



# “Open Church – Open Bible”

Min. Marossa Davis



# Sunday Church School

February 7, 2021

“Jesus’ Claim to Deity”

John 8:48-59

CBC

## “Open Church – Open Bible”

“Jesus’ Claim to Deity”

John 8:48-59 (KJV)

- v. 48 “Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?”
- v. 49 Jesus answered, I have not a devil; but I honour my Father, and ye do dishonour me.
- v. 50 **And I seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth.**
- v. 51 Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.
- v. 52 “Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death.”

CBC

## “Open Church – Open Bible”

“Jesus’ Claim to Deity”

John 8:48-59

- v. 53 “Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself?”
- v. 54 Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God:
- v. 55 **Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his saying.**
- v. 56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.”

C  
B  
C

## “Open Church – Open Bible”

“Jesus’ Claim to Deity”  
John 8:48-59

v. 57 “Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?”

v. 58 Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.

v. 59 Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.”

C  
B  
C

## “Open Church – Open Bible”

“Jesus’ Claim to Deity”

In today’s lesson, we are continuing in the unit of study titled, “**Going Deeper with Jesus.**” In last week’s lesson, Pastor Bogan taught us about how Jesus proclaimed that He was the **Light of the World!** Today, Jesus will go even further by identifying Himself as **God** when He declares, “**Before Abraham was, I am**” (John 8:58) which is our Golden verse of the day.

**Our passage today** contains three important principles: 1) the first is that Jesus always honors and glorifies the Father. In the face of the Jews desperate accusations, Jesus **steadfastly** pointed people to His Heavenly Father. In so doing, He perfectly defended His own credibility. **The second principle** is that Jesus offers eternal life, in fact He is the exclusive source of eternal life. **Thirdly**, Jesus makes a **clear claim to deity**. He identifies Himself with the Yahweh, the great **I Am** ( Ex. 3:14 ) and indicates that **His nature is divine.**

C  
B  
C

## “Open Church – Open Bible”

“Jesus’ Claim to Deity ”

TODAY’S AIM

**FACTS:** to understand that Jesus unambiguously claimed to be God.

**PRINCIPLE:** to learn the significance and implications of Jesus’ deity for our daily living.

**APPLICATION:** to practice obeying Jesus’ divine authority over our lives.

LESSON OUTLINE

I. ACCUSED OF DEMONIC INFLUENCE      John 8: 48-53

II. ACCUSED OF LYING                      John 8: 54-59

C  
B  
C

## “Open Church – Open Bible”

“Jesus’ Claim to Deity ”

I. ACCUSED OF DEMONIC INFLUENCE - JOHN 8: 48-53

**Dishonoring Jesus-** The conversation Jesus was having with the Jewish religious leaders became increasingly **intense** and here it reached a climax. One sure way to tell when someone is losing an argument is when they resort to **name calling!** When the Jews had run out of intelligent, logical arguments they resorted to such name calling. Instead of pursuing truth , they merely expressed angry feelings, with no self control, their thinking processes had ceased, as they lashed out at Jesus!

**With no way to refute** what Jesus was saying, they resorted to attacking Him personally. They accused Him of being a Samaritan and being demon possessed. Jesus had questioned their lineage from Abraham so they accused Him of being a Samaritan whom they hated because of their biracial identity. They were half Jews and were considered apostate. Jesus did not even bother

C  
B  
C

## “Open Church – Open Bible”

### “ Jesus’ Claim to Deity ”

to respond to this part of their allegation.

**However, Jesus did respond** to their charge of Him having a demon. This is one of several times He was accused of having a demon or at least operating under the power of a demon. He was not exalting Himself but only the Father. Their attack on Him was dishonoring , which in turn was dishonoring to the Father. Throughout the conversation, He had been associating Himself with the Father and now he claimed the **same bond** with the Father once again. As long as they denied Him and His message, they were denying Yahweh Himself. This was far more serious than just denying Jesus alone.

