

## I. Jesus affirms His deity

- A. We have been working our way through John 5:19-47, and as you know by now, this portion contains Jesus own words confirming that He is one with God. Today we will pick up at vs 31.
- B. Pray

## II. Jesus confirms He is one with God

- A. [31-32] Jesus says that He is not the only witness to the truth of who He is, God is also testifying to the truth that Jesus and God are one.
  - 1. John 5:31-32 . . .
    - a. [31] If I alone testify about Myself, My testimony is not true, that is, not legally admissible in court.
      - (1) As far back as the Mosaic Law, God decreed that one witness is not enough to prove innocence or guilt, truth or error. This decree is carried into the NT, so I will give you one example from the OT and the NT.
        - (a) Deuteronomy 19:15, "A single witness shall not rise up against a man on account of any iniquity or any sin which he has committed; on the evidence of two or three witnesses a matter shall be confirmed."
        - (b) Matthew 18:15-16, "If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother. [16] But if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, so that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every fact may be confirmed."
      - (2) And as you may recall, when wanting to put Jesus to death, the Jewish religious leaders found a number of witnesses, but had a hard time getting two who would tell the same story. Finally, they found two who agreed and so they continued on with their case against Jesus (Matthew 26:59-61).
      - (3) The point is, that based on God's requirement that it takes two or three witnesses to verify a truth or fact, Jesus does not expect those who oppose Him to believe He is one with God on the basis of His testimony alone. And so He goes on to say in vs 32 . . .

- b. [32] There is another who testifies of Me,
      - (1) Jesus confirms that there are two witnesses verifying what He is saying – Himself and God. And it is on the basis of this evidence that He expects those listening to believe He is one with God.
      - (2) However, He goes one step further and says . . .
    - c. and I know that the testimony which He gives about Me is true.
      - (1) With this statement, Jesus is asserting that both witnesses agree – which was a requirement for any testimony of two or three witnesses to be treated as legally reliable.
- B. [33-35] Jesus says that John the Baptist's teachings confirm that He and God are one.
  - 1. John 5:33-35 . . .
    - a. You have sent to John, and he has testified to the truth.
      - (1) In John 1:19-27, we have the story of the religious leaders sending representatives to John the Baptist to find out if he was the Messiah. John responded by saying he was not the Messiah, but rather he was the forerunner preparing the way for the Messiah (Isaiah 40:3-4; Malachi 4:6).
      - (2) The point Jesus is making here is that those listening to Him had accepted John the Baptist's personal testimony as true, yet John was the only one testifying to this fact, and John was merely a man who never did the works Jesus did – while Jesus had God as a second witness and His miraculous works as a third. Then Jesus says . . .
    - b. [34] But the testimony which I receive is not from man,
      - (1) In other words, the proof of Jesus' deity does not come from mere human knowledge or insight, but from God the Father and God the Son.
      - (2) It is interesting to note the when Jesus asked the disciples who they thought He was, Peter said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God," to which Jesus said, "Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven (*not by mere human means, but divine*)" (Matthew 16:15-17).
    - c. but I say these things so that you may be saved.
      - (1) Jesus is reminding His listeners that since they accepted John the Baptist's personal testimony, it only makes sense that

they should accept His testimony – which was based on divine revelation and miraculous works – and in accepting it find justification, salvation, and eternal life.

