



Jesus' Answer to Racism

John 8:48-59

Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil? (John 8:48—KJV).

The Jews answered and said to Him, “Do we not say rightly that You are a Samaritan and have a demon?” (John 8:48—NASB).

The Jews answered him, “Are we not right in saying that you are a Samaritan and have a demon?” (John 8:48—NRSV).

Jesus told the religious leaders who wanted to kill Him that their spiritual father was not Abraham or God but the devil, because the devil is a liar and a murderer, and they acted like the devil. Then, they attacked Jesus using a racial slur when they called Him a Samaritan. They hated Samaritans too. Amazingly, Jesus did not defend himself against the false charge that He was a Samaritan. Though the Bible does not tell us directly why Jesus did not defend himself against a racist insult, the Bible tells us enough about Jesus and His character to believe Jesus did not defend himself because Jesus saw nothing wrong with being a Samaritan (or a member of any other race, for He created all races and loves all races); therefore, He ignored the accusation. Jesus was not racially prejudiced against anyone. Jesus came to show the Father's love and save the world, people of all races. For examples, He visited with a Samaritan woman at a well and led her and a Samaritan town to believe in Him as the Savior of the world (see John 4). He also told a parable that involved a good Samaritan who loved his neighbor as the LORD commanded and helped a stranger who had been left for dead (see Luke 10:25-37). Because Jesus was not racially prejudiced against anyone, He did not take the charge that He was a Samaritan as an insult. The Bible teaches that every person is “fearfully and wonderfully made” and God's works are wonderful (Psalms 139:14). Jesus commanded: “Love one another as I have loved you” (John 13:34).

Thinking Further

1. Why do you think Jesus did not deny that He was a Samaritan?
2. When accused of having a demon, what are some things Jesus said in John 8:49? What lesson might His followers learn from Jesus' reply?
3. What must someone do to never see death? What did Jesus mean?
4. What did Jesus say about seeking glory?
5. Why did the religious leaders pick up stones to throw at Jesus?