been born again.

Well you might think, 'That's a bit harsh, isn't it? Everyone who is not a believer in Jesus Christ wants to kill Him?' Well, Paul wrote in Romans chapter 8, verse 7, "The mind set on the flesh...", (and that's the unregenerate mind—that mind which has not been born again), "...is hostile toward God." —at war with Him. That's the nature of the human race apart from the grace of God.

And Jesus repeats that accusation against these men in verse 40, "You are seeking to kill Me, a man who has told you the truth...this Abraham did not do." So now

it was clear to them that Jesus denied that their father was Abraham, which made their claim illegitimate and therefore made them illegitimate children.

They responded by claiming that, 'God was their father', thinking that there was no way that He could deny that. After all in Exodus chapter 4, verse 22, the LORD said, "Israel is...My firstborn son", and in Jeremiah 31, verse 9, the LORD said, "I am a father to Israel...". So they confidently answered, "We were not born of fornication; we have one Father: God."(vs41). —'We are legitimate children.'

But in saying that, they not only defended their legitimacy but they may have questioned His. They may have been aware of the unusual circumstances of the Lord's birth so that this was also a thinly veiled insult; accusing Him of being illegitimate and saying, 'You were born of fornication.' If so, that would give indirect proof of the virgin birth because they recognized there's something very unusual about His birth. And that's significant because the virgin birth is not actually mentioned in the Gospel of John and maybe suggested here. Now if indeed their statement was intended as an insult, the Lord's statement in verse 42 answered it.

But first He again exposed the error of their boast that God was their father. And again, it is their own conduct and malice that proves how false their claim was; "If God were your Father," He said, "you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and have come from God." (vs42). There is no illegitimacy about His birth. It was supernatural; 'He came from God', which is clearly a reference to His incarnation—His becoming a man through the virgin birth.

But it may be more than that because literally the statement is, "Out of God I came out, and have come." And some have understood this to be about His eternal existence and His eternal existence in being from the Father, so that it's a reference to His deity. He is God's Son, who has, as early theologians described it, been "eternally generated from the Father." So if God were their father, as they claimed, they would love Him—God's eternal Son; equal with the Father in power and glory.

But they didn't, proving that there was no filial, (or family), relationship between them and God—no family connection. Yet, everything about the Lord supported what He said. They had every reason to see Him as coming from God, every reason for believing in Him. His miracles demonstrated that. Which of these men could deny it? None of them deny His miracles. They even later, (we'll see in chapter 11), when He raises Lazarus from the dead, don't question it. They know that He's done it: But that is what galvanizes their opposition to Him. 'We've got to remove this man before the Romans come and remove us!'

No, they don't deny His miracles for they are clear signs and evidence of who He is. They don't deny His character, (well, they might have questioned that but there was no reason for that), His character was pure. His teaching was pure, clear, and deep—and carried conviction. In fact they felt the conviction of His teaching—and they resisted it.

Why was that? Why didn't they believe in light of all of this? Why doesn't anyone believe? He asked that question of them in verse 43, "Why do you not understand what I'm saying?" Of course He knew the answer; and He gave the answer, "*It is because you cannot hear My word.*" That's the reason, ultimately, that His word had no place in them. They cannot, (not apart from God's grace), understand and believe what He has taught.

His statements here, exposing their error and need, were maybe to create within them an awareness of their lost condition and move them to seek God's grace. Because apart from it, they won't believe; and not just these Jewish antagonists, but all people. What the Lord teaches here is universally true: 'Whoever does not receive the Word of God and believe in Jesus Christ does not have the Father and is lost—and is doomed forever.'

This verse is revelation—and gives the lie to the modern doctrine of 'the universal fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man', that in the recent past has been so popular in liberal Protestant theology. The idea that is, 'Regardless of our ideas and

differences about God and religion, we all have the same God—and our beliefs don't really matter. We're all in the family of God.'

Well, Christ denied that. Doctrine does matter. Belief does matter. It separates people into two lives; two types; two families, those born once—and those born again: Children of God and children of the devil.

Does that seem harsh? Does that seem unkind coming from me? Well, it's coming from the Lord. It's precisely what Jesus said next in verse 44. Abraham was not their father; God was not their father; and He now tells them who their real father was: "You are of *your* father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *nature*, for he is a liar, and the father of lies."

We have an expression, "Like father, like son." The physical traits and the personality traits of the father are often seen in the son. And that was true spiritually of these men. It's true of all unbelievers. These men acted like their father, the devil, whom Jesus calls "a murderer", and "a liar", and "the father of lies."