- d. [35] He (*that is John the Baptist*) was the lamp that was burning and was shining and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light.
    - (1) During the time that John the Baptist was popular, they went out to hear him, and they accepted what he taught as godly truth to live by, and they rejoiced that God had provided John and his teaching for them.
    - (2) However, Jesus points out that their rejoicing in John and His teaching was only for a while. It was not permanent, as proven by their rejection of Jesus as God, and of Jesus' teachings as being from God.
  - e. To summarize this section, Jesus is pointing out to His listeners that their acceptance of John's personal testimony about not being the Messiah, and their acceptance of John's teaching about repentance in order to be prepared for the coming of Messiah was sufficient reason to accept Jesus' claim to be one with God.
- C. [36] Jesus says that in spite of how great John the Baptist's witness was, the works that Jesus was doing are even greater proof that He and God are one.
- 1. John 5:36 . . .
    - a. But the testimony which I have is greater than the testimony of John; for the works which the Father has given Me to accomplish—the very works that I do—testify about Me, that the Father has sent Me.
    - b. John the Baptist only had words to support his claim to be the forerunner of the Messiah, while Jesus has His own words, God's words, and miraculous deeds to support His claim to be one with God. And as far as miraculous deeds go, it was Jesus, not John who healed the sick, gave sight to the blind, made the lame walk, fed huge groups of people, walked on water, calmed the stormy seas, cast out demons, and raised the dead to life.
    - c. And it is these miraculous deeds which further prove that Jesus, though visibly human, is also divine. Therefore, if those listening to Jesus had accepted John's testimony, they ought – all the more – to accept Jesus' testimony since His is a combination of divine words and miraculous deeds.

D. [37-38] Jesus says that God declares that they are one. However, Jesus says that those He is talking to have never heard God say this and they cannot hear God say this because they do not believe in Jesus – the one sent to them by God.

1. John 5:37-38 . . .

a. And the Father who sent Me, He has testified of Me.

(1) This time, Jesus is not laying claim to having two witnesses, but rather He is saying that God has spoken in a way that all humanity can hear.

(2) And then Jesus makes a strong statement about the cause of spiritual deafness, spiritual blindness, and spiritual emptiness of those who think they believe in God and are hearing from God, yet do not believe that Jesus is God and do not believe He speaks the words of God.

b. You have neither heard His voice at any time nor seen His form. [38] You do not have His word abiding in you, for you do not believe Him whom He sent.

(1) In other words, if you do not listen to Jesus and live according to what He says, and if you do not believe His miraculous works are further proof of His deity, it means you are neither listening to God nor accepting God's word as truth.

(2) John states this truth in this way in 1 John 5:9-12, "If we receive the testimony of men, [then we ought to receive] the testimony of God [for it] is greater; [and] the testimony of God is this, that He has testified concerning His Son. [10] The one who believes in the Son of God has the testimony [of God] in himself; the one who does not believe God has made [God] a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has given concerning His Son. [11] And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. [12] He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.

E. [39-47] The essence of these nine verses is that the OT scriptures speak about Jesus as Immanuel, that is "God with us." However, even though those listening to Jesus read the OT, and even though they teach others what Moses taught, they themselves do not believe what Moses said about Jesus. Therefore, it is only natural that they will not believe what Jesus says about being one with God. Today, we will only look at vs 39-40.

1. John 5:39-40 . . .

- a. You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me;
    - (1) The scriptures referred to here are the OT scriptures, and as you already know, they testify about Jesus.
    - (2) Jesus confirmed this while talking with the two disciples on the way to Emmaus following His resurrection. We read about this in Luke 24:25-27, “And Jesus said to the two disciples, ‘O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! [26] Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?’ [27] Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, Jesus explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures (OT).”
    - (3) The important truth here is that the scriptures do not save us! They reveal God and the ways of God to us. They point to the Savior – Jesus Christ, and what He has done to save us. They tell us how to be saved from the penalty and power of sin. And they tell us how to live as a Christian once we have been born again.
  - b. [40] and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life.
2. Whatever you may think of the religious Jews of Jesus’ day, and I admit it is easy to have a low opinion of them, it is all too common for Christians today to apply the words “coming to Jesus for life” to the topic of eternal life – that is, to the life that we enter after dying in this world and rising in God’s eternal world.
- a. For example, when most Christians read the words, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me” (John 14:6), they think of salvation and eternal life.
    - (1) And yet, eternal life with God does not start after we die, it starts when we repent and come to saving faith in Jesus Christ. It starts when we are born again – to use Jesus’ words to Nicodemus.
    - (2) Therefore, when Jesus speaks of coming to Him for life, and when He says He is the way, the truth, and the life, He is not speaking only of life in our heavenly future, He is also speaking of life in our present world. And the life He is speaking of is a life that is abundant and full of inward peace and joy in spite of the circumstances. In other words, it is a life that is far more than we could ask or think.

