

“I am God.”

John 8:48-59

Who is your biggest hero? Michael Jordan, Joe Dimaggio, JFK, Beyonce, or a high school teacher you remember? Suppose someone came up and said “I’m bigger than (your hero)”? How would you react? We see such a reaction in today’s Bible story.

A. “Let’s let God Sort this out.”

Sometimes you find yourself in a situation that only God can settle. Jesus’ claims had backed the religious leaders into a corner ... so much so that they lashed out at Jesus with an alarming attack:

John 8:48-50, The people retorted, “You Samaritan devil! Didn’t we say all along that you were possessed by a demon?”

⁴⁹ “No,” Jesus said, “I have no demon in me. For I honor my Father—and you dishonor me.

⁵⁰ And though I have no wish to glorify myself, God is going to glorify me. He is the true judge.

They hated Samaritans. Now they hated Jesus. Hate destroys.

In the dispute between the true identity of Jesus, He says, “God is the true judge, let’s allow Him to verify My identity.”

B. “Obeying Me defeats death.”

John 8:51-52, I tell you the truth, anyone who obeys my teaching will never die!”

⁵² The people said, “Now we know you are possessed by a demon. Even Abraham and the prophets died, but you say, ‘Anyone who obeys my teaching will never die!’

“Anyone” includes me! There’s the problem ... the religious leaders wanted to be the gatekeepers, saying who was good enough to get in. They wanted to retain their power, spiritually abusive power.

Jesus said, “I am the gate, not you.” (John 10:9)

While “anyone” is inclusive ... “who obeys” is exclusive. Obedience to Jesus is a non-negotiable condition of eternal life.

Perfect obedience? No. Your “report card” doesn’t need to be perfect.
Consistent obedience? Yes. Over time are you moving toward Christ?

C. “God Will Glorify Me.”

John 8:53-55, Are you greater than our father Abraham? He died, and so did the prophets. Who do you think you are?”

⁵⁴ Jesus answered, “If I want glory for myself, it doesn’t count. But it is my Father who will glorify me. You say, ‘He is our God,’

⁵⁵ but you don’t even know him. I know him. If I said otherwise, I would be as great a liar as you! But I do know him and obey him.

Jesus was thinking to the Cross and the Resurrection where God would validate His claims.

D. “I AM God.”

John 8:56-59, Your father Abraham rejoiced as he looked forward to my coming. He saw it and was glad.” ⁵⁷ The people said, “You aren’t even fifty years old. How can you say you have seen Abraham?” ⁵⁸ Jesus answered, “I tell you the truth, before Abraham was even born, I AM!” ⁵⁹ At that point they picked up stones to throw at him. But Jesus was hidden from them and left the Temple.

Abraham was the man whom God chose to carry His message of hope to humanity. Abraham, “Father” Abraham, was the key figure in Jewish history. Jesus is saying “I am bigger than Abraham!” No wonder they wanted to kill him!

Moses asked God, “what is your name?” God said, “Tell them ‘I AM’ has sent you.” (Exodus 3:14). In using this same phrase Jesus is saying, “The reason I am bigger than your hero Abraham is because I am, in fact, God.”

MAIN POINT: Jesus claims to be the very meaning of “being.” Do you agree?

A closing prayer, “Dear God, You came to earth in the Person of Jesus and said ‘anyone’ can have eternal life in obedience to Jesus. Thank you for that bold and decisive move to rescue humanity from her despair! Help us to consistently obey you day by day. In Jesus’ name, amen.”