

JOHN

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to John chapter 5 as we continue our study through the Word of God. Keep in mind that the purpose of John writing this Gospel is that you would believe that Jesus is Almighty God and that you would repent of your sins and ask Him to be Lord and Savior of your life.

We are told of this in John 20:30-31 where John tells us, “**And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.**”

The Amplified Bible puts these verses like this, “**There are also many other signs and miracles which Jesus performed in the presence of the disciples which are not written in this book. But these are written (recorded) in order that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ (the Anointed One), the Son of God, and that through believing and cleaving to and trusting and relying upon Him you may have life through (in) His name [through Who He is]. [Ps 2:7,12.]**”

And if you think about it, all that Jesus did was to show to the Jewish people that He is the Messiah, the One the Old Testament prophets spoke of, but many refused to believe, especially the Jewish religious leaders who swayed the people because it went against what they believed, the traditions they had!

As we have seen in John chapter 2 Jesus moved from the area of Galilee to Jerusalem for the Passover Feast. Then in John chapter 4 He is heading back to the area of Galilee and as He is traveling He goes through Samaria and there meets a woman by the well of Jacob and she not only gets saved, but she goes back to her town and gets the men of the city to come to Jesus and many got saved. Now, as we are going to see, Jesus is back in Jerusalem.

Let me share with you this quick summary of this chapter so you can see where we are going and then we will dig into our study this evening and look at these lessons the Lord has for us. We are told,

The Lord returns to Jerusalem for the Feast of Booths. Contrary to the legalistic thinking of the Jews, He heals a man who had been ill for thirty-eight years. The Jews are furious, accusing Him of violating the Sabbath. In the heated discussion that follows, the Lord says He is doing the very same work as God, who is His Father. The Jews realize He is “making Himself equal with God.” In the rest of this chapter, the Lord becomes more direct in His message. He tells the Jews that the one who hears His words and believes has eternal life. He reminds them that He has life in Himself and that He came to execute judgment and show His authority as the Son of Man.

- Elmer Towns, The Gospel of John, p. 47

Now, in knowing that, you might not think there is much in this chapter that you can apply to your life. But there is. You see, just like the Jews of Jesus’ day, we have all kinds of religious ideas that we hold onto. We have all kinds of rules and regulations to follow. We have these traditions that we hold onto like they are the gospel truth, and they are not!

And, just like in Jesus' day, there are many who deny the deity of Jesus Christ. But after going through this chapter, if you still deny who He is, then it is because you refuse to believe what the Scriptures are saying, and, like the Jews, you are holding onto religious teaching or your own personal ideas of who Jesus is instead of the truth of God found in the Word of God. You see, God is very clear on this matter!

With that as our background, let's begin reading in John chapter 5 beginning in verse 1 and let's see what the Lord has for us as we study through His Word.

JOHN 5

VERSES 1-4

As I opened up this evening I read the summary of this chapter from Elmer Towns, and he says that this was the Feast of Booths, but I don't think we can be dogmatic about this. I think we can safely say it was one of the three feasts that God required every male that was able to attend to come.

According to Deuteronomy 16:16 those Feasts were the Feast of Unleavened Bread which included Passover, the Feast of Weeks or Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles.

I think if a particular Feast was important to the story, the Holy Spirit would have told us, but He hasn't, so just know it was probably one of the three major Jewish Feasts.

John tells us that in Jerusalem there was this pool, called Bethesda and it had five porches over it. Now there have been many who have tried to negate the existence of this pool, but this pool was excavated just north of the Temple Mount.

And this is fascinating to me. You see, the name “**Bethesda**” means “*house of mercy*” and, like I have said, it had five porches or coverings for protection from the elements. And this long, rectangular pool was used to clean animals that were to be taken to the Temple for sacrifice. Thus, this pool, only some two to three feet deep, was filthy as the dirt of the animals was left behind!

