

“I AM YOUR FATHER”

INTRO ILLUSTRATION//

- (This is pretty specific to me and jokes being made about my name specifically, but the movie reference should be well known enough to still stick and make sense to students!)
- Who
- Growing up I got told a lot of jokes/puns with my name
 - Dryer- washer/dryer jokes
 - Luke- “I am your father” (Darth Vader/Star Wars reference)
 - Extremely popular/Iconic movie scene:
 - Even if you don’t like/know star wars, you’ve probably heard this reference, but to refresh you, here’s the scene:



- *show scene*

-what makes this scene is it’s such a major plot twist and unexpected turn
-You can see and hear the disgust and pain in Luke Skywalker’s response:
“That’s not true, that’s IMPOSSIBLE”
-What he really couldn’t believe, is that he, someone good, could come from Darth Vader, someone so evil.
-and I bring this up because when I read our passage this week, Jesus told the priests and pharisees who their real father was, and just like Luke, they couldn’t believe it

MAIN PASSAGE//v.39-48

- This is an incredibly deep and intense moment, and one that really begins to bring a rift and divide between Jesus and the religious leaders
 - Rightfully so, Jesus is declaring that the religious leaders, in a spiritual sense, are children of the devil, that's a massive statement
 - These are the priests, pharisees, religious leaders (pastors) of the day!
 - And Jesus is saying their ancestry doesn't matter, their religious deeds don't matter, they are murderers and liars, like their true "father", the devil
 - They were shocked just like Luke was to hear that Darth Vader was his father
 - Same issue: couldn't believe they (someone good) could come from someone/something so evil (satan)
 - What Jesus is saying here is simply: you're either for or against me, you're either walking as Children of God or children of the devil
 - He's not just singling out the religious leaders: he's talking about EVERYONE: **v.34- "everyone who sins is a slave to sin"**
 - Romans 5:10** "For if, while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!"
 - The good news is that Jesus offers a solution to us all, even the pharisees and religious leaders

Transition: In this conversation Jesus shows us 2 things we need:

MAIN POINTS//

1. We need **FREEDOM (sin makes us slaves)**

- We just read it, Jesus says that everyone who sins is a slave, that's each of us in this room
 - you can't be "set free" if you don't realize you're a slave
 - BUT the WORD brings freedom (**v.31 + 36**)
 - you are really my disciples, you're really children of God, if you are faithful to my teachings
 - some versions say "abide" which means remain + stay
 - Are you just **familiar** with Jesus + his words, or truly **following** Him?
 - the religious leaders just knew scripture but didn't really follow Jesus
 - Notice what Jesus says: the truth (His teachings) will set you FREE
 - He didn't say following them will make you a good person
 - He didn't say following them will make you moral

- Sin makes slaves, so Jesus' concern is our FREEDOM!
- and we are freed by the word, by the truth

Transition: We aren't just freed from sin, but we are freed from *being* slaves

1. We need FREEDOM (sin makes us slaves)

2. We need to know our TRUE FAMILY (the son sets free)

-The religious leaders thought they were saved/free because of their ancestry (Abraham) (because of WHO they were)

-**v.39-44:** Jesus explains that their actions are more in line with satan, making him their real father

-Jesus shows us freedom doesn't come from our physical family or anything other than Him

-BUT: the beautiful thing is when we are saved, when we accept and follow Jesus, we're welcomed into our new spiritual and true family

-we aren't just set free from sin, but we are set free from *being* slaves and have a new identity + belonging in Christ! **v. 35 + 47**

-We are welcomed into the family FOREVER

-Those who belong to God LISTEN to Him GLADLY

CLOSING//

-We can't rely on our physical parentage or ancestors, good or moral actions, pastors or friends, we can't lean on anything other than Christ for salvation + freedom

-Why?

-**v.58:** Because he is the I AM (beginning and end, eternal, all powerful) God

-He is the only one that can save us

-The religious leaders knew exactly what Jesus was saying here in this moment, he was saying he was God

-This is a *massive* statement

Transition: This is so important because this isn't just a claim Jesus made, it's the truth, HE WAS AND IS GOD. And it's because of this we can be saved and be free. Because God came to this earth to be the sacrifice for our sins, we can walk in freedom and be welcomed into His family.

ALTAR//

- Do you need freedom? (Begin a relationship with God or specific sin?)
- Have you been trying to rely on things outside of God for salvation? (Family, friends, works, etc.)
- Are you just familiar with Jesus, or are you truly following Him?