

Absolutes - Part 1

by David Adams

David Adams explores the concept of absolutes in relation to truth and the teachings of Jesus, emphasizing His eternal nature as the ultimate absolute.

Duration: 42:38

Scripture: Exodus 3:14, Psalm 102:25-27, Isaiah 40:28, Matthew 11:28, John 8:21-24, John 8:58, Colossians 1:17, Hebrews 1:10-12, James 1:17, Revelation 1:8

Topics: "Absolutes", "The Nature of Truth"

Description

David Adams addresses the concept of absolutes in his sermon, emphasizing the importance of recognizing that truth is absolute despite contemporary beliefs that deny this notion. He highlights the significance of Jesus' declaration, 'Before Abraham was, I am,' as the ultimate absolute, affirming Christ's eternal existence and divine authority. Adams argues that while society may claim there are no absolutes, the very act of labeling something as a lie acknowledges an absolute truth. He encourages the congregation to understand the implications of believing in Jesus as the I AM, the changeless Lord of eternity, who remains the same throughout all ages.

Transcript

...four brethren with me on the platform here, and then, when this peaceful moment arrived, they all just looked at me and fled. And I felt I was all alone in the Sahara Desert. The platform seemed too large, the audience was too numerous.

I was a stranger and many of them were Chinese. Well, I don't have exactly the same feeling this morning. I'm glad to be back with you, and I must relate to a conversation that I overheard on my way here on this trip.

It was between two preachers, and one said to the other, have you ever been to the Park of the Palms to speak? And the questioner said, I have never. And I said, well, I've never been there either. In fact, I hope I never go there.

And the first man said, and why is that? He said, do you think you could tell them anything new about the Park of the Palms? They've all lived long enough to have heard everything. And they all know everything. So, he said, really, I'm not anxious to go.

Now, in the light of that, what am I going to do? You see, I have already been informed that you have all heard everything, and you all know everything. So, that wasn't a very good introduction. I hope you understand.

On my account, I was listening to it. As I said, I wasn't a participant in the conversation at all. I was just overhearing.

Sometimes it's not good to be hearing something that you shouldn't. However, I have summoned up all my courage, and I was here in Florida at any rate, and I couldn't go home, but I was just judging my duty. So, you understand the handicap under which I'm working.

I won't often speak to a convocative congregation that knows everything, and that has heard everything. I worked very quickly this morning in the Gospel by John, chapter 8, as an introductory message for our studies that we shall have morning and evening, from Tuesday through Friday. They will not be just on one topic, although the two topics are very closely related.

And I should tell you at the outset, because if I don't, while I'm finished, you won't have known what I was trying to say. But if I tell you at the beginning what I'm trying to say, then at least you will know what I meant to say. And as a brother up in Toronto often says, he said, don't go to sleep, because you'll listen to Dave's asides.

And the asides, I said on this one, I wandered from the topic and go off into bypass meadows. And he said, sometimes you get a whole lot more out of his asides than you will out of his sermons. That's just a little word of advice to you in case you wonder about it, or in case you wander because of it.

You have all heard, those of you who are either related in any way to the process of education in our days, if not you, then your children, if not your children, your grandchildren, and if not your grandchildren, some of you probably have greats, that there is a common expression used today as the title topic in the world and teaching of philosophy and psychology, and it's this, there are no absolutes. Now this our younger generation are being taught both in high school as well as in colleges and universities, and I have met up with some of them, and it has been on my mind, I wish to counter that statement, that categorical statement that psychologists are making, and philosophers are making today, that there are no absolutes. I noticed rather interestingly that these people who claim adamantly that there are no absolutes, if they're not agreed with something that is said, they will say that's a lie.

And right away you say, how can it be a lie? Because if there are no absolutes, there's no truth by which to call it a lie. Right? Truth is absolute. You can't change it, you might distort it, you might deny it, you might counter it with something else, but truth is inviolate, it is absolute.