**Honoring the Father** ( v 50-51) Jesus had no need to justify Himself. He was not trying to gain fame and glory for Himself. But, the Father sought glory for the Son, and He would judge people according to their stance towards

C  
B  
C

## “Open Church – Open Bible”

### “ Jesus’ Claim to Deity ”

Him. Jesus was not bothered by what people thought about Him personally, but He did everything for the approval of His Father, and His Father in turn **wanted glory for His Son**. The Jews were on dangerous ground by making the types of accusations they were about Jesus.

**Then Jesus told them** that anyone who receives His words in faith would **never see death**. His use of the words **verily verily** in verse 51 was a warning to the Jews that they needed to pay close attention and do what He was saying because it was a life and death matter! He had already warned them that they would **die in their sins** because of their unbelief ( vs. 21, 24 ) They did not need to die in their sins, but it would be necessary for them to **believe in the truth** of His teachings for them to avoid it.

**Jesus was presenting Himself as the One** sent by the Father with the

C  
B  
C

## “Open Church – Open Bible”

### “ Jesus’ Claim to Deity ”

words of eternal life. Their rejection or acceptance of His truth would determine their **eternal destiny**. But their hearts were so hard they could not understand what He was saying; rather they were determined to discredit Him. Their prejudices did not allow any room in their thinking for receiving Him.

**Sadly, this is the state** of much of the world today. The truth of God’s word is repeatedly shared from Gospel pulpits, during evangelistic services and classes on TV and on YouTube, and through personal testimonies shared by God’s children. But for many people, their hearts are still hardened to the Gospel message so that is a **lack of acceptance**. At the same time, we must **continue to share the ‘good news’** because there are **still many** who will respond in true faith and there will be **rejoicing in heaven** over each one!

C  
B  
C

## “Open Church – Open Bible”

### “ Jesus’ Claim to Deity ”

**Exalting Abraham-** In verses 52-53 the Jews were even more convinced that Jesus was demon possessed. His claim that anyone who kept His word would not see death did not align with what they thought to be facts. Their main point was that their much celebrated **Father Abraham** was dead. To them, this proved that Jesus was teaching falsehoods from a demonic source. They, once again, only thought in **physical, literal terms**. Thus they were unable to comprehend the meanings of Jesus’ teachings.

**Not only Abraham**, but all the other prophets of the Old Testament were dead as well. The Jewish leaders, therefore interpreted Jesus’ saying that Abraham and all the prophets had failed to obey His word; if they had obeyed they would still be alive! Such a claim , they thought could only come from someone who was not in His right mind and therefore under the influence of evil spirits. The leaders inability to understand anything

C  
B  
C

## “Open Church – Open Bible”

### “ Jesus’ Claim to Deity ”

Jesus said in other than earthly, physical terms made them unable to see this spiritual truth.

**They regarded Jesus’ claim** that His message could prevent death as absurd and dangerous. To them, Jesus was under extreme delusion and self exaltation. Although He was presenting **nothing but God’s truth**, they remained completely unmoved.

**Jesus had repeatedly explained** that He was not exalting Himself, but only His Father. He was doing the **works** and speaking the **words** that His Father had given Him. The religious leaders however, were unwilling to get past their envy and their theological prejudices. Since they were **unwilling to receive the truth** He had come to deliver from God the Father, their minds and their hearts **remained closed**. They were unable to accept his testimony.

#### II. ACCUSED OF LYING - John 8: 54-59

**Honored by the Father-** vs. 54-55. In Jesus’ personal testimony, He never sought to honor Himself. His honor came from His Father alone. Honor can be

C  
B  
C

## “Open Church – Open Bible”

### “ Jesus’ Claim to Deity ”

described as assigning **high esteem** to someone. Because Jesus spoke only the truth from the Father, He was assigned the **highest esteem** from the Father.

**For anyone to honor themselves** is normally taken as a social disgrace. The Greek word used here means to ‘ assign glory’. It is the basis for our English word **doxology**. Jesus was saying that if He sought glory for Himself, it would amount to nothing. In verse 50, He had already said “ I seek not mine own glory : there is one that seeketh and judgeth”. The only glory He valued for Himself was the one given Him by His Father.

