

**JOHN 5:39-47**  
**TESTIMONY OF SCRIPTURE!**

Please turn in your Bibles this morning to John chapter 5 as we continue our in-depth study of the Gospel of John.

We have spent the last several weeks here in John chapter 5, in fact, this is our ninth study in this chapter, and some may be wondering why we are spending so much time in this chapter!

The reason is simple. Jesus spends the majority of this chapter explaining to the Jewish religious leaders that He is Almighty God, something that they relentlessly rejected!

And this is all born out of Jesus healing a man who was lame for thirty-eight years. And the Jewish religious leaders were mad at this man who was healed, and they were mad at Jesus.

Why were they so mad, why were they so upset at Jesus that they wanted to kill Him?

Because Jesus healed this man on the Sabbath day, the nerve of Him! He could have healed this man on any other day of the week, but not the Sabbath!

And it is out of all of this that Jesus shows that He, like God the Father, can work on the Sabbath and they both are working on the Sabbath!

And I think Jesus touched a nerve with these Jewish religious leaders, and not just one nerve, several it seems. We are told in John 5:18, **“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.”**

And make no mistake about it, Jesus clearly testifies to these Jewish religious leaders showing that He is Almighty God. He showed them that just as God the Father created all things, He also created all things with Him because He too is God, the second person of the Holy Trinity!

Jesus showed them that He was equal in power with God the Father in that what God the Father does so does the God the Son. That the love of God the Father is seen in God the Son. And that both God the Father and God the Son have the power to raise the dead because Jesus and God the Father are God.

Not two God's or three God's when you include the Holy Spirit, but One God manifested in three distinct persons!

But, of course, they did not believe the testimony of Jesus, they did not think He was speaking the truth.

So Jesus gives the testimony of not one witness, not two witnesses, not three witnesses, but four witnesses who show that He is God, and if you count Moses in verses 45-46 then there are five witnesses!

We have seen the witness of John the Baptist, and that John showed that Jesus is the Lamb of God who came to take away the sins of the world. And only God can forgive sins, no man can do that.

So that was a powerful witness, and the Jewish religious leaders could not deny it. But they could not accept it either. So they were silent on it because if they came against what John the Baptist was teaching, then the Jewish people would come against these Jewish religious leaders because they believed that John the Baptist was a man of God! And again, they could not agree with what he said, that Jesus is God, so they were silent on this witness.

The next witness that Jesus brings forth is the witness of the miracles that He did. They showed that He is the One that the Old Testament prophets spoke of. Jesus was the Messiah that they were waiting for!

And the biggest miracle is that He rose from the grave on the third day – ***THE RESURRECTION!*** But again, they were silent. They said that the miracles He did were not of God but the Devil!

And the last time we looked at the testimony of God the Father, His witness of God the Son!

And we looked at what God the Father had to say in the Old Testament regarding the Messiah, and it was clear, God the Father spoke of God the Son and the work that He was to do.

And in Hebrews 1:8-9 we see God the Father say, **“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 other words, God the Father clearly calls Jesus, the Messiah, God! But again, silence!

And you would think after three powerful witnesses that this would be enough for these Jewish religious leaders, but it was not. And, as we will see this morning, Jesus is going to give one more, the – ***TESTIMONY OF SCRIPTURE!***

Let me share this article with you from October 19, 2017, some four years ago from the Pew Research center. They wrote,

***In late 2016, Oxford Dictionaries selected “post-truth” as the word of the year, defining it as “relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief.”***

*The 2016 Brexit vote in the United Kingdom and the tumultuous U.S. presidential election highlighted how the digital age has affected news and cultural narratives. New information platforms feed the ancient instinct people have to find information that syncs with their perspectives: A 2016 study that analyzed 376 million Facebook users' interactions with over 900 news outlets found that people tend to seek information that aligns with their views.*

*This makes many vulnerable to accepting and acting on misinformation. For instance, after fake news stories in June 2017 reported Ethereum's founder Vitalik Buterin had died in a car crash its market value was reported to have dropped by \$4 billion.*

*When BBC Future Now interviewed a panel of 50 experts in early 2017 about the "grand challenges we face in the 21<sup>st</sup> century" many named the breakdown of trusted information sources.*

*"The major new challenge in reporting news is the new shape of truth," said Kevin Kelly, co-founder of Wired magazine. "Truth is no longer dictated by authorities, but is networked by peers. For every fact there is a counterfact and all these counterfactuals and facts look identical online, which is confusing to most people."*

- <https://pewrsr.ch/3pa3vHr>

Here is the scary part of that article. Listen once again, ". . . A 2016 study that analyzed 376 million Facebook users' interactions with over 900 news outlets found that people tend to seek information that aligns with their views."