And the very fact that they will say to you, that's a lie, you're admitting an absolute, and that is true. And yet they will hand this statement out to us, and to our younger generation particularly today, that there are no absolutes. In our morning studies, I wish to look with you at a few of the numerous absolutes that we have given to us, particularly in the Gospels like yours.

And in the evening studies, I wish to change that, and I would like to consider with you some of the privileges of the life of the Lord Jesus. There's the group of three. I read a book some time ago that was trying to enlighten me from what, now it's a little bit longer than I am now, and it's called the secret of the universe.

It's written by a man by the name of Nathan Wood, and his conclusion of, if you read the whole book, was that the secret of the universe lies in the trilogies of the universe, the number three, and how many times it occurs, not only in scripture, but in duality and other areas of time. So I wish to begin with you this morning from John's Gospel of Temporary, and we'll have a short reading, and then I shall speak with you about the ultimate absolute. John's Gospel, chapter 8. We shall read from verse 21.

Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall see him shall draw in your sins. Whither I go, ye cannot come. Then said the Jew, Will he kill himself, because he said, Whither I go, ye cannot come? He said unto them, Ye are from beneath, how I am from above.

Ye are of this world, I am not of this world. I said therefore unto you, Ye shall die in your sins, for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins. Then said they unto him, Who art thou? Jesus said unto them, Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning, I have many things to say unto George of you, but he that sent me is true, and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him.

They understood not that he spake the name of the Father. Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of my self, but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. And he that sent me is with me, the Father hath not left me alone, for I do always those things that please him.

As he spake these words, many believed on him. Now let us turn to chapter 42. Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, you would love me, for I proceeded forth and came from God, neither came I of myself, but he sent me.

Why do you not understand my speech? Even because ye cannot hear my words. Fear of your Father the devil, and the lusts of your Father you will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and behold not in a truth, because there is no truth in him.

When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own, for he is a liar and a follower. Because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not. Let us look farther down to James 2, verse 49.

Jesus answered, I have not a demon, but I honour my Father, and ye dishonour me. And I seek not mine own glory, there is one that seeketh and judges. Verily, verily, I say unto you, if a man keepeth my saying, he shall never see death.

Then said the Jew unto him, Now ye know that thou hast a devil, or a demon. Abraham is dead, and the prophets, and thou sayest, if a man keepeth my saying, he shall never taste the death. Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead, and the prophets are dead? Whom makest thou thyself? Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing, it is my Father that honours me, of whom ye say that he is your God.

Yet ye have not known him, but I know him, and if I should say I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you, but I know him, and keep his saying. Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw that it was last. Then said the Jew unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast not seen Abraham.

Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was, I am. Then put thee up stones to cast at him, that Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed on. Of all the marvellous things that our Lord Jesus said when he was here, I think the statement we have read in John chapter 8 is the most remarkable, the most outstanding, the most striking of them

all.

Immediately it draws your attention. You cannot lightly dismiss it, you cannot lightly forget it. And this is what I like to call the ultimate absolute.

Perhaps some of you have noticed that the miracles in the parables of our Lord Jesus Christ when he was here are often followed by a discourse which results in being, perhaps to your notice, more important than the miracle itself. John chapter 8 begins, as most of you will know from memory, with the incident of the woman taking an adultery. After that incident, manifesting the grace and the glory of our Lord, there came the discourse that we have read of here in chapter 8. And it is just another example of the fact that our Lord's miracles generally are followed by a discourse.

And the discourse, I may say, is of much greater value than the miracles. While we tend to remember miracles and forget the discourses, nevertheless the words which our Lord speaks subsequent to and consequent upon the miracles are the things that we study with interest and remember. So on this occasion the Lord is speaking with the Jews.

He said to them that he was the light of the world. Upon that there came a discussion with them, and the Jews, being frustrated because they couldn't understand him and they couldn't discern just exactly who he was, they recharged him with being demon-possessed. And our Lord said, he was not demon-possessed, but he had one father that was flawed.

And they said, well we're not born of fornication. That was a distinct flir on our Lord's birth. We've only got one father, and that is God.

