



SERIES: September 2022 – February 2023 Believe

SPEAKER: NAT CRAWFORD

Saturday, December 3, 2022

Scripture: John 8:39-41

TITLE: A Dead Giveaway

Sometimes I give my kids the behavior pep talk. You know which one I'm talking about. "Okay, kids, we're going into this restaurant, we're going into church, remember who you represent: me. Please be on your best behavior."

Let's face it, there's nothing more embarrassing than having those kids that everyone is talking about for the wrong reasons...especially when they're the preacher's kids.

Our behavior is a reflection of what's in our heart. It's a mirror to our character. This is true of our spiritual condition as well.

Listen to a nasty exchange between the Pharisees and Jesus in John 8:39-41.

They answered him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would be doing the works Abraham did, but now you seek to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. This is not what Abraham did. You are doing the works your father did." They said to him, "We were not born of sexual immorality. We have one Father—even God."

The Pharisees are arguing with Jesus about Him, His identity, His character, and His teaching. Jesus has continually said, "I am the Messiah you've been looking for. I'm the savior you need. I am God in the flesh. I've come to save you because you cannot save yourself. Oh and by the way, your lives reflect your heart. If you are truly my disciple, if you are a real believer in me, your words and lives will show it."

Well, the Pharisees aren't having it. They say, "Abraham is our father." In other words, "We're good, Jesus. We have Abraham as our last name." It's like someone saying, "It's okay. My parents are Christians. That will cover me." Jesus says, "If you were really Abraham's offspring, you'd live like it. You'd recognize me. You'd welcome me and my words. Instead you reject me. You want to kill me. Your actions and words reflect the reality of your heart and soul.

There is a scandalous truth that in our natural state, we are children of wrath. We are enemies of God. Satan is our spiritual father, not God. Jesus affirms this.

Well, the Pharisees are done with it. And a common practice today was the common practice back then: when you're losing an argument or don't have one, you call people names. They essentially say in verse 41: You don't have a dad. You're an illegitimate child. Shut up and go away.

These Pharisees were so hard-hearted and so fixated on playing God through religion, they hated Jesus. Today, the world is no different.

So here's my challenge for you today: Assess your heart. How are you playing the pharisee in your own life? How are you relying on your background, religious practices, or traditions to count towards your relationship with God? Our works do matter but they are the outflow of our relationship with Jesus. They are not the path to the relationship.

Remember, your life will reflect your heart. It's a dead giveaway. So, assess your heart and begin to follow Jesus fully. When we do this, we will win the day.