

SERMON NOTES

*Reason To Believe: Jesus Clarifies
John 8:31-59*

Continuing his ministry of preaching and teaching, Jesus clarified what it means to be a true follower. It is by grace alone we are saved through faith in Jesus Christ but as Martin Luther once said, “We are saved by faith alone, but the faith that saves is never alone.” In his excellent commentary on the fourth gospel narrative, John Phillips remarked, “The essential proof of genuine, saving faith would soon be evident by their continuing in his word. His teaching would become their rule of faith, the law of their lives.”

Key thought: Jesus clarified what it means to be a true follower, and He wants you to walk in the assurance of your faith. (2 Corinthians 13:5 & 2 Peter 1:10–15)

1. There are true and false followers of Jesus Christ. (8:31, 59)

2. True followers of Jesus... (8:31-32)

- a. Continue in His Word
- b. Know the truth
- c. Find freedom in Christ

3. Identifying the differences between true and false followers:

“The Bible speaks of four different kinds of ‘spiritual children.’ We are born by nature children of wrath (Eph. 2:3); when we reach the age of accountability and deliberately sin, we become children of disobedience (Eph. 2:2). When we put faith in Christ, we become the children of God (John 1:12). But the person who finally rejects the Savior and prefers self-righteousness (the devil’s substitute) becomes a child of the devil. (See Matt. 13:24–30, 36–43, where the children of the devil are portrayed as counterfeit Christians.) Jesus pointed out the characteristics of the children of the devil:”

- They will not give place to the Word of God (v. 37).
- They trust in the flesh—human birth, works (v. 39).
- They hate Christ and seek to kill Him (vv. 40, 44).
- They do not love Christ or the things of Christ (v. 42).
- They do not understand the Word—blinded by Satan (v. 43).
- They are liars and love lies more than the truth (v. 44).
- They will not hear the Word of God; they hate it (v. 47).

“Remember, these “children of the devil” were not grossly immoral people; they were self-righteous religious people who rejected Christ. Many people today are deluded by Satan into an outward form of godliness that lacks the power of the Gospel, but these people think they are truly saved and going to heaven.” (Wiersbe, W. W. (1992). *Wiersbe’s expository outlines on the New Testament* (pp. 233–234). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.)

SERMON NOTES (Cont'd)

*Reason To Believe: Jesus Clarifies
John 8:31-59*

Questions to Examine Yourselves:

Taken from *Who Am I? Identity in Christ* by Jerry Bridges

- What is my attitude toward God? Do I gladly acknowledge my dependence on him and my accountability to him?
- What is my attitude toward my sin? Am I concerned or indifferent about it?
- What is my attitude toward Jesus Christ? Do I trust him as the one who dies for my sin on the cross?
- What is my attitude toward the Bible? Do I truly want to grow in my understanding and application of it in my life?
- What is my attitude toward prayer? Do I also want to grow in this area of my life, or am I quite content to see prayer as an occasional call out to God for help?
- What is my attitude toward other Christians? Do I appreciate being with them and learning from them, or do I actually prefer the company and lifestyle of my non-Christian friends?

“These are important questions that we should seek to answer truthfully. The stakes are too high to ignore them or play games with them. Our eternal destiny is at stake and eternity lasts forever. There is no end to it. All of us will spend eternity in the blessed presence of God, or we will spend it under the never-ending curse and wrath of God.” (Jerry Bridges)

More Signs of True Genuine Faith:

The book of 1 John was written so we can know we have genuine saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. These scriptures below (taken from *GotQuestions*) are a great series of tests and be reminded we won't fulfill them all perfectly all the time but the pattern of our lives will continue to show a love for God and spiritual growth.

- Do you enjoy having fellowship with Christ and His redeemed people? (1 John 1:3)
- Would people say you walk in the light, or walk in the darkness? (1 John 1:6-7)
- Do you admit and confess your sin? (1 John 1:8)
- Are you obedient to God's Word? (1 John 2:3-5)
- Does your life indicate you love God rather than the world? (1 John 2:15)
- Is your life characterized by “doing what is right”? (1 John 2:29)
- Do you seek to maintain a pure life? (1 John 3:3)
- Do you see a decreasing pattern of sin in your life? (1 John 3:5-6) [Note: this refers to not continuing in sin as a way of life, not a total absence of sin.]
- Do you demonstrate love for other Christians? (1 John 3:14)
- Do you “walk the walk,” versus just “talking the talk”? (1 John 3:18-19)
- Do you maintain a clear conscience? (1 John 3:21) Do you experience victory in your Christian walk? (1 John 5:4)