And our Lord said, if so, were your father, you would love me, and you would listen to my words, and you would accept my words because I came forth from war. But you were of your father the devil, and the works of your father you would do. You was a murderer from the beginning.

Whom did he murder? Our understanding at the beginning of the historic account of the series ends the family for a human family, whilst which we are part, begins the course in Eden. Did murder take root in Eden? Our Lord said he was a murderer in the beginning. He abhors not, or he should not, in the truth.

And there you see, he opens their eyes, and he says, this is what it means that a lie is murder. How did he murder our first parent? With a lie. And how has he brought death and destruction into the world ever since? What is the armor in which he's dressed, of which the Lord spoke so clearly in this book of chapter 11? This is the lie, this is his truth, because a lie kills, and truth heals.

And so he is a liar, our Lord said, there is no truth in him. He cannot speak truth. He might simulate it, he might quote it from the scripture of time, but behind it all, even his quotation of scripture, is the sinister lie.

There's no truth in him. He's not capable of stating the truth. And this is the sentence, this is the condemnation that God passed upon him.

When we read about this, well, over in Ezekiel chapter 28, God says that a fire will proceed out from him, so that he never ever could report the truth. It was always to be that which he began to be, and that was a murderer by the use of a lie. So lies still kill.

Truth is that which heals. And after chatting with our Lord and discussing with him the subject matter of this passage, the part that goes to your testimony, our Lord made a very remarkable statement, and I want to notice this with you, in part at any rate. We come to the last part of the chapter, and he said something about Abraham, making Abraham to be their father.

He said something about Abraham. He said, you know, your father Abraham is going to see my day, and saw in this land. Theologians have been puzzling ever since with exactly what our Lord is referring there.

What's the day he's talking about, and when did Abraham see his day? And we have come to sometimes different conclusions about that matter. And then they said back to him in report, they said, thou art not yet 50 years old, and hath thou seen Abraham? Not what he said, of course. He said that Abraham saw his day, but through this Adam.

And our Lord made this statement. This is the statement that rings all through the Gospels like God. Verily, verily, I say unto you, he said, before Abraham was, I am.

That's the ultimate answer. Before Abraham was, I am. Now consequent upon that statement, as they had done previously in the Gospels by John, and as they will do later, it took up stones to stone him to death.

Because he had said that before Abraham was, I am. And when our Lord made that claim to be the I am, then he's what he was referring. Although he related it sequentially with Abraham, but they knew he was going back to Exodus chapter 3. You will remember that incident, Moses has led the sheep of his father-in-law to the back side of the desert.

Interesting, isn't it? He wasn't a shepherd, but after 40 years in the back side of the desert, in Perun, he learned to be a shepherd. And the dexterity of his shepherd character was revealed when he led a flock of sheep to the back side of the desert. He didn't drive them, he led them.

He led them into a desert because without leading or guidance they wouldn't have gone. He couldn't have driven them into a desert forest, but he could lead them there. And he had done that in return to the incident that we know so well in Exodus chapter 3 of the burning bush.

He saw this thorn bush in the wilderness, and he saw it on fire. It was burning, and as he watched it quickly consumed, for it was only a thorn bush, he was amazed to discover that it did not cease to burn. It did not be reduced to ashes, so he drew near to look at it.

And as he did so, a voice spoke to him out of the bush. He said, Moses, Moses, and he said, here am I. He said, Lord, she's gone from thy feet to the place where I am now, stone, this is who we are. And then you remember God spoke to him, the angel of Jehovah spoke to him out of the burning bush, and he gave him a commission that he was to go down into Egypt, back down into Egypt, where he had left 40 years before, and he was to pray to the king, let my people go up and take care of me in the wilderness.

And you recall how Moses protested against that. He said, Lord, I'm not able to do this. I'm not competent for this task.

That was in Egypt once. And anyway, I'm a very poor sage. Regardless of what act, if you even stood in action for seven years, a man might have been running away.

But the problem later on wasn't this. So I'm a poor man of speech. I don't have the ability.

I can't go down to Pharaoh. I fled from the face of Pharaoh. Pharaoh became our left Egypt 40 years ago.