**The leaders claimed Jesus’ Father was their God.** But, Jesus said they did not even know Him. Jesus knew Him well, however, and if He claimed He did not know Him, He would be a liar like them! He was referring to their claim to know God while **everything they said and did** showed otherwise. Jesus’ charge against them was the same as saying they were

C  
B  
C

## “Open Church – Open Bible”

### “ Jesus’ Claim to Deity ”

unbelievers.

**The proof Jesus offered** of His true knowledge of the Father was His **obedience** to Him. Verse 55 records Him as saying “ I know him, and keep his saying”. He was implying that the proof of their **unbelief** was their **disobedience** to the Father’s word.

**Honored by Abraham-** vs. 56-57 The Jews had asked Jesus if He claimed to be greater than their **Father Abraham** in verse 53. Without giving a direct answer, He had spoken instead of being **honored by His Father** who they said was **their God**. Jesus now claimed, “ Your Father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it and was glad” ( v.56 ). Genesis gives no account of this but Hebrews 11: 8-13 indicates Abraham had an understanding of God’s promises about the distant future ( perhaps spiritually looking down the corridors of time)

**Jesus might have been saying** that Abraham’s spirit witnessed Jesus’ birth and rejoiced that salvation through Him had finally arrived on Earth. Or, information about Jesus’ coming may have been included in God’s promises or

C  
B  
C

## “Open Church – Open Bible”

### “ Jesus’ Claim to Deity ”

visions to him with the specifics not being recorded in Scripture. ( cf Gen. 12:3, 22:18, 15:11-21). Whatever Jesus’ meaning was, the Jews continued to think only in **physical terms**. Therefore, they responded indignantly that He was not even fifty years old yet and He **claimed to see Abraham**. From their **literal, earthly perspective** we can perhaps understand why they were convinced that Jesus was either mad or possessed or both.

**The good news is** that since we have the in dwelling of the **Holy Spirit** to give us understanding, we can see the reason for their failure to grasp Jesus’ meaning. They had **rejected Him** and His teachings about God, so it was impossible for them to comprehend what He wanted them to learn. We should be grieved that they so wholly missed the truth. This should also be our attitude towards the unbelievers we meet today who similarly reject the Gospel. Our desire is that they would be led to a knowledge of the truth.

**I AM** ( John 8: 58-59 ). If it had been Jesus’ intent to merely indicate that He

C  
B  
C

## “Open Church – Open Bible”

### “ Jesus’ Claim to Deity ”

had existed before Abraham’s time, He could have simply said, “ Before Abraham was, I was”, But that is not what He said. He had a more profound reality in mind. So He said, “ Verily, verily, I say unto you, **Before Abraham was, I am.**” Jesus uses the emphatic phrase *ego eimi* - “ I am” denoting His absolute, eternal, self existence. He was asserting that He **always exists in the present**, which constitutes a claim to deity. No other “ **I AM**” statement caused dissension like this particular one. Basically Jesus comes out and plainly tells the Jews, “ **I’m God**”.

**This was a clear declaration of His deity.** Jesus was explicitly alluding to Yahweh’s identification of Himself to Moses at the **burning bush**. **When Moses asked God** who he should say sent him to deliver the Hebrews, God said “ **I AM THAT I AM:** and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you” ( Ex. 3:14 )

C  
B  
C

## “Open Church – Open Bible”

### “ Jesus’ Claim to Deity ”

Then God added, “ This is my name forever, and this is my memorial unto all generations” ( v. 15 ). To the Jewish leaders facing Jesus, it was obvious that by choosing to use this particular phrase, He was actually claiming to be Jahweh Himself.

**For the Jewish leaders, this was the last straw!** They believed He was blaspheming, so they determined to kill Him. “Then they took up stones to cast at him” ( v. 59 ) They surely based this action on Leviticus 24:16: “ He that blasphemeth the name of the Lord, he shall surely be put to death, and all the congregation shall certainly stone him.”

