
THE GOSPEL
OF JOHN


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OF JOHN
Chapter 5

Introduction

- In the first part of this chapter, we see Jesus heal the man at the pool of Bethesda.

Pool of Bethesda



Introduction

- In the first part of this chapter, we see Jesus heal the man at the pool of Bethesda.
  - The third of seven miracles John records
    - Each to intentionally designed to be instructive
  - We can spend years literally staring the answer in the face, only to be so focused on ourselves that we miss it
  - The pool where this man had made camp as the very pool the sacrificial lambs were washed in
  - For 38 years this man had been observing lambs whose blood would be shed to make atonement for sin
  - Never understanding the lesson they taught…
  - We are