God said, I'm sending you to go down to Egypt. When you get there, gather the elders of Israel together and tell them that I have permission to go down to Pharaoh. Let my people go, that they may serve me in the wilderness.

You will bring my people out. This will be the sign and the angels will respond and respond to you. And Moses said, when I gather the elders of Israel together, they're going to ask me, who commissioned you? And the Lord's answer to that was, because as you'll find out later on in the epistle to the Corinthians, or also in the book of Revelation, if you know the name of the God who sends you, you are driven of authority in the event.

So, firstly, well, who sent you? God said to Moses, tell them that I am that how you are. And as Moses progressed it again, when finally God reduced the title and he said, tell them that I am that sent you. That's what the people would have understood, the Jews would have understood that our Lord was quoting from when they said, thou art not yet fifty years old, and thou shalt see Abraham.

And he said, verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was. And he goes back through the days of Moses, and then he goes back through the days of Abraham, and he goes back beyond Abraham, and he goes out into timeless deities. And he says, verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was, I am.

Now, they knew what he was saying. They knew what was inspired in that speech. They knew that he was more, had to be more, than Jesus of Nazareth.

He had to be more than the virgin's son. He had to be the prophet, more than the prophetess of Galilee. Before Abraham was, he said, I am.

So, next to the chapter three, we remember too that he added something to that. He said, I am that I err. And we understand that was difficult, because our English language does not convey the language of the original, even in the Hebrew or the Greek, where we have read it here.

But we have difficulty reading at times that our Lord just used that statement, I want to know if someone is with you, and all he said was, I am. We have to say something in addition to that. We have to add an appendage to that.

We have to say, I am this, or I am that. We can't just say, I err. The Lord claimed that he was the, I err.

Timeless deities. And so, they were very much disturbed about this. This was equal to what he said in the presence of Caiaphas's church later on, in the course of the high priest.

And so, we have come to that which our day is absolute. I am that I am, not I am what I was. Not I am not what I shall be.

I am that I am. He always was, he always will be, that he is. We can't say that.

We can't say, I am that I err. We can't say, I am that I was not. For we are not today what we were a year ago.

Are we? We cannot say, I am that I am. We have to say, I am what I shall not be. For a year from now, we won't be what we are today.

So, we are not timeless. We are subjective at this time. We speak about past, present, and future.

Our Lord goes above all of that, as Peter said. Why did Peter need him when he said, one day was thought as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day? You might like to make chronology out of that if you please. And say, well, the thousandth year, of course, is going to be the millennium.

And yes, I know, I understand that. We were supposed to have interrupted in 1988 too, but we weren't. And then they pushed it off to 1991, and that came in the end.

And then they pushed it off another, and we're still here. I don't know what you're doing here. Perhaps it was supposed to have taken place long ago.

So, we can't say that. We are what we were not. We are what we shall not be.

For we are subject to constant change. Mentally, physically, intellectually, spiritually. We are not what we were.

We are not what we shall be. But God is the I am that I am. Jesus, one of the marvelous titles of our Lord has given to us in the epistle to the Hebrews.

Remember, in chapter one of the epistle to the Hebrews, unto the angels, did he not say, thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee. No. And you'll remember when he comes farther down in that chapter, he says, he's quoting from the 102nd Psalm.

When our Lord hath said, thou hast weakened my strength in the way, cut off, cut me not off in the midst of our day. What did the father say to him? He said, our Lord in the beginning hath laid the foundation of the earth, the heavens are the works of thine hand. They shall perish.

That's all he means. When you go back to the 102nd Psalm and see actually when God said that to his son. Unto his son he said, what did he say? Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.

Thou shalt righteousness, and thou shalt thy kingdom. Thou shalt love righteousness, indeed it is iniquity. Therefore God, even thy God, hath an urge to deal with the oil of gladness above thy service.

And then what happens? Then you go back to Psalm 102 and you find that our Lord from the cross is speaking to his father and he says, thou hast weakened my strength in the way, cut me not off in the midst of thy day. And God speaks back to his son and what does he say? They shall perish. Thou remain.

