

SCRIPTURE STUDY SHEET FOR JULY 25, 2021 @ CAPC OAKLAND

Reflecting on the Fourth of the Six Great Ends of the Church
The Church is for "The preservation of the truth"

John 8:31-50
COMMON ENGLISH BIBLE

³¹ Jesus said to the Jews who believed in him, "You are truly my disciples if you remain faithful to my teaching. ³² Then you will know the **TRUTH**, and the **TRUTH** will set you free."

³³ They responded, "We are Abraham's children; we've never been anyone's slaves. How can you say that we will be set free?"

³⁴ Jesus answered, "I assure you that everyone who sins is a slave to sin. ³⁵ A slave isn't a permanent member of the household, but a son is. ³⁶ Therefore, if the Son makes you free, you really will be free. ³⁷ I know that you are Abraham's children, yet you want to kill me because you don't welcome my teaching. ³⁸ I'm telling you what I've seen when I am with the Father, but you are doing what you've heard from your father."

³⁹ They replied, "Our **FATHER** is Abraham."

Jesus responded, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do Abraham's works. ⁴⁰ Instead, you want to kill me, though I am the one who has spoken the truth I heard from God. Abraham didn't do this. ⁴¹ You are doing your father's works."

They said, "Our ancestry isn't in question! The only Father we have is God!"

⁴² Jesus replied, "If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God. Here I am. I haven't come on my own. God sent me. ⁴³ Why don't you understand what I'm saying? It's because you can't really hear my words. ⁴⁴ Your **FATHER** is the devil. You are his children, and you want to do what your father wants. He was a murderer from the beginning. He has never stood for the **TRUTH**, because there's no **TRUTH** in him. Whenever that liar speaks, he speaks according to his own nature, because he's a liar and the father of liars. ⁴⁵ Because I speak the **TRUTH**, you don't believe me. ⁴⁶ Who among you can show I'm guilty of sin? Since I speak the **TRUTH**, why don't you believe me? ⁴⁷ God's **CHILDREN** listen to God's words. You don't listen to me because you aren't God's children."

⁴⁸ The Jewish opposition answered, "We were right to say that you are a Samaritan and have a *demon*, weren't we?"

LANGUAGE NOTES & TEXTUAL CONNECTIONS

John is one of the gospel retellings of the life, death and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth. It's thought to be the last written as it contains more theological language and reflection than the other gospels that focus more on telling the stories rather than interpreting them. It's highly poetic, filled with metaphors and connections to Greek Philosophy (the major world-view at that time). The notion and word "truth" are used dramatically more often in the book of John than in any other books of the Bible.

John 8 tells the story of Jesus returning to Temple (the public forum for ideas religious and philosophical) to continue debating and talking with the religious leaders. He's said to return after a night of rest to pick up on what happened the day before.

FATHER... CHILDREN :: The ancients saw family relationships as the paradigm for understanding both genetic ancestry and allegiance to world-views and beliefs. A disciple was considered a "child" of the master-teacher they chose to follow and learn from. A bit different than our world today.

⁴⁹ “I don’t have a *demon*,” Jesus replied. “But I honor my Father and you dishonor me. ⁵⁰ I’m not trying to bring glory to myself. There’s one who is seeking to glorify me, and he’s the judge.”

John 14:1-14
COMMON ENGLISH BIBLE

[Jesus said to his disciples] ¹ “Don’t be troubled. Trust in God. Trust also in me. ² My Father’s house has room to spare. If that weren’t the case, would I have told you that I’m going to prepare a place for you? ³ When I go to prepare a place for you, I will return and take you to be with me so that where I am you will be too. ⁴ You know the way to the place I’m going.”

⁵ Thomas asked, “Lord, we don’t know where you are going. How can we know the way?”

⁶ Jesus answered, “**I AM THE** way, the **TRUTH**, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷ If you have really known me, you will also know the Father. From now on you know him and have seen him.”

⁸ Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father; that will be enough for us.”

⁹ Jesus replied, “Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been with you all this time? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? ¹⁰ Don’t you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words I have spoken to you I don’t speak on my own. The Father who dwells in me does his works. ¹¹ Trust me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or at least believe on account of the works themselves. ¹² I assure you that whoever believes in me will do the works that I do. They will do even greater works than these because I am going to the Father. ¹³ I will do whatever you ask for in my name, so that the Father can be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴ When you ask me for anything in my name, I will do it.”

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION & EXAMEN:

- What engaged you, enraged you, or surprised you in the text?
- We’re talking about truth – that the Church is called to actively preserve the Truth. How does Jesus talk about truth in these scriptures? What is he talking about...observable facts?; historic tradition?; relationships?; general knowledge?; or news?
- How is the Spirit of God inviting you – or us as a church – to act, speak, be or change through this word about truth in this time of fake news and silo-thinking?

LANGUAGE NOTES & TEXTUAL CONNECTIONS

Demon :: daimón in Greek δαιμόνιον: a spirit, a being inferior to God, superior to men. Often the presence of a demon is the explanation for how a human can do something that seems to contradict or overwhelm the will of God.

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John 14 continues the telling of a private time of teaching of Jesus with his disciples begun in chapter 13, in which he shares the basics of his teaching and the inevitability of his death. Here his students respond with confusion to his talking of his death after having washed