Did you see that people are not necessarily interested in the truth, but they will look for those people, that information site, that will align with their views! And here we are, some four years down the road from that article and five years down the road from that study, and I think that this problem is even worse today!

Now I am not going to focus on all the information and misinformation that people gravitate to today, but what I am interested in is people who will gravitate towards people, teaching that goes contrary to the Scriptures, but they believe that it is true because it fits in with what they want to believe!

And I guess man has not changed much over the years. We see these Jewish religious leaders doing the same thing. They held to the beliefs of their fathers, but those beliefs went against what the Scriptures were teaching, and Jesus is going to expose their error. But they are not going to be interested in the truth because they have what they want and no one is going to change their mind on these things. Jesus is not God, at least according to them and their beliefs despite the evidence that is before them!

I saw it a few years back with the Hebrew Roots Movement where people involved in this movement fought me tooth and nail that they were right even though the Scriptures showed that they were wrong.

They were not going to believe what the Scriptures were saying, but this web site, this teacher had the answers, and we just did not get it, we were not open to it!

No, it was not that I didn't get it. Not at all. I completely understood what they were saying. You need Jesus to be saved, but you also must keep the Law! In fact, one of the teachers they wanted me to listen to taught this in regard to salvation, which is the most important aspect. You see, if you get this wrong you are damned to Hell, so it is very important!

According to this teacher of the Hebrew Roots Movement this is what you need to be saved. You must believe in Jesus, which sounds great if he ended there. But he doesn't! He goes on to say that Jesus is the Torah and thus, you must believe and obey the Torah, the Law to be saved. Jesus does not save, the Law does!

No it doesn't, the Law only condemns us, shows us our sin. Jesus saves, end of story!

But again, they fought hard until the person promoting this and refusing to stop was asked to leave!

That is what we see here with these Jewish religious leaders, they rejected the truths of God found in the Word of God regarding the Messiah. And that is what we will see this morning as Jesus uses the Scriptures to show that He is Almighty God, but again, they will reject the Scriptures and believe the words of men.

I have broken down these verses we will be looking at this morning in to four main points. They are,

***MISSING THE TRUTH – JOHN 5:39-40***

***THE RESULTS – JOHN 5:41-43***

***PRIDE BLINDS – JOHN 5:44***

***MISSED THE WITNESS OF MOSES – JOHN 5:45-47***

So with that as our introduction, let's begin reading in John chapter 5, starting in verse 39 as we study through the Gospel of John and we look at the topic, the – ***TESTIMONY OF SCRIPTURE!***

**JOHN 5****VERSES 39-40**

I am not sure why, but there are some who do not include this as a witness of Jesus Christ. I just don't get that because this too is a powerful witness of Jesus.

Make no mistake about it, the Word of God, the Bible is a powerful witness to who Jesus is, and we have seen that over the last few months in our study of the Gospel of John.

The fourth witness is the – ***TESTIMONY OF SCRIPTURE!***

And this is important, the Scriptures testify of who Jesus is, ***ALMIGHTY GOD!***

Look again at how Jesus starts out here. He says, "**You search the Scriptures . . .**" John 5:39.

Why did they search the Scriptures?

Jesus tells us, "**. . . for in them you think you have eternal life . . .**" John 5:39.

What Scriptures is Jesus speaking of here? Some may say that there is a lot of religious writings out there, so which one?

Keep in mind who Jesus is speaking to, the Jewish religious leaders. In other words, Jesus is saying what we call the Old Testament, these sacred writings of the Jewish Scriptures they called the Tanakh, that is what He is speaking of!

