

Counterfeit Faith

Pastor Jeff Bucknam | John 8:31–59

NOTE: As a guide, use these questions to help with group and family discussion or for personal reflection. Not all questions are needed. Select the ones that will best serve your group as you grow in Christ together through His Word. *Soli Deo Gloria*.

Ice Breaker

Recount a time when you were tricked (or nearly tricked) by something that was inauthentic (but looked real). Perhaps fool's gold, or a costume, or someone you thought may have been a celebrity walking down the street, or an AI video, or New Coke instead of Coca-Cola Classic ...

Understanding the Text in Context

Read the text together. Note how often Abraham is brought into the conversation. How does the discussion of Abraham reveal the issues being discussed?

Jesus is speaking to people who had “believed Him” (John 8:31). Why do you think He immediately begins talking about abiding instead of simply affirming their belief? What does that tell us about the kind of faith Jesus is looking for?

The sermon points out that counterfeit faith may look genuine for a season. What examples from Scripture can you think of where someone's true heart was revealed over time? How do those examples help us understand John 8?

Connecting to Jesus and His Gospel

Jesus challenges the Jews' statement about being Abraham's children (v.39). How does this passage reshape what it means to belong to God's people across the whole Gospel story?

In this passage, Jesus contrasts being a “slave to sin” with being set free as a son (v.34–36). What is the significance of this distinction? Read how Paul writes on this theme in Romans 6:15-19.

Living Out the Truth

In this passage, Jesus teaches that genuine faith will naturally produce works and result in a genuinely transformed life — a life characterized by abiding in Jesus’ words. Do you feel that your faith continually submits to God’s Word? How do you feel and what do you do when you feel conviction from the Holy Spirit? What would it look like in your life to have a deeply rooted faith?

Do you know someone who, over the course of time, once seemed to be a Christian but whose life failed to abide in the Words of Jesus — and is no longer a Christian? As a group, pray for them — that they would turn to Jesus and that their faith would be authentic.

Pray for one another — to “abide” in Jesus’ words and truly be Jesus’ disciples (Jn 8:31).

Parenting Moment and Family Focus

Read John 8:31-32. Share stories of people — from the Bible, from history, or especially those you know personally — who have proved to truly be Jesus’ disciples because they have continued to abide in Jesus’ words. Encouraged by those people, pray for each other to abide in Jesus’ words.

Further Study

Al Mohler provides some history and wise counsel in the aftermath of one famous person’s abandonment of belief in Jesus: [“The Tragedy of Joshua Harris: Sobering Thoughts for Evangelicals”](#)

For more on Jesus’ “I am” statement in this passage, read [“Before Abraham Was.”](#)

“Freedom” is a universal value. Yet, how culture defines freedom and seeks out a life of freedom is often quite different from biblical freedom. For more on true freedom:

- Read [“10 Key Bible Verses on Freedom”](#)
- Read [“Get a Better Definition of Freedom”](#)
- Listen to a longer conversation: [“A Vision of Freedom”](#)

Read your John Study Journals, looking ahead to next week’s sermon and text for John 9:1-41: “God’s Work Through Our Struggle,” “Don’t Miss What is Right in Front of You,” and “The Blind Man who Saw.”