(3) The truth is, Jesus is the life. He is the way and the truth – and it is in coming to Him, trusting in Him, listening to Him, obeying Him, conforming to His likeness, taking on His attitude, and loving as He loves that we enter into the life that He is and gives – starting here and now and for eternity.

3. This raises a number of question that I want to ask.

- a. How many of us are at least somewhat like the religious Jews of Jesus' day? How many of us who have come to Jesus for salvation from the penalty of sin and for eternal life read the Bible – but are, at times and in certain areas, unwilling to come to Jesus to obtain the life He has for us right now?
  - b. Is your faith in Jesus for living a godly life in this world as confident and complete as your faith in Jesus for eternal salvation? Do you completely and consistently believe that the example of Jesus' life and the truths He taught are the ONLY way to life, and to the truth about life, here and now?
  - c. How many of us live as if reading the Bible each day is more important than living according to what it says – even if it is only one or two areas where we live contrary to what it says?
  - d. How many of us regularly read the scriptures yet rarely use them to evaluate and guide our choices, thoughts, attitudes, words, and deeds – in certain areas?
  - e. Do you read to learn what you are doing wrong and what you ought to be doing. Do you want the Bible to speak to you about areas where you still distrust God and are being ungodly? Do you get up from reading to put off what you are doing wrong and put on the likeness of Jesus Christ so that you move forward in doing, or at lease begin doing what you ought to be doing?
  - f. How many times have you read Psalm 37 or Philippians 4:6-7 and yet continue to fret and be anxious about things?
  - g. How often have you read Philippians 4:8 and yet allow your mind to think about, dwell on, fantasize or day-dream about things that are contrary to or even enemies of the things that that verse tells us to think about?
- (1) For example, Philippians 4:8 begins with the exhortation to think on the things that are true, and yet how many of us still treat some of our assumptions about certain people or situations as true? And how many of us deal with those people and situations on the basis of our assumptions rather than the truth?

- h. 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 is a very familiar portion of scripture about love, and yet how many of us intentionally and prayerfully make it our aim to live each day according to what is stated in those verses?
  - i. Who among us hasn't read James 1:2-4, and yet how many of us face the hard times of life with the conviction that the spiritual profit gained from hard times makes those times a joy rather than a sorrow or drudgery or something to suffer through?
  - j. Jesus said He was among us as the one who serves (Luke 22:27), and He asks us to follow His example, and yet how many of us prefer to be served rather than serve? And how many of us complain or feel resentful if we are asked to serve more than we feel is fair?
- 4. What I am trying to help us grasp is that there are many who faithfully read their Bibles – and you might be one of them – yet they are unwilling to come to Jesus, as proven by the fact that they are often angry and they let the sun go down on their anger, they harbor resentment and bitterness, they refuse to forgive certain people, they look and lust, they envy, gossip, lay up treasure on earth, hate their enemies – and even some of their family members, they speak unkindly, they return evil for evil – and the list could go on.
- 5. It is Jesus, not the scriptures, who is the life, and it is in Jesus that we gain this life. It is Jesus who knows the truth and it is in Jesus that we come to understand the truth about how to live godly in this world. And it is Jesus, not the scriptures, who brings us into the life that God created us to enjoy – here and now and on into eternity.

### III. Conclusion

- A. The point here is that reading the scriptures is not enough. We must come to Jesus, and we must seek to understand His ways, and we must live according to His truth if we are to enter into God's abundant life in this world and have eternal life in the next.
- B. Therefore, let us not make the same mistake the religious Jews made in Jesus' day. Let us read and use what we read to come to Jesus, for He is the way, the truth, and the life.