That has been seen "from the beginning", Jesus said. In other words, at the beginning of human history, in the Garden of Eden, he was there telling his lies by disputing God's Word. He told Eve that, 'She could disobey the LORD's command and not be hurt.' In fact, not only would she not be hurt by this rebellion, this disobedience, she would be blessed by her rebellion. She'd be enlightened. She'd be "like God, knowing good and evil." (Gen 3:5).

God had given one, only one, prohibition. They were forbidden from eating of the fruit of the tree of the Garden with the warning, "In the day that you eat of it, you will surely die." (Gen 2:17).

I'd like to pause for a moment, because as I was reflecting on that, I thought, "What an amazing revelation of the goodness and generosity of God." In fact, the first three chapters of the Bible are very significant: They're seminal chapters. There is so



much of the doctrine of the Word of God and so much of the fundamental doctrine for our understanding of reality right there in those chapters: What are we? We're creatures. God exists; and the Bible doesn't try to prove His existence—He is. It begins, "In the beginning God." There, we begin with Him. We don't need a proof—and men know that He exists. It's written in their hearts by virtue of the fact that we're created in His image. That means we're creatures. We're His creatures. We're dependent upon Him.

But something's happened—sin has occurred. You want to understand why the world is in the state it is, you must understand Genesis 3. And If you don't believe that, then of course, it's all a mystery.

But in this prohibition that He gives, you see the goodness and the character of God. What does He say? 'Here's my garden. Don't eat anything in that garden. It's mine. You have one tree from which you can eat.' No. He says, 'All of it is yours. This is my garden; all of it is yours. Just one tree is forbidden because if you eat from it, it will kill you!'

So He's generous in giving them the run of the garden; and He's kind in warning them about that one tree. And it was there for a purpose, to test their obedience. Should they obey, they would move on to great glory. It was a very important moment, because he, Adam, is the representative. But there's that warning, "...in the day that you eat from it you will surely die." (Gen 3:17b).

But the serpent came along and he questioned that; that's his method. The serpent said, "You will not surely die!" (Gen 3:4). Now that was a lie but Eve believed him and ate the forbidden fruit, (forbidden fruit is always alluring). She ate and then gave it to Adam; and he ate. The result was, they died; they died immediately spiritually and later physically though the process of aging. So dying began that moment when they died spiritually: Immediately they knew they were naked; they knew they were guilty.

But by that one act, "...sin entered the world", Paul said, "and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned.", Romans 5, verse 12.

Our representative sinned and that was imputed to us—and mankind fell. So by infecting the head of the human race, the father of the race, the devil got to all of us. When Adam sinned, he brought the entire race down with him. We have all been infected with original sin. So the devil's lie was a murderous lie: He is a liar and a murderer.

And just like a snake, he has offspring. He has a family; he has a nest, or a brood of vipers. The first family had two sons; and with them the human race was divided into two lines, two families. The older brother, Cain, invited the younger brother, Able, to meet him in a field. And there he killed him. Cain was a liar and a murderer, just like his spiritual father, that old serpent, the devil.

Ever since then two families have existed, the righteous and the unrighteous; believers and unbelievers. Both have the desires of their spiritual fathers: 'Like father, like son.' One is true; the other is false, deceiving—and being deceived.

Jesus said of the devil, he "does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him." (vs44). The devil utters lies naturally, spontaneously, and brilliantly. Deception is his modus operandi, his method. God speaks truth. The Son speaks that truth; He is the life-giver, the fountain of Light and truth. The devil is the life-destroyer, the father of lies; darkness—not light.

What's clear from this is that the Bible teaches the existence of a devil. He's not a metaphor for evil. He is a personal, malevolent being, a powerful spirit who moves in the world, working wickedness. What is not real is all of the popular conceptions of the devil.

Some years back I was on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, which is now a Moslem shrine with the Dome of the Rock, where according to their tradition their legend, Mohammad, went up to heaven on his horse. On this occasion we were with a guide who explained it was a very holy site for Islam. But, he said, "It is not holy. Satan is there. One day I was standing there and I saw him. He has eyes. He has teeth and horns. Come, and I'll show you."

So sure enough, there on the outer wall of the Dome of the Rock, you could make out what looked like a hideous face in the marble. It was the result of the pattern in the marble when the stone was cut; and in an unfortunate providence for them, you had this image.