**Since it was not yet time for Jesus to die.** He easily escaped His assailants, leaving the temple and walking away. As the Divine Son of God, He simply left them behind so that He could carry on with His work.

C  
B  
C

## “Open Church – Open Bible”

### “ Jesus’ Claim to Deity ”

**Jesus’ claims about Himself were so radical** that if He were not the Son of God, then He would have to be either crazy or a liar. However, even His enemies recognized that 1) Jesus spoke with an uncommon eloquence, not something normally associated with someone out of their mind; 2) Jesus’ stern moral ethics and exemplary life were not something a liar would promote and; 3) no one ever seriously disputed that Jesus was a son of David.

**Jesus asserted that keeping His word-** that is **believing in Him-** is the key to a person never experiencing **eternal** death. Of course, believers who do not live to see Jesus’ return will die ( I Thess 4:13-14) but they will be raised again, and no believer will die spiritually ( John 11: 25-26) We can make sense of Jesus’ words only if we recognize that Jesus really is who He claimed to be.

C  
B  
C

## “Open Church – Open Bible”

### “ Jesus’ Claim to Deity ”

**With this “I AM” statement,** Jesus makes clear that He is the Yahweh of the Old Testament. Jesus is **concealed** in the Old Testament and **revealed** in the New Testament. Jesus’ claim not only asserted that He is God but also implied that He originated from no other source than Himself. Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega ( Rev. 1:8; Col 1:15-17 ) who made all things come into being. He needs nothing and no one to be who He is. Yahweh is absolutely One but in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

**God the Father confirms that Jesus is God.** He says, “ But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God is for ever and ever” ( Hebrews 1:8) The Apostle Paul presents Jesus as God ( Phil 2:6; Col 2:9; Heb 1:3) **Do you believe Jesus is God?** If not, we humbly ask that you will today. If you already do, won’t you share His love, His truth and His Good News with someone today?

C  
B  
C

## “Open Church – Open Bible”

### Practical Points

1. True believers will praise God for who Jesus is and for what He has done in their lives ( John 8: 48-51 ).
2. People who hate Jesus will often justify their hatred by trying to make Him into something evil ( vs. 52-53 ).
3. A true knowledge of God will lead to a proper knowledge of who Jesus is ( v. 54 ).
4. If we know God, we will demonstrate it by obeying Him and rejoicing in His Son ( vs. 55-56 ).
5. Jesus is the eternal God, the Second Person in the Trinity ( vs. 57-58 ).
6. As God in the flesh, Jesus was in complete control of His earthly destiny ( v. 59 ). He is also in control of ours.

C  
B  
C

## “Open Church – Open Bible”

### For Further Discussion

1. What did Jesus say about seeking glory?
2. Why did Jesus say “ Before Abraham was, I am “ rather than “ I was” ( v. 58 ) ?
3. Why did Jesus’ Jewish opponents accuse Him of being demon possessed ( v. 48 )?
4. How did- and how does- God the Father honor His Son ( v. 54 )? How do we honor both of them.?

## “Open Church – Open Bible”

### Communication Information

Thank you for sharing today at the “Open Church-Open Bible Ministry at the Christ Baptist Church.

If this lesson has been a blessing to you, and you desire to support Christ Baptist , please go to <http://www.cbcburlingtonj.org/>, click on the **GIVE** tab at the top of the page and follow the prompts

Or Send Your Donations by Mail to  
Christ Baptist Church, PO Box 10, Burlington NJ 08016

A copy of this lesson can be obtained by going to the CBC Website at <http://www.cbcburlingtonj.org/>, Click the ON-LINE Sunday School tab  
A copy of the Weekly Lesson PDF will be available for downloading

[www.cbcburlingtonj.org](http://www.cbcburlingtonj.org) e-mail [churchoffice@cbcburlingtonj.org](mailto:churchoffice@cbcburlingtonj.org) 609.387.1234