There were also these five porches and they covered each side and there was one across the middle. What do you think these five porches represented to the Jews? I believe it spoke of the Law, the Pentateuch or the first five books of Moses or the Law; Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.

And thus, as you looked at the one porch that extended across this pool, it gave you a picture of the stone tablets that Moses brought down from Mount Sinai. So, I believe what we see here is a picture of the Law before us.

That tells me that the Law can't save you, it can't heal you, all it can do is expose your sin and as you looked at those filthy waters, as much as some may see their sin being washed away, it remains. The Law shows us our sin but Jesus cleanses us from our sin, completely!

And here's the thing. Just like back in Jesus' day, many people run for shelter under it, they want to be covered by it, but they can't be healed by it!

Make no mistake about it, there is no mercy in the Law, only judgment for failing to keep it. And yes, some people feel good about their actions, the things they are doing, but there is not true healing in that, they are not saved by their works.

Even in the Temple, in the Holy of Holies sat the Ark of the Covenant in which the Law, the 10 Commandments were placed. And we are told that God did not sit upon the Ark, the Law, but upon the Mercy Seat.

And keep in mind that on the Day of Atonement the High Priest would come and sprinkle the blood of the sacrifice on the Mercy Seat. Jesus is our Mercy Seat and it is His shed blood that covers our sins!

Now tradition, developed over time, said that the first one in the pool after the water was stirred would be healed. And that is a great picture of the Law. “Do better! Be the first! Try harder! God helps those who help themselves.” And that list can go on and as you can see, it is all man trying to accomplish this.

But we are going to be introduced to a man who could not get into the water to be healed because he could not walk. And we will see that what the Law could not do, heal this person, Jesus will and He does!

How did they know when to try and rush down into this water? John tells us when the water was stirred or bubbled up. Interestingly enough, the word for “**pool**” in the Greek is COLUMBETHRON and it means, *“a deep pool from underneath which comes bubbling.”* Thus, when there was an eruption of this spring, you would get the bubbling or stirring of the waters and the people rushed in to be healed.

I know, kind of a strange story. Was this a healing of God or just a legend that developed, a kind of wishful thinking?

God can heal anyway He wants but it would seem that this is more of a hopeful feeling than an actual healing. You see, if you were lame, blind and-so-on, those with the more severe physical problems, it would be more difficult or even impossible for them to get into the water, to beat the others in so they could be healed! But if you had a headache, no problem, you would make it in and ultimately, you would be healed or the headache would get better.

There are also others who say it was a healing and the waters were a place of contact where a person's faith could be released. I agree, that can be true, as we saw with the woman with the bleeding problem who came just to touch the hem of His garment and she would be healed, and she was!

But if it was the water that released their faith, why would it only happen to the first person who entered in when the waters were stirred? That does not seem fair, it does not seem right.

Keep in mind that God can and does do things in unexpected ways. But something isn't necessarily from God simply because it is unexpected or unusual.

I think this is just some tradition that continued to grow and now, many came to this pool to be healed, and yet, only the first person in would be, at least that is what they thought.

Now listen to one man's story, because it truly is sad and he was in a hopeless condition!

VERSES 5-6

We are told that there were a "**great multitude of sick people**" waiting at this pool for the waters to be stirred so they could be the first one in and be healed!

And amongst that "**great multitude of sick people**" was a man who could not walk and this infirmity he had for 38 years! His whole body was failing and yet he waited there by these waters to be healed! It was a hope that had been long in disappointment! We don't know how many times he came to this pool to be healed, but he left as he came, unable to walk!

Now, out of that "**great multitude of sick people**" Jesus looks to one man. No one else looked to Jesus, but now that Jesus calls out to this man, he responds. He no longer is watching the water, he is watching Jesus!

Spurgeon said, “A blindness had come over these people at the pool; there they were, and there was Christ, who could heal them, but not a single one of them sought him. Their eyes were fixed on the water, expecting it to be troubled; they were so taken up with their own chosen way that the true way was neglected.” How true that is in our world today!