But that was no image of the devil. He doesn't have horns or hoofs or teeth or tail. He is the opposite of that. He is a spirit, whom Paul said in 2 Corinthians 11, verse 14, "disguises himself as an angel of light." His disguise is not in the form of some scary creature—but in people. That's where he's found; that's where he hides. Just as he used the serpent in the Garden, he works through people: Ministers who come preaching what Paul called "a different gospel" and "another Jesus." (2Cor 11:4). These are the men he calls 'false prophets' and "deceitful workers." (2Cor 11:13).

I find that phrase, "another Jesus", which Paul uses in 2 Corinthians 11, very significant. The devil and his ministers preach a 'Jesus'; they honor a 'Jesus'. Everyone honors a 'Jesus'—but not the Jesus that we're reading of here. Not the Jesus who says the things that we find here in John 8. Not the Jesus of the Bible—it's 'another' one, a 'different' one—and the devil and his ministers proclaim that 'Jesus'; this is what these false prophets, these deceitful workers do. That's where Satan works.

And he is at work in all places of power; in the great capitols of the world but also in places of learning; schools and universities—and chiefly in pulpits, in preachers who deny the truth of the Gospel; they deny the deity of Christ. They don't deny Jesus; they speak of a 'wonderful man and teacher, Jesus'; but they deny the deity of Him—of the deity of Christ and the necessity of His blood atonement. They deny the need of faith in Christ and repentance from sin. They preach "another Jesus", 'another gospel', one of works and merit.

Satan is all for religion, but religion that makes people feel good about themselves, Comfortable religion that winks at sin and lets people sleep spiritually—and not wake up to the peril of their soul. So his ministers preach doctrines like 'the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.' 'Everyone is okay.'

Or he disseminates the same lie he used on Eve; that, 'Following the Lord, obeying His command, is restrictive. It will result in the loss of happiness and fulfillment in life. You'll never reach your potential. He's trying to keep you down. He doesn't want you to be like Him.' That is Satan's ploy. Satan is a master of deception and he uses it well in his attempt to keep souls in his family. He exercises enormous power and influence over society and people.

Martin Luther had a lot to say about the devil. He claimed to have numerous encounters with him. On one occasion, in Wartburg Castle where he was busy translating the Bible, (the New Testament at that point), into German, he is said to have thrown an ink pot at the devil. (Now, that's a famous story but it may simply be a legend.) What is true is what he put in his great hymn, *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God*. He described the devil as "The prince of darkness grim" and wrote,

His craft and power are great,  
And armed with cruel hate,  
On earth is not his equal.

And that is so true. We're not equal to the devil; he's lord of the lie—and convincing. Jesus said, "...there is no truth in him." There is nothing redeeming in Satan. It is all darkness. God is Light; "He cannot lie", Paul said, Titus chapter 1, verse 2. The devil cannot speak truth, ever. He's swept up multitudes in his deceptions—and has blinded the minds of those disputing with Jesus there in the temple. They didn't believe Him; and that was evidence of their spiritual condition.

So, in verse 45, the Lord gave them the reason for their unbelief. It was because of truth, the very thing the devil hates; "Because I speak the truth, you do not believe me." Now think about that. Jesus didn't say, 'Although I speak the truth, you do not believe'. But, "because I speak the truth." —They didn't accept the truth because it is the truth.

Two simple words in this passage give us significant understanding of human nature; the nature of man and mankind's condition. The word, "*cannot*", in verse 43 and "*because*" in verse 45. The children of God love the truth; it is Light and life. But the children of the devil hate it and cannot believe it—because it exposes their nature, it condemns the darkness that they love. That's John 3, verse 19.

John 3, a great chapter on God's love and His mercy; "For God so loved the world," (verse 16), "that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life." What a glorious and great promise! But then, a few verses later in verse 19, "...men love the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds are evil." "*Men love the darkness*", now that shows how desperate man's condition is.

Jesus said in verse 32 that, 'The truth', (the truth that He reveals and the truth that He is), 'makes people free.' But it's that *truth* that causes people not to believe. What all this shows is the absolute need of grace—sovereign grace. Men "*cannot*", according to verse 43, *cannot* change their condition any more than 'a leopard can change his spots.'

Then to impress on them, even more, their guilt and His authority to speak to them as He did, He asks, "Which one of you convicts Me of sin? If I speak truth, why do you not believe Me?" (vs46). He was sinless; they could not convict Him. And that meant that He had authority to speak to them as He did—and as *sinless* and *guiltless* He spoke truth. So, 'Why didn't they believe Him?', He asked. And again, He knew why; He had explained it: 'They *cannot* believe the truth'. There is no place in them for the truth. They were in spiritual darkness as all unbelievers are.

