

WHO'S YOUR DADDY? *A Personal Paraphrase of John 8:12-59*

"I am the light of the world," Jesus announced. "If you follow me you'll never be in the dark. The truth will always light your path." The Pharisees were scandalized. "How can you make such a claim?" they asked. "I'm telling the truth," Jesus replied. "I came from my Father and I'm going back to Him. That's why you can be sure that what I say is the truth."

"Really?" said the Pharisees. "Who's your daddy?" "If you knew who I was," said Jesus, "then you would know who He was." This made the religious big shots really angry but Jesus had more to say. "I'm going back to my Father's house. You may try to go there, too, but it won't work. Unless you recognize who I am, your destiny is to die in your sins and to go to *your* father's house." "Who do you think you are?" asked the Pharisees. "I've already told you," Jesus said. "But you didn't listen. You'll only know who I am when you have raised me up high on a cross!"

Many in the crowd were impressed with the way Jesus handled the Pharisees and believed in him. Jesus, however, wanting to be sure that their faith was authentic said, "Only those who hear my words and do what I say are *really* my disciples. They alone know the truth. Consequently, they alone are free! Everyone else is in bondage." "That's preposterous," said the Pharisees. "We're children of Abraham. How can you say we're slaves?" "If you live in sin, you're a slave to sin. It's that simple," said Jesus. "No one is free until I take off their chains. The fact that you want to kill me proves who your real father is. Abraham's children would never seek to kill a man who told them the truth! No, you have another father."

"You're crazy," said the Pharisees. "We know who we are. We are children of Abraham and that means God himself is our Father!" "Really?" said Jesus. "If God were your Father you would know who I am because I came from God and do only what He tells me. In fact, He is the one who sent me to you! It's clear now who your father is: the devil! The family resemblance is unmistakable. You are liars and murderers just like he is. Like father, like son."

"You're not just crazy," said the Pharisees, "you're demon possessed!" "No," said Jesus, "I don't have a demon but I do have the truth. The devil hates truth and so do you. That's how I know who your daddy is. But it doesn't have to be this way. If you would only listen to my words and do what I say you would be truly free... you would never die!"

"Who do you think you are?" said the Pharisees. "Are you greater than father Abraham?" Jesus replied, "Abraham knew I was coming and the thought of it made him leap for joy." "What?" said the Pharisees, "Abraham knew about you? You're not even 50 years old!" Jesus replied, "The truth is that before Abraham even existed... I am who I am!"

This was just too much! The Pharisees started looking for rocks to stone Jesus, but he quietly slipped out of the Temple because his time wasn't up yet.