Now Jesus asks this man who can’t walk a very simple question, “**Do you want to be made well?**”

Now that seems like a cruel question, of course he does. Then why did Jesus ask this man if he wanted to be healed? To draw out his faith.

As we read on I think this man’s answer shows that he is missing the point. Look at what we are told.

VERSE 7

Remember what Jesus asked this man, “**Do you want to be made well?**” And as you read his answer he does not answer the question that Jesus asked him. You see, he begins to tell Jesus why he is still in this condition, because no one will place him in the water when the waters are stirred so he could be healed! That is not what Jesus asked him. He asked him, “**Do you want to be made well?**”

Make no mistake about it, in our own lives God wants to set us free in areas of bondage and we tell Him all the reasons why we can’t! The question remains the same, “**Do you want to be made well?**” And the answer should be “You bet I do!” But we come up with excuses why we ***CAN’T BE HEALED!***

It is as Calvin said, “The sick man does what we nearly all do. He limits God’s help to his own ideas and does not dare promise himself more than he conceives in his mind.” May we not limit what God wants to do in our lives by putting Him in a box. He can heal, he can set us free.

Over the years I have known several people who have been alcoholics and they are saved, but they are always alcoholics in their minds, they cannot get beyond that even though God says **“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.”** II Corinthians 5:17.

May we truly believe that and apply it to our lives that we truly do want that healing in our lives and we believe that God can do it! It is as Jesus said, **“Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.”** John 8:36. Do you believe that God can heal you from your sins, that He can set you free? ***HE CAN!***

VERSES 8-9

This man was in a hopeless condition and his only hope, he thought, was for someone to carry him into the waters of that pool as the water was stirred, and to be the first one in. But that has not happened and there was no indication that it would!

But notice how this man was set free, not by man’s help, not by the Law or by rules and regulations, but by Jesus.

You see, Jesus commanded this man to **“Rise, take up your bed and walk.”** And the man said back to Jesus, “Are you kidding me? I haven’t walked for thirty-eight years and now you are telling me to grab my bed and walk! If I could do that why would I be here at this pool?”

No, he did not say that. What he did do is listen to Jesus and obey Jesus and he stood up and walked! Now he could have continued on making excuses why he couldn't, but he didn't. He obeyed the voice of God who told him to do the impossible, and he stood up and walked and probably leaped for joy as he was set free from this bondage he was in!

We see this over and over in the Scriptures where the people of God are placed in a hopeless situation, hopeless in the eyes of man and yet, possible with God!

Remember when the children of Israel were set free from their bondage in Egypt and God placed them in a hopeless situation to test their faith.

You see, the Red Sea was before them, they had mountains on either side of them, and Pharaoh and the Egyptians were coming up from behind to bring them back into captivity. When the people saw this, they started to complain to Moses for getting them in this mess and to God.

Now Moses could have made all kinds of excuses why this happened but he didn't. We are told what took place in Exodus 14:13-14, "**And Moses said to the people, 'Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which He will accomplish for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall see again no more forever. The LORD will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace.'**"

And you know the rest of the story. God told Moses to lift up his rod and stretch out his hand and as he did the Red Sea opened up and the children of Israel crossed over on dry land and the Egyptians were drowned in the Sea as it closed up on them.

God can do the impossible because He is God! May we not forget that! May we stand up and walk as He commands us. It is as Matthew 19:26 says, "**. . . 'With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.'**"

And as verse 9 closes we are told, “**And that day was the Sabbath.**” That is going to lead us to the problem of Jesus healing on the Sabbath day. And, as we will see, instead of rejoicing, the Jewish religious leaders were complaining that this man was set free on the Sabbath. Look at what we are told.

VERSES 10-13

Keep in mind that when John speaks of “**The Jews**” he is not speaking of all the Jewish people but of the Jewish religious leaders and they had a problem. You see, they negated the miracle and complained that this man was carrying his bed or sleeping mat on the Sabbath! And in their mind, carrying this bed constituted work and thus, this man was breaking the Sabbath day Law, at least in their mind.