Keep in mind that the New Testament was not written yet and thus, Jesus has to be speaking of the Old Testament Scriptures or the Tanakh!

What does "***Tanakh***" mean?

It is an acronym of the first Hebrew letter of each of the three divisions of their Scriptures.

Let me show you how this works.

➤ **Torah** or **Teaching** and these are the five books of Moses. Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.

➤ **Nevi'im** or the **Prophets**. This section of the Hebrew Scriptures is divided into two parts of four books each. First – The Former Prophets, which are: Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings. Then the Latter Prophets, which are: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and the 12 minor prophets.

➤ **Ketuvim** or the **Writings**. These contained 13 books, which are: Ruth, Psalms, Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Lamentations, Daniel, Esther, Ezra (which included Nehemiah), and I and II Chronicles.

It is out of that we get the word - **TaNaKh**.

And make no mistake about it. The Jewish religious leaders took their study of the Tanakh very seriously. One scholar said, *“They pored over the OT, endeavoring to extract the fullest possible meaning from its words, because they believed that the very study itself would bring them life. The study of Scripture had become an end in itself rather than a way of getting to know God better. Their failure to recognize Jesus as the Messiah testified to their lack of perceiving the true message of Scripture. Life comes through Jesus, not [simply] through Bible study (vv. 21, 26; cf. 1:4; Rom. 10:4). As John the Baptist, the Old Testament pointed away from itself to Jesus.”*

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! But they were not looking for the Messiah, not at all!

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, the Messiah!

And here is what can happen when you let knowledge puff you up instead of building you up in the faith.

William Barclay wrote, *“They read it not to search for God but to find arguments to support their own positions. They did not really love God; they loved their own ideas about him.”* Exactly, and people still do that today!

Listen to what Ray Stedman had to say regarding this issue of reading the Scriptures and missing Jesus. He wrote,

What a strange paradox! These men were painstaking students of the Scripture, spending their whole lives counting the very words and memorizing great sections of it, committing themselves wholly to it, because they thought the knowledge of Scripture would give them life.

There are many like that yet today, students and scholars who search the Bible but never find Jesus. Yet Jesus himself declares, “They [the Scriptures] bear witness to me.”

Jesus is the main subject of the Old Testament! If you want to have an exciting experience with that book, start reading it with the object of looking for Jesus. You will find him on every page because he is there.

The whole of the Old Testament, that dramatic record of a nation separated from the rest of the stream of humanity and set aside to be a peculiar people unto God, is filled with references to Jesus, appearing in type and shadow, in sacrifice and priesthood, and in clear and burning prophecy. What an amazing claim this is, “They bear witness to me.”

If I said to you this morning, “I want to announce something to you: I have been reading through the Old Testament and I find that the whole book is talking about me: Ray Stedman is the subject of the Old Testament!”

I’m sure most of you would get up and walk out. Some of you would probably phone for the men in white coats to come and get me! We would call anybody who made that claim, mad.

Mohammed, the prophet of Islam, who studied the Old Testament, never dared to claim that it witnessed to him.

Buddha knew some of the Old Testament, yet he never claimed it was a witness to him.

Gandhi, the modern-day Buddha, never claimed that Scripture talked about him.

But when Jesus makes that claim no one calls him mad. There is an acknowledgment of the justice of his claim, there is evidence in support of it.

The theologian Godet comments,

***We see from this passage how Jesus beheld Himself in the mirror of the O. T. There, He recognized His own figure so clearly that He thought it impossible to study the book sincerely and not come to Him immediately.***

As Jesus says, it is possible to study the Bible, to even give your whole life to it, and never see him. These people thought what many today think, that knowledge is power, education is life, and if you get a knowledge of what God does you will have life. . . .

- <https://bit.ly/3BVot0l>

Let me take a few minutes and show you that the Old Testament spoke of what the Messiah was to do. And, because of that, it should have been easy for them to recognize Jesus as the Messiah, but they were no willing to see!

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.”**

So that is what the Messiah would do, that is one of the prophecies of the Messiah. Did Jesus fulfill that?