They all shall act gold as a garment and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up and they shall be kings. But thou art the King, one of the titles of our Lord. Thou art the King.

The heavens and the earth shall pass away. Thou remaineth with God to his son. Look at Ezekiel chapter 1, the light is from under the earth, under the earth.

Can you see how that looks like? So he is the changeless one. Do we know him today? Is he the same as some of you of fifty years ago? Fifty years ago, fifty years ago, so he won't go. Is he not the same today as he will be? Ten years from now, twenty years from now, a hundred years from now, that's his title.

Thou art the King. This is my throne, it is ultimate, the ultimate absolute. Then this world needs our faith, our confidence and our strength has been lost.

Is not this the one whom we believed for many years and so the God of the Lord of God and the light? Is not this the one that we understood had borne all sins and was on the way to the truth? Is it the one that we understood had brought us back to God in reconciliation and said he would believe us on this one has everlasting life? Is he not the same one? He is the same, this is his throne, this is his name. Thou art the King, I am the King, I am the King. So our Lord is speaking of you and as he says it, that is one phrase you say of him, you again is a stone, a stone of death.

He knew what he was saying. I want you to look directly in the chapter where we are reading just to see how important this reading is. It just says what we read from verse 21, the beginning of the paragraph verse 21, he said in verse 23, hear from many I am from above, after the participation of the I am statement, hear the swirl of not of this world, I spill therefore unto you, you shall die in your sins.

Though the gospel preacher loves to take this verse and use it when he preaches the gospel, the gospel of forgiveness of sins, the gospel of revention, the gospel of reconciliation, the gospel that God has given to us of complete and full pardon. When he tells his audience who are unbelievers, who are not Christians, who are not saved, he tells them our Lord said you shall die in your sins and if you die in your sins where I am you cannot come, you cannot come if you die in your sins. And so immediately the listener's mind was racing through the category of his sins because the speaker has said you shall die in your sins holding the word of the master whom God hath raised and if you die in your sins where I am you cannot come, this is of the darkness of the wasteland, this is of the day of eternity, this is of the time of peril.

And they say what a dreadful thing to fight God in my sin. Well why should you move it with me this morning what the Lord said he meant when he said that. He's not talking about adultery, he's not talking about drugs, and as he's not talking about a drug addict, he's not talking about let's say a robber, no that's not the thing he's talking about.

What he's talking about is what he's saying to you. Verse 24, I said therefore unto you ye shall die in your sins for if you believe not that I am the Lord of your sins. That's the sin that he's speaking of.

We enter a large product of sin into this statement of our Lord, but that's not what he's referring to. He forgave the adulterous devotees, he forgave the rich thieves, didn't he? Didn't he take all and threw none off? But what's he saying here? He said if you believe not that I am the Lord of your sins. My friends through this I'll do what's most important that we know in Jesus Christ.

It is of the utmost importance that we have our minds filled with the glory of this glorious day of life. We have not taken to ourselves another doctrine of religion. We have not laid hold on the grass at home some liturgy or ritual.

No. In whom do we believe? That's the important thing for if you believe not that he is who I am. It's all within our sins.

Let me read it. Verse 24. You remember Matthew's gospel chapter 11, John the Baptist, he's in prison.

And there has been a provision of which you already have read, it was calculated this hour in the ark of the church for the release of great men and spirits. And you will recall that John turned to one of his servants, Jesus Christ, as he did, and said to Arsene that his homily left for another. Not another of the three times, but someone different.

This is what has happened to John. John said in a rich oratory, he said, I saw the heavens open, he said, above, descending like a dove on Mount Sinai from heaven. I saw their witness that this is the Son of God.

In a way, he's in the shadow of doubt. He's in the dungeon of despair. He is wondering.

He turned to Jesus Christ and asked him, asking if he's the one that should come, or did he left for another. And what did our Lord do? He said, go and tell John this, that I am saved for I am the light of the world. Tell John that the door of here rings, tell John that the lame are walking for I am the way.