Now think about that for a minute. For the past thirty-eight years he has not been able to walk and now he is healed, but according to their tradition, anyone who intentionally carried anything from a public place to a private place on the Sabbath should be stoned to death.

Jesus healed this man of his infirmity and instead of rejoicing they wanted to put this man to death! But that is what the Law does; it kills while the Spirit gives life!

Now we have dealt with this issue before regarding the Sabbath, so I am not going to go in-depth again, but keep in mind that the Sabbath was to be a day of rest, a day of spending time with the Lord. But they had made it into a day of heavy burdens with all their rules and regulations. There was no joy! But for those who come to Jesus, there was joy, there was peace, they did not have to work their way in, but receive that gift by faith.

Jesus said, **“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”** Matthew 11:28-30.

Now I don't believe that this man was saved at this point. He was healed from his infirmity but not saved. Why do I say that? Because when these Jewish religious leaders ask him who healed him, he couldn't answer. We are told in verse 13, **“But the one who was healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, a multitude being in that place.”** But Jesus will reveal Himself to this man and I believe he comes to saving faith. Let's read on and see.

VERSES 14-15

We see here that Jesus meets up with this man at the Temple. And when Jesus sees this man He tells him, **“See, you have been made well.”** I like what Morris has to say regarding this because it sheds some light on what Jesus did and what those at the pool received. He wrote that these words, “Employs the perfect of the verb, indicating that the cure was permanent. No doubt some of the ‘cures’ that were reported from the pool did not last very long.”

Why did Jesus meet up with this man again? Because that verse goes on to say, **“Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you.”** In other words, Jesus healed him physically but there was a spiritual issue that was even more important and needed to be dealt with.

You see, his condition of being crippled would only last a lifetime if Jesus didn't heal him, but if he did not receive Christ, that is an eternal condition in the Lake of Fire!

Thus, the later would be far worse than the former condition He was in and Jesus tells him to sin no more, get out of that lifestyle that leads to death and is opposed to God and live what you believe. Of this Maclaren wrote, “The man’s eight-and-thirty years of illness had apparently been brought on by dissipation. It was a sin of the flesh, avenged in the flesh, that had given him that miserable life.”

Yes, but now he has been set free and told not to go back to those sins. Now keep in mind that works don’t save us, it is not a salvation by works but a salvation that works. Our faith, the salvation that God has given to us need to be manifested in our lives!

And after this encounter with Jesus, after he is saved I believe, he goes and tells others what Jesus has done for him, even to these religious leaders who could have had him put to death or kicked out of the church or synagogue! His faith was real!

Now some feel that he was just giving the Jewish religious leaders the information they needed to get at Jesus, that he just turned Jesus in. I don’t think so. I think he was so excited that he was telling everyone, even these Jewish religious leaders. How did they respond to what this man said about Jesus? Let’s read on and see.

VERSES 16-18

This persecution against Jesus was ongoing until they finally crucified Him! He healed on the Sabbath, He told this man to carry his bed on the Sabbath, all things that were not to be done on the Sabbath, at least in their minds!

In fact, they want to put Jesus to death, murder Him and they saw that as being okay, even on the Sabbath day! We have to understand that the rules and regulations that they came up with for the Sabbath day were not of God. It was their own rules, their own traditions and they stuck to them no matter how foolish they were.

Let me give you an example. In Deuteronomy 23:12-14 God tells Israel to practice good sanitation when their armies were at camp. In other words, put your outhouses outside the camp of Israel! That was a good practice.

But then the rabbis came along and applied that same principle to Jerusalem, which they regarded as *“the camp of the Lord.”* Now, take that Law and add to it the Sabbath travel restrictions and now you had a prohibition against going to the bathroom on the Sabbath! Folk’s, that is not rest, at least not for me!