You bet He did. Compare what we read in Isaiah 35 with John 9:30-33, which says, **“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 in Matthew 11:4-5 we see Jesus say to the disciples of John the Baptist, **“... ‘Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them.’”**

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.’”**

Again, that is very clear. Jesus is saying that He is the One that the Old Testament prophets spoke of regarding the Messiah!

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.

Please understand that the entire Bible, from Genesis through Revelation is the story of redemption and that entire story of redemption is about Jesus Christ, the Messiah, the One who has come to redeem us from our sin!

Keep in mind that the Old Testament has over 300 prophecies related to the First Coming of Jesus Christ! Over 300! And for any man to fulfill just 48 of them is beyond any mathematical probability!

Now I understand that there are those who say that Jesus knew of these prophecies from the Jewish Scriptures, and He went about fulfilling them so that people would think that He was the Messiah.

That is just foolishness, and it shows that they have not read these prophecies because no man could just fulfill all of them by his own efforts. Maybe some of them he could orchestrate and fulfill, but not all of them because most of them are very specific!

Let me give you a few examples and you will see what I mean.

In II Samuel chapter 17 we are told that the Messiah would be a descendant of King David! That is very specific, and it would eliminate every other family in the world!

In Micah 5:2 we are told that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem, in the region or county of Ephrathah. Why so specific? Because there was another Bethlehem to the north in Galilee. So that would eliminate every other place in the world. Here in this small town of Bethlehem, a few thousand people, is where the Messiah was to be born!

In Daniel 9:24-27 we are told that the Messiah would be born sometime before the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple. That took place in 70 A. D. That means that the Messiah had to come before 70 A. D. and Jesus did!

Not only that but these verses also tell us the exact day that the Messiah would present Himself as King, as the Messiah. It was 173,880 days after the command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem to the coming of the Messiah. That date the command was given was March 14, 445 B. C. What was the end date? We call it Palm Sunday, and it was 173,880 days after the command by King Artaxerxes, which brings us to April 6, 32 A. D. as Jesus, the *MASHIACH NAGID* had come!

That is very specific, and no man could just arrange something like that. Something that was written some 600 years before the event happened!

Also, you can look at Genesis 3:15 and compare it with Isaiah 7:14 and we see that the Messiah would be born of a virgin and not only that, but this child who was to be born, this Messiah would be called Immanuel or “*God with us.*” This Messiah, Jesus, was not going to be an ordinary man, like the Jewish religious leaders thought, but He would be God Incarnate or God indwelt a body of flesh!

In Psalm 41:9 we see that someone close to Him, a dear friend, someone that He trusted, would betray Him. And we see Judas do that. How do you set something like that up? You can’t, but God knew what would happen and told us long before it did!

In Zechariah 11:11-13 we are told how much the Messiah would be betrayed for, 30 pieces of silver. Not only that, but His betrayer, who is Judas, would take that money and throw it down in the Temple and the priests would then use it to buy a potter’s field!

Psalm 22, written some 1000 years before these events took place, give us a graphic description of the Messiah hanging on a cross! Keep in mind crucifixion was not invented for another 900 years or so as the Persians would invent it!

We also see in Psalm 16, as well as other passages, of the resurrection of the Messiah. And, of course, we see this take place in the New Testament as Jesus rose from the grave on the third day!

And we can go on, but I think you get the idea. The Old Testament, the Tanakh, clearly points to all that the Messiah was to do, and we see this played out in the life of Jesus very clearly. But the Jewish religious leaders refused to see it, even though they searched the Scriptures for life, they missed the One who could give them life, Jesus!

Isn't that interesting. The Scriptures testified that Jesus is the Messiah; they just refused to see and believe that fact. It wasn't that they couldn't, it was that they would not believe, it was a choice on their part.

The evidence was overwhelming, make no mistake about it! And the same is true today. To deny that there is a God is foolishness when you look at all the evidence that life could not just happen apart from God creating life, all life! But people refuse to believe!

Let me give you this example and you will see what I mean.

Dr. Wald, who was one of the foremost biologists in this country said, *“Spontaneous generation was totally disproved 100 years ago by Louis Pasteur . . . That leads us only one possible conclusion. That life arose as a super natural creative work of God. I cannot accept that philosophically, because I don't want to believe in God. I choose to believe that which I know is scientifically impossible, spontaneous generation arising to evolution.”*

You see, he has all the right information, he just refuses to apply it properly.