And I am the truth. Tell him what you've seen here, witnessed things, the miracles of the revelation of whom was, and told John that, and when he said, tell John this, and I think this is his character. He had the food, he's gone, happy as he is, he doesn't stumble as he is, and there's the great prophet.

Of whom there was not an equal, let alone a prophet in John the Baptist, and yet in the dungeon of darkness, in that dungeon of doubt, of questioning, he said this to the Lord, and the Lord could not let it pass. Tell John, I'll give you now, he doesn't stumble as he is, if he believes not that I am he, or if he may ignore that I am him, which is what our Lord said, he desires to be seen. And I know, of course, after this, if I were to have gone on the Lord immediately, praying for the defense of his servants, wouldn't you go out in the wilderness and streets and throw up? But do you see the important thing? In whom do we believe? Where does our faith rest? Whom do we consider as Lord and Savior? If he believes what I am, which is what he sees, who I am, and of course, that's what fools you down.

First time you've gone through this, when you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you shall know who I am. Now, who are we to try and ignore this English? This doesn't make a lot of sense, of course, you'll notice it will do, but you can't understand this directly what it means, but when you go back to not only the Greek itself, but also when you go back to other languages, they fit perfectly and talk to it in French, for example, *et c'est la même chose*. When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you shall know that I am.

We have to see in English, I am you, in order for us to protect us from Satan in that pose. Because in the original, there is no protection from Satan, it is no, at all, we are you. You will know that I am, when you have lifted up the Son of Man, that's what you're going to discover, that's what you're going to drown, that I am the eternal one.

You're forward, you're delivered, and how are you going to know this? From twelve o'clock noon to three o'clock in the afternoon, through the dark, over all the land, and where does that darkness come from? From the day, to the time of the water in the evening time, and then you're going to hear a cry in the darkness, release, and the temple, they're all going to drown in the water, because we are the Lamb of God, and then the rocks are going to be raised from the hill upon which you were supposed to fly, the graves are going to be opened, and then you're going to sit there and say, it's time to rise, and come out of the graves, and into the holy city, and if you're going to do that, it's one way, because we are the Lamb, and we've won that war, which was said, finished, and we're going to go and resurrect you, and you're going to be declared, you'll be the son of God, that's power by the resurrection from the dead, then he says, when you have lifted up the son of man, notice this part of what he drew, that son of man, when you have lifted up the son of man, and you will know that I am, and that was to be the confirmation of what he was saying at the close of our chapter here, that my friend is the absolute, the ultimate absolute, Jesus is the changeless Lord of eternity, for the liberals, for I, so we turn into the spirit of our reckoning of time, this is he who could save, not only Abraham, not only Moses, Moses the subverting ghost, but before Abraham was, for I am the absolute rock upon which our series rests its contents, he is the same today as

when you knew him 40, 50 years ago, he is the same today as when you will see him in the days yet unborn and the ages to come, he will be as you know him now, he is changed, he is, he I am, what a comfort it is to always say he exists, what solidity it gives to our confession, what substance it does give to us in our salvation when we know that this one is ours at times, this one who himself was buried in the first days as he is said, he would rise again, he came out in the day, shattered the shackles of death in all his imperial power, shook off from himself all these opponents, as Colossians 2 tells us, he was packed into his own, he who was there to receive him was acclaimed, saluted him, he said this day I will rise as often as he, sit on my right hand until I may stand on his left.

Is there any wavering in that confidence that we must have in him? No, no, no, no, no, this is the ultimate answer, Jesus is, always will be, I am, that which was, that which is, and that which yet shall be, as we have already heard this morning, but a glorious day is ours, say the prayer. Our father, we thank thee for being able to come before thee in the conscious presence of him who is the great I Am, we thank thee for our Lord beneath our deepest need, he satisfies our heart's longing and fills the horizon of eternity for us, he is what we first knew him to be, he will be what we know him now, we thank thee for all that is to come, he will be our King for safe, and thy blessing with him on this missal that we celebrate this morning in his name.

Amen.

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