And I love the answer that Jesus gives to them, **“My Father has been working until now, and I have been working.”** John 5:14.

Now you may be thinking, “Hey, wait a minute. I thought it said that God worked for six days in creation and then He rested! Why does Jesus say that He and then Father are working?”

He rested in creation but if He rested we would be toast. He is actively involved in our lives, He holds all things together! Again, if God ever stopped working, look out!

Listen to what we are told in Psalm 121:2-4 of God, **“My help comes from the LORD, Who made heaven and earth. He will not allow your foot to be moved; He who keeps you will not slumber. Behold, He who keeps Israel Shall neither slumber nor sleep.”**

This is from The Living Bible and we read, **“No! My help is from Jehovah who made the mountains! And the heavens too! He will never let me stumble, slip, or fall. For he is always watching, never sleeping.”** That should be a great comfort to us!

Clarke sums this up like this, “Though he rested from creating, he never ceased from *preserving* and *governing* that which he had formed: in this respect he can keep no *sabbaths*; for nothing can continue to exist, or answer the end proposed by the Divine wisdom and goodness, without the continual *energy* of God.”

Now don't miss the other big point here, Jesus once again claims to be equal with God the Father! I know that the Jehovah Witnesses, the Mormons and other cults say that Jesus never claimed to be God. Wrong!

At least the Jews were honest, and they recognized that Jesus made Himself equal with the Father, and He is! Remember in John 4:26 the ***EGO AMI*** statement of Jesus or the **“I AM”** statement. Jesus said to the woman at the well in Samaria, **“I Am, that speaks to you.”** To say that Jesus never claimed to be God goes against what the Scriptures teach!

Morris said, “He was claiming that God was *His* Father in a special sense. He was claiming that He partook of the same nature as His Father. This involved equality.”

And if you still doubt it, then just listen to verse 18 again, **“Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.”**

They knew exactly what He was saying and that is why they wanted Him dead! But listen to what Jesus says next.

VERSES 19-23

As Jesus begins these words to these Jewish religious leaders He says, **“Most assuredly”** or **“Verily, verily.”** These words can be translated into our vernacular like this, ***“Listen carefully and get this straight”*** or ***“Pay attention!”***

Why did Jesus want them to listen closely, to pay attention to what He was saying? What is Jesus speaking about? He makes a few different points here.

First of all, in verse 19 we see that He freely has submitted Himself to do the Father's will. The idea here is that He, as God the Son, does nothing independently. He was and is fully submitted to the Father's will. This submission comes by choice, not by coercion or by an inferior nature. In the Incarnation Jesus was fully God and fully man!

The second point is found in verse 20 where we see the relationship between the Father and the Son. You see, this relationship between the Father and the Son is not a master, slave relationship but one based in love. And this is a continuous love not one that comes and goes!

And then, again in verse 20 Jesus says to these religious leaders that He is going to do greater things than they just saw, this lame man walking once again!

The third point, found in verse 21 in this relationship is that God the Father not only raises the dead but so does God the Son! Why? Because they are One!

The fourth point, found in verse 22 is that the Father has given judgment into the hands of His Son. Jesus Christ is coming again in judgment of a Christ rejecting world!

And lastly, in verse 23, and here is the kicker for all those who reject the deity of Jesus, if you don't love the Son, then you don't love the Father! Again, they are One, One God manifested in three distinct persons and they are in agreement with each other even though they have different roles within the Godhead!

Now as we have read through these verses, don't come to the conclusion that there is a small difference between God the Father and God the Son. There is no difference, they are God, fully God, as well as the Holy Spirit. Jesus said that if you have seen Him then you truly have seen the Father! And now, listen to what Jesus says about this everlasting life.

VERSE 24

Make no mistake about it, people today want to have that eternal life but for them to obtain it, they have their own ideas. Some want to live in these bodies forever! Others see the path to eternal life is by being good, doing this, doing that! Others feel you just need to believe in something and that will get you eternal life!