That was these Jewish religious leaders, and it is also true of those who reject the life, the work of Jesus, that He came to save man from his sin. The evidence is overwhelming, they just refuse to believe!

As we read on, we will see the reason for their unbelief as we look at – ***THE RESULTS!***

#### VERSES 41-43

Notice again how John 5:41 opens this section of – ***THE RESULTS*** for us. It says, **“I do not receive honor from men.”**

Remember what we read in John 2:23-25, **“Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name when they saw the signs which He did. But Jesus did not commit Himself to them, because He knew all men, and had no need that anyone should testify of man, for He knew what was in man.”**

Jesus knew how fickle man can be. One minute they love you and the next minute they hate you.

Think about major sports figures and when they are at the top of their game, everyone loves them, except the opposing team I guess. But when they have a bad game or a few games, the fans boo them, they want the guy out of the game, they want him traded. Again, how fickle man can be!

The only testimony that the Lord really needed was from God the Father, and the honor He received from God the Father for the work that He was sent to do!

But, because of man being so changeable, Jesus did use the witness of man to testify of who He is, as we have seen in our studies over the last several weeks.

Then, in John 5:42 Jesus makes this observation. He says, **“But I know you, that you do not have the love of God in you.”**

Now the question may be, ***“How did Jesus know that they did not have the love of God in them?”***

Now the obvious response would be, ***“Because He is God, of course!”***

Which is true, but there is more to it than that. I believe the reason Jesus said that was because what was manifested in the lives of these Jewish religious leaders.

Think about how they treated people. Jesus said of them in Matthew 23:1-13, **“Then Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to His disciples, saying: ‘The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat. Therefore whatever they tell you to observe, that observe and do, but do not do according to their works; for they say, and do not do. For they bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men’s shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. But all their works they do to be seen by men. They make their phylacteries broad and enlarge the borders of their garments. They love the best places at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues, greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, “Rabbi, Rabbi.” But you, do not be called “Rabbi”; for One is your Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brethren. Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven. And do not be called teachers; for One is your Teacher, the Christ. But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted. But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in.”**

We will talk more about this as we get to our next point. But pride is the problem. They saw themselves as better than everyone else. They made others do all kinds of work and they themselves would not even do it or help out!

Their life was one for show, to be looked at and they were not interested in people, not at all!

And when you have that kind of self-righteous attitude, you look down upon people and when you are looking down, you are not looking up! I know, brilliant, but let me explain.

If you are looking down, you are not looking up to the Lord and your focus will be self and not others.

Remember what John said in I John 4:12-16, as he is speaking to us as Christians, **“No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us. By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world. Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.”**

In other words, if you are focused on God, if your life is centered upon Him, then the love of God that flows into your life, will touch the lives of others.

If you are not focused upon God, if your life is not centered upon Him, then you are not going to love people like you should. Yes, you can love the brethren that are nice to you, that meet your standard, but if they don't, well, you can justify your behavior but not according to the Scriptures, according to what you want to believe!

One writer put it like this as he sums it up for us. He wrote, *“Man’s failure to receive the Son of God is here traced back to its cause. These men did not have the love of God in them, that is, they loved themselves rather than God. If they had loved God, they would have received the One whom God had sent. By their rejection of the Lord Jesus, they showed their utter lack of love for His Father.”*

Now we come to John 5:43, and it is kind of a haunting verse to me. Listen again to what it says. **“I have come in My Father’s name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive.”**

You see, Jesus came in the Father's name, we saw His witness and the witness of the Scriptures 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. And they are ready to go, but there is a problem or delay I should say.

Today no Jew or Christian can go up there on the Temple mount 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, Moshe Dayan gave it back to the Jordanians to oversee and today it has been given to the Palestinians, and these 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 to me because we see the Jews preparing to receive the Antichrist as their Messiah, having rejected Jesus!

This is – ***THE RESULT*** when you reject Jesus, you will worship a man or a creature or something.

Now how did these Jewish religious leaders not see Jesus as their Messiah?

