

John 8:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world.

Analysis

Jesus identifies the fundamental divide: 'Ye are from beneath; I am from above.' This establishes two humanities - those born of flesh (from beneath) and those born of Spirit (from above). Natural origin versus spiritual origin determines destiny. The Reformed doctrine of total depravity and regeneration finds clear expression: humanity's earthly origin leaves them unable to ascend to heavenly things without divine recreation.

Historical Context

The contrast between 'beneath' (ek tōn katō) and 'above' (ek tōn anō) parallels John 3's contrast between earthly birth and birth from above, establishing the necessity of regeneration.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. What does it mean to be 'from beneath' versus 'from above'?
2. How does your origin determine your destiny?

3. What must happen to change someone from 'beneath' to 'above'?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	εἶπεν	αὐτοῖς	ὕμεῖς	ἐκ	τῶν	κάτω	ἐστέ	ἐγὼ	ἐκ
And	he said	unto them	Ye	from	G3588	beneath	are	I	from
G2532	G2036	G846	G5210	G1537		G2736	G2075	G1473	G1537
τῶν	ἄνω	εἰμὶ	ὕμεῖς	ἐκ	τοῦ	κόσμου	τούτου	ἐστέ	ἐγὼ
G3588	above	am	Ye	from	G3588	world	this	are	I
	G507	G1510	G5210	G1537		G2889	G5127	G2075	G1473
οὐκ	εἰμὶ	ἐκ	τοῦ	κόσμου	τούτου				
not	am	from	G3588	world	this				
G3756	G1510	G1537		G2889	G5127				

Additional Cross-References

John 3:31 (Parallel theme): He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all.

John 17:14 (Parallel theme): I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

John 17:16 (Parallel theme): They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

James 4:4 (Parallel theme): Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.