Jesus is not liberal with this, He is very conservative. In fact, He is saying that He alone is the path to eternal life. In John 14:6 we are told by Jesus, **“I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”**

And here in John 5:24 Jesus tells us we need to hear and believe the words He is saying to us if we want eternal life. But what must I do to obtain it? Jesus said, **“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.”** John 3:16-17.

In other words, ***“Pay attention”*** or ***“Listen carefully and get this straight!”*** If you want everlasting life you must not only hear the Words of God, but believe them and what they teach, that Jesus is the Messiah, our Savior and you must receive Him into your life to obtain this everlasting life, that abundant life that is only found in Him!

And how many people today, religious people, can know that they have eternal life? There really are none because religion does not save. Religion tells you to do this and do that and nobody knows how much or even what to do.

But for us as Christians, we can know that we have eternal life! If we believe that Jesus is Lord and Savior, if we receive Him into our lives, we can be assured that we have eternal life! What peace that brings.

Clarke put it like this, “Has *changed his country, or place of abode*. Death is the country where every Christless soul lives. The man who knows not God lives a dying life, or a living death; but he who believes in the Son of God *passes over* from the empire of death, to the empire of life.”

Praise God for the gift of life that He has given to us!

VERSES 25-27

Here we see that Jesus has the power over death as He will raise Lazarus, He will raise Jairus’ daughter from the dead and-so-on. But I believe this is also speaking of a spiritual rising from the dead. Remember that Jesus just spoke of eternal life and knowing you have eternal life that is found in Him!

Paul tells us in Ephesians 2:1, “**And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins.**” You see, our spirits were dead in sin until we heard His voice and received Him into our lives and then we were made alive again, spiritually speaking, our spirits were alive and only God can do that. All we can do is receive it into our lives.

Also, in verse 27, when Jesus uses the title of, “**Son of Man**” we need to understand that it is a Messianic title as Daniel 7:13-14 tells us and thus, Jesus is the one who can give us life, and that life is found in Him!

VERSES 28-30

Jesus is telling us that there are two resurrections. The first is the resurrection of life for all those that come to Jesus and receive Him as Lord and Savior. That started at the resurrection of Jesus and will continue on through the Tribulation Period into the 1,000-year reign of Christ, that is the resurrection of life!

It is as Revelation 20:6 says, **“Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.”**

But for those who reject Christ, they are part of the second death, or the resurrection of the dead which will take place at the Great White Throne Judgment after the Millennial reign of Christ and they will be eternally separated from Christ in the Lake of Fire. A very sobering thought.

And in Revelation 20:11-15 we are told, **“Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.”**

The choice is ours to receive Jesus or reject Him, but if you reject Him then you will see the judgment of God upon your life.

And please understand that God's judgments are always fair, they are always righteous.

In Psalm 9:8 we are told, "**He shall judge the world in righteousness, And He shall administer judgment for the peoples in uprightness.**"

Never forget that – His judgments are perfect, He does not judge unfairly or in an unrighteous manner!

VERSES 31-32

Jesus is a reliable witness of Himself because what He says is true, but the Jews would not accept that, they would not believe Him.

In fact, in Deuteronomy 19:15 we are told, "**one witness shall not rise against a man concerning any iniquity or any sin that he commits; by the mouth of two or three witnesses the matter shall be established.**"

So, Jesus is going to give us not just two witnesses of who He is, but as we shall see, He will give us four and if you count Moses in verse 46, then there are five! They are John the Baptist, the works of Jesus, the Father, and the Word of God itself, and I believe Moses as well as I have said!

VERSES 33-35

John the Baptist bore witness of who Jesus is even though the religious leaders did not accept it. And when Jesus questioned them about the witness of John they refused to answer because if they said John was of God then they needed to believe what he was saying about Jesus. If they rejected that John was of God then the Jews themselves would have been angry with them because they believed John was a prophet of God! The witness was there, they just did not believe it!

In John 1:15-18 we are told, **“John bore witness of Him and cried out, saying, ‘This was He of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me is preferred before me, for He was before me.’” And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace. For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.”**

And in John 1:29-34 we are told, **“The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, ‘Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! This is He of whom I said, ‘After me comes a Man who is preferred before me, for He was before me.’” I did not know Him; but that He should be revealed to Israel, therefore I came baptizing with water.’ And John bore witness, saying, ‘I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him. I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, “Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.” And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God.’”**

So, John bore witness that Jesus is the Messiah, He is the Lamb of God who came to take away the sins of the world! He is God!

VERSES 36

The second witness of who Jesus is can be seen in the works that He did. In fact, Jesus tells us that it is even a greater witness than that of John the Baptist. His power over sickness, His power over nature, His power over the spirit world showed that He was more than just a man, He is God!

It is as Peter said on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2:22, “**Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know.**”

So, the works of Jesus testify of who He is, God incarnate, the Messiah!

VERSES 37-38

Here we see the third witness and this witness is from the Father who spoke of who Jesus is. And here is the problem for these Jewish religious leaders. They can't hear God the Father audibly, or see Him, but they have His word. Thus, they are guilty because they do not abide in the word that God gave them. How many people are doing that very thing today!

Let's look at a few passages that show the witness of the Father. In Hebrews 1:8-9 we see the Father speak of the Son, of Jesus as being God. We read, “**But to the Son He says: ‘Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You With the oil of gladness more than Your companions.’**”

In Matthew 3:16-17 we read, **“When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.’”**

And from the Mount of Transfiguration in Matthew 17:5 we read, **“While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!’”**

Thus, the third witness of who Jesus is comes from the Father!

VERSE 39

Now some don't include this in the witnesses of who Jesus is, but I do. I think it is a powerful and important witness of who Jesus is, and that is the Word of God, the fourth witness of Jesus! The Scriptures testify of who Jesus is, ***ALMIGHTY GOD!***

In Isaiah 35:5-6 we are told, **“Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, And the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then the lame shall leap like a deer, And the tongue of the dumb sing. For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, And streams in the desert.”**

Now, compare that with John 9:30-33, **“The man answered and said to them, ‘Why, this is a marvelous thing, that you do not know where He is from; yet He has opened my eyes! Now we know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, He hears him. Since the world began it has been unheard of that anyone opened the eyes of one who was born blind. If this Man were not from God, He could do nothing.’”**

Also, in John 3:2 we are told, **“This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, ‘Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him.’”**

And the list can go on-and-on, what I want you to see is that Jesus is the fulfillment of what the Old Testament prophets spoke of the Messiah being.

In fact, listen to how He opened up His ministry in Luke 4:16-21, where we read, **“So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: ‘The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.’ Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. And He began to say to them, ‘Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.’”**

Thus, the fourth witness of who Jesus is comes from the Word of God, the Bible for it testifies to the fact that Jesus is the Messiah! In fact, as the Scriptures say regarding Jesus, **“Then I said, ‘Behold, I come; In the scroll of the book it is written of me.’”** Psalm 40:7.

Let me add this. The word **“search”** is the Greek word EREUNAO and speaks of “to track the scent.” What scent, what are we to be looking for? Jesus, the Word! You see, they were looking for eternal life in the Scriptures and they missed the point that this eternal life they were looking for was only found in Jesus!

As we read on we will see the reason for their unbelief.

VERSES 40-44

Here is the problem in a nutshell. It was not that they didn't have the right information, they did. Jesus says that they were "**not willing to come to Me that you may have life.**" It was a matter of the heart and it was their choice and they refused Jesus and lost everything! They were not willing to come to Him!

It is as Paul said in Romans 10:9-10, "**that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.**" It is not a head problem but a heart and because of their rejection of Jesus, the love of God is not in them, they would rather receive the love from man instead!

Now verse 43 is a haunting verse to me. You see, Jesus came in the Father's name, we saw the witness show this already and we will look at the witness of Moses in a minute. But they rejected Jesus and they, in the end, will receive the Antichrist as their Messiah, at least for a time, until they recognize their mistake and come to Jesus!

I know that is hard to believe but that is what Jesus is saying. You see, if you ask an orthodox Jew today about the Messiah, they believe that He is coming soon!

In fact, when we were in Israel there was a sign in Hebrew across from the Wailing Wall that said, "***Prepare Messiah is coming!***" Now, if you were to ask them "How will you know that this is the Messiah?" they will tell you that "***He will be a man like Moses who will help us rebuild our Temple!***"

Now, compare that with what we are told in Daniel 9:27, **“Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate.”**

You see, the Antichrist comes on the scene and one of the things he will do is help the Jews to rebuild their Temple. Today no Jew or Christian can go up there and read the Bible, pray, worship, only Muslims can!

Back in 1967 when the Jews recaptured the Temple Mount and the old city of Jerusalem, a few days later Moshe Dayan gave it back to the Jordanians to oversee and today, the Muslims will not let anyone else up there to worship or pray!

But this Temple will be built according to Revelation 11:1-2 and in the middle of the Tribulation Period, the 3½ year mark, the Antichrist will stop the grain offerings and the blood offerings and sit in the Temple and demand to be worshiped as God. (II Thessalonians 2:3-4)

This is the abomination of desolation that Jesus spoke of in Matthew chapter 24 telling the Jews who see this to flee for their lives from the wrath of the Antichrist, for two-thirds of the Jewish people will be slaughtered by this man, only one-third making it through the Tribulation Period according to Zechariah 13:8-9.

So, a verse that is haunting because we see the Jews preparing to receive the Antichrist as their Messiah, having rejected Jesus!

VERSE 45-47

I believe that Moses is the fifth witness testifying that Jesus is the Messiah, Almighty God! And for the Jews, they held Moses in high esteem and yet Jesus is telling them that they are rejecting the words of Moses for Moses testified of Jesus! Thus, if they reject what Moses is saying, they are going to reject what Jesus is saying, and they did!

Now some may ask, “When did Moses write of Jesus?” I will give you just a couple of examples. Deuteronomy 18:15 says, “**The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear.**”

In Numbers 21:8-9 we read, “**Then the LORD said to Moses, Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole; and it shall be that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, shall live.’ So Moses made a bronze serpent, and put it on a pole; and so it was, if a serpent had bitten anyone, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived.**”

And Jesus said that this spoke of Him and the work He was going to do, it pointed to Calvary, as we read in John 3:14-15 “**And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.**”

In Numbers 20:8-11 we read, **“Take the rod; you and your brother Aaron gather the congregation together. Speak to the rock before their eyes, and it will yield its water; thus you shall bring water for them out of the rock, and give drink to the congregation and their animals.’ So Moses took the rod from before the LORD as He commanded him. And Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly together before the rock; and he said to them, ‘Hear now, you rebels! Must we bring water for you out of this rock?’ Then Moses lifted his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod; and water came out abundantly, and the congregation and their animals drank.”**

And in I Corinthians 10:4 we are told that Jesus was that Rock!

And lastly, look at the offering of Isaac by his father Abraham in Genesis chapter 22, it too speaks of Jesus. In fact, in Genesis 22:8, Isaac asks his father where the sacrifice is and Abraham says this, **“... ‘My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering.’...”** God did provide ***“HIMSELF”*** as the sacrifice. And we can go on-and-on but I think you get the point.

Thus, Moses accuses them because of their failure to receive his words and to receive this prophet, Jesus!

Let me close with this. Can we rest in God’s Word, trusting in what He has said, applying that into our lives? We should for they testify of Jesus, our Lord and Savior!

POOL OF BETHESDA