That is the next point – ***PRIDE BLINDS!***

#### VERSE 44

The fatal error of these Jewish religious leaders and the fatal error for people throughout history, is ***PRIDE!***

What do I mean by that?

The big one and the one we see here is the Jewish religious leaders wanted honor from people, honor amongst themselves and in seeking that vain honor they sacrificed “**. . . the honor that comes from the only God.**”

And what happened with them, happens today in keeping people from the faith. We truly are no different even though we think we are. We think we are smarter, but we are not!

Let me share with you some lines from a sermon that Charles Spurgeon did on John 5:44.

I believe it was titled “*Why Men Cannot Believe in Christ.*”

These are some of the points that he made.

- “The mere fact of receiving honor, even if that honor be rightly rendered, may make faith in Christ a difficulty.”
- “When a man gets to feel that he ought to be honored, he is in extreme danger.”
- “Always receiving this undeserved honor, they deceived themselves into believing that they deserved it.”
- “Dear friends, it is very difficult to receive honor and to expect it, and yet to keep your eyesight; for men’s eyes gradually grow dull through the smoke of the incense which is burned before them.”
- “Once more, the praise of men generally *turns the receivers of it into great cowards.*”
- “But, oh, how many live on the breath of their fellow men; to be approved - to be applauded - that is their heaven; but to be despised, to be sneered at, to be called fool, to have some nickname applied to them; oh no, they would sooner go to hell than bear that.”

And here is another point. It is hard to say that we were wrong. That is just pride. If the evidence, if the Scriptures I should say, show that we are wrong, then we need to listen to what God is saying, let go of that pride. But they refuse to because they loved the praise of man rather than the praise from God!

Another issue with pride is that we think we are better than we really are. We think God owes us heaven because of the things we have done in this life. Yes, we are not perfect, but we have lived a good life. We have helped people. We have done good things and thus, we will go to heaven.

But that is just pride because the Bible says you are not good, not one of us.

The Bible tells us that we are all sinners separated from God.

And here comes pride and we think we are better than we really are. God does not want goodness; He demands perfection and none of us are perfect.

Because of that, our sins separate us from God, and we need to come to Jesus, repent of our sins and ask Him to be Lord and Savior of our lives, receive that forgiveness of our sins so we can be white as snow before Him!

Clarke made these comments regarding these religious leaders. He wrote, ***“The grand obstacle to the salvation of the scribes and Pharisees was their pride, vanity, and self-love. They lived on each other’s praise. If they had acknowledged Christ as the only teacher, they must have given up the good opinion of the multitude; and they chose rather to lose their souls than to forfeit their reputation among men!”***

And Tasker put it like this. He wrote, ***“They had accused Jesus of acting independently of God; He now accuses them of displaying that independence. The motive of their actions is not love for God but the approval of their fellows.”***

Make no mistake about it, everything about the Jewish religious leaders, the Pharisees, the Scribes, was designed to get honor from men!

Remember what we read in Matthew chapter 23 as Jesus is rebuking them for their behavior. We are told in Matthew 23:5-7, **“But all their works they do to be seen by men. They make their phylacteries broad and enlarge the borders of their garments. They love the best places at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues, greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, ‘Rabbi, Rabbi.’”**

They were not interested in serving God, but they were interested in being served, looked upon with honor by the people. They wanted to be seen by men for the works that they did. They had these large phylacteries on their forehead to impress the people. They stood on the street corners and prayed out loud so the people could hear how holy they were. The way that they gave their money was like sounding the trumpet so everyone could hear that these spiritual men were giving to God. They loved the chief seats in the synagogues and sat up front for the religious banquets.

In other words, the honor of men! That is just pride!

And how did Jesus view their behavior?

We don't have to guess. We are told in Luke 16:15, **“And He said to them, ‘You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God.’”**

Listen to how The Amplified Bible puts this verse, **“But He said to them, You are the ones who declare yourselves just and upright before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is exalted and highly thought of among men is detestable and abhorrent (an abomination) in the sight of God. [1 Sam 16:7; Prov 21:2.]”**

And one more just to drive home this point of how Jesus viewed their behavior, their actions, their pride. This is from The Living Bible, **“Then he said to them, ‘You wear a noble, pious expression in public, but God knows your evil hearts. Your pretense brings you honor from the people, but it is an abomination in the sight of God.’”**

It was all about their appearance before men and this missed the point. They were representing God before the people, and they were not representing God correctly because it was all about them.