Yet unbelievers do believe; and it's the truth of the Gospel, the message of hope, and forgiveness, and life that plants the seed and delivers life into the heart of the unbelieving, resulting in new birth. In other words, 'It's all of grace.' And the Lord was explaining that to these men.

They did not believe the truth because it was contrary to their nature. It was contrary to what they loved. It was contrary to the bent of their mind. But through His revelation of truth would they, could they believe when His Light shone into their hearts and God's grace opened their minds. That is the way that the change would take place; only through the revelation that He gave. Only in that way could they believe, as Light shone into their hearts and dispelled the darkness; and so as He speaks truth that would hopefully be the consequence. But other than that, other than His grace, there is no path to life.

That's what the Lord spoke in John chapter 6, verse 44, when He spoke to this large crowd in the synagogue in Capernaum and explaining their condition. He said, "No one can come to Me **unless** the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day." 'No one can come': No one has that ability unless God's grace intervenes. And then He "*draws*" His chosen ones; He draws His elect.

And that's what the Lord said in the next verse of our text, verse 47, where He repeats the truth and that statement of reality that He told the Galileans back in chapter 6. "He who is of God hears the words of God; for this reason you do not hear *them*, because you are not of God." (vs47).

So again, there are only two kinds of people in the world: the children of God and the children of the devil; those chosen by God and those left in their sin. The elect believe—the non-elect don't.

Jesus spoke to this group as though some '*chosen*' might be among them, in order to convict them of their failure and lostness, so that they would be awakened to their condition and reconsider their direction. That's how the elect believe; it's through the hearing of the Gospel of grace and salvation through faith alone. And while hearing it, the Holy Spirit opens their heart to believe it. And they do. It's a miracle. It's supernatural.

We can't reason people into the kingdom, and reason people into understanding their need—but when the Word of God is spoken and the Spirit of God works through it.

John Bunyan, remember, described this great division in the human race with two children. The older was Passion; the younger was Patience. Patience was the believer, Passion the unbeliever. He described the two types of people, not so much in regard to their relationship to Christ, as to their relationship to the world.

Passion lived for this present world, which is “passing away”, John tells us. (1 Jn 2:17). Patience lived for the world to come, which is eternal. Passion used all his treasures up quickly and soon had nothing but rags. The unbeliever, (that's him), all that he cares about is in this present world; this present world which is “passing away”; this present world which is soon gone forever. Patience, the believer in Christ the Savior, has eternal life and glory and joy— forever.

If you don't have that but want that, want to be a child of God, then believe in Christ and let His Word have its place in you. You can't do that in your own strength. You can't do that in your own understanding. —You don't have that. Jesus made that clear in chapter 6 and makes it clear here in chapter 8. But God has the power and He gives it. It is, as I said, a miracle.

You have it illustrated beautifully in Mark chapter 3, when Jesus is in the synagogue and there's a man with a withered hand. The hand was powerless but Jesus told him to, ‘Stretch it forth’, which was impossible; it's the very thing he could not do. But he obeyed and stretched it forth—whole!

Faith is impossible for the unbeliever—that's the doctrine of total inability. That doesn't mean, though, that we can't believe; only that we cannot believe in our own strength. Christ calls the lost to Himself through the Gospel and He *gives* faith for them to respond. He shines the Light of truth into their dark heart to overcome willful unbelief and makes unbelievers able to believe.

So if you have become world weary, if you want what lasts, if you want a new father, the heavenly Father, then come to His Son. Believe in Christ who died for sinners

and you'll discover, by God's grace, you can, in fact, believe. May God help you to do that. And help all of us who have, to do the works of Abraham: Be men and women who are obedient to the Lord God. Let's pray,

Father, that's a great fact that is true of every believer in Jesus Christ—You are our Father, and we can cry out to You, "Abba, Father!" We have the closest relationship with You, the God of the universe, God Almighty. We have it through the person and work of Your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. You sent Him. He came forth from You, into this world, by becoming a man in order to offer Himself up on the cross for our sins. And He did that; He said, "It's finished." And by Your grace, You brought multitudes to faith in Him, and into Your family, in which we cry, "Abba, Father." Thank You for that, Father. Thank You for Your goodness and your grace, and Your mercy to us who are so undeserving.

Well, may we think of that, Father, in the next hour; and may we think of that throughout the week; and may we look to You for blessing, for that's what we're promised.

The LORD bless you and keep you. The LORD make His face shine on you and be gracious to you. The LORD lift up His countenance on you and give you peace. In Christ's name. Amen.

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