

John 8:39-40

- A. Truth can liberate (**JOH 8:32**) or lacerate, depending on the hearer.
1. Truth can *prick one in his heart* (**ACT 2:37**) or *cut one to the heart* (**ACT 7:54**), producing repentance in the former or resentment in the latter.
 2. Truth can make believers free and unbelievers foes. **GAL 4:16**.
 3. *Recipitur ad modum recipientis* (the reception depends upon the receiver).
 4. How one responds to convicting truth says much about his nature or character.
 5. Wicked men hate the light of truth (**JOH 3:19-20**) and would rather turn it into a lie than submit to it. **ROM 1:25**.
 6. We ought not to shrink from truth which convicts us of needed change. **JOB 34:32; PSA 139:23-24**.
- B. Jesus was here reproving the Pharisees. **JOH 8:13**.
1. Christ also was addressing those who believed in Him in this chapter. **JOH 8:31**.
 2. “They” of vs. **33, 39, 41** refers not to the believers but the Pharisees also present.
 3. The Pharisees had not yielded to John the Baptist’s denunciation of their false identity with Abraham. **MAT 3:7-9**.
 - a. They were a *generation of vipers* and *the poison of asps was under their lips*. c/w **ROM 3:13**.
 - b. Such lips pretend to honor God with form, not faith. **MAT 15:8 c/w 2TI 3:5**.
 4. Jesus made clear that neither Abraham nor God was their father in any valuable sense. **JOH 8:41-44**.
 - a. They did *the lusts of their father* (Satan), not *the works of Abraham*.
 - b. Abraham was a righteous man as proven by his faith prior to circumcision. **ROM 4:11-12**.
 - c. Abraham also rejoiced to see Christ’s day. **JOH 8:56**.
 - d. The Pharisees had only a fleshly identity with Abraham and fleshly circumcision.
 - e. God was not their father in a *spiritual* sense.
 - f. Abraham was not their father in a *prototypical* sense but he is thus the father of all who believe, Jew or Gentile. **ROM 4:11-12; GAL 3:7**.
- C. Jesus notes also here another positive aspect of Abraham: his response to someone who reproved him with truth. v. **40**.
1. Abraham twice represented Sarah as his sister to a ruler. **GEN 12:11-13; 20:1-3**.
 - a. This was a half-truth proffered to powerful men whom Abraham assumed to have sketchy principles. **GEN 20:10-13**.
 - b. Abimelech (whose name means, “my father is king”) clearly reproved Abraham. **GEN 20:9-10**.
 - c. Rather than hate the man and seek his death, Abraham prayed for him. **GEN 20:17-18**.
 - d. We ought to be cautious in not *speculating* evil on the pretext of *foreseeing* evil. **PRO 22:3 c/w 1TI 6:4**.
 2. Sarah stood against Abraham on a point of doctrine and he submitted to the truth rather than hate the messenger. **GEN 17:18-19 c/w GEN 21:9-12**.
 - a. The message to Abraham was that not all of his natural posterity would have the inheritance he was to receive: they would not all have a claim on God. **ROM 9:7-8**.
 - b. This is the very message that Jesus was declaring to these wicked Jews!
 3. The Pharisees contrarily sought to kill their Reprover. *This did not Abraham!* **JOH 8:40**.
- D. Solomon had much to say about reproof, rebuke and reaction.

PRO 6:23; 9:7-8; 12:1; 13:1; 15:5, 10, 12, 32; 17:10; 25:12.

1. Again, how we react to godly reproof (regardless of the source) that corrects our thoughts and actions says much about us.
 2. “I would rather be corrected by an enemy than solidified in error by a friend.” (PWB)
- E. One might say, “Well, I would never seek to kill someone who reproved me!”
1. But what if one hates the reprover? **1JO 3:15.**
 2. What is our response when someone rightly reproves us: humble or hateful?
- F. Abraham was the “father” of many things, including:
1. Eight children: Ishmael, Isaac and six by Keturah. **GEN 25:1-2.**
 2. The nation of Israel.
 3. Many nations. **GEN 17:5.**
 4. Circumcision and faith. **ROM 4:11-12.**
 5. Those who are humble to godly reproof. David was one of his children in this regard. **PSA 141:5.**
- G. Truth, like iodine, stings open wounds for good. Let us take our medicine with thankfulness.