William Barclay gives us this insight. He wrote,

The point is not: “Am I as good as my neighbor?”

The point is: “Am I as good as God?”

The point is not: “Is my scholarship and is my piety greater than that of other people whom I could name?”

The point is: “What do I look like to God?”

So long as we judge ourselves by human comparisons there is plenty of room for self-satisfaction, and self-satisfaction kills faith, for faith is born of the sense of need.

But when we compare ourselves with Jesus Christ, and through Him, with God, we are humbled to the dust, and then faith is born, for there is nothing left to do but to trust the mercy of God.

- William Barclay, The Gospel of John Volume 1, pp. 199-200

Exactly. Pride blinded their eyes to the truth that was before them, the Messiah, Jesus Christ!

And these Jewish religious leaders who held Moses in high esteem, Jesus is going to deal with that next as they – ***MISSED THE WITNESS OF MOSES!***

VERSES 45-47

Now we can talk about Moses being the fifth witness testifying that Jesus is the Messiah, Almighty God, but that is not the point here! They could check the Scriptures and read about what Moses said, how he testified of the Messiah!

You see, 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!

In fact, Jesus tells them that Moses is accusing them, the one they said they trusted in, because they do not believe what Moses has said about the Messiah, about Jesus!

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, and there are more, 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.

John Phillips summarizes this up for us as he wrote, *“The writings of Moses were full of types that depicted Christ: the ark of Noah, the offering of Isaac, the ladder of Jacob’s dream, the story of Joseph, the Passover lamb, the manna from heaven, the rock (that brought forth water in the wilderness), the serpent on the pole - to mention just a few. The writings of Moses contained one outstanding messianic prophecy known by heart by every Jew (Deuteronomy 18:15). Jesus could well say, “Moses wrote of me.” He wrote of him repeatedly. But these people discounted all these types and prophecies of Christ. The indictment was clear, the consequence inevitable. To disbelieve the writings of Moses was to make any genuine faith in Christ impossible. Their case was hopeless if Moses, the great intercessor of the Old Testament (Exodus 32:30–33:17), became their great accuser. Their doom was sealed.”*

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

I like the what David Guzik had to say about this. He wrote,  
*Jesus did not call these religious leaders to a new or a different faith. He called them to believe what Moses, what the Scriptures, what His works, what John the Baptist each testified about Jesus: that He is the Messiah, the Son of God and God the Son. If they refused to believe this overwhelming testimony, it was unlikely they would believe Jesus’ own words.*

- <https://bit.ly/3aOR0sx>

Yes, these Jewish religious leaders – **MISSED THE WITNESS OF MOSES** because it went against what they wanted to believe. And if they continued on that path, rejecting Jesus, then they will stand before the judgment of God!

My prayer, as we have gone through these verses here in John chapter 5, that you clearly see that Jesus Christ is Almighty God, the second person of the Holy Trinity.

That is the focus of these verses!

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!

And if we hold on to our own traditions, our own beliefs that are contrary to the Word of God, then the Scriptures themselves will testify against us.

May we clearly see and understand that **“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.

And I will close with this.

An unknown writer said, *“This Book is the mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, the doom of sinners, and the happiness of believers. Its doctrines are holy, its precepts are binding; its histories are true, and its decisions are immutable. Read it to be wise, believe it to be safe, practice it to be holy. It contains light to direct you, food to support you, and comfort to cheer you. It is the traveler's map, the pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword, and the Christian's character. Here paradise is restored, heaven opened, and the gates of hell disclosed. Christ is its grand subject, our good its design, and the glory of God its end. It should fill the memory, rule the heart, and guide the feet. Read it slowly, frequently, prayerfully. It is a mine of wealth, a paradise of glory, and a river of pleasure. Follow its precepts and it will lead you to Calvary, to the empty tomb, to a resurrected life in Christ; yes, to glory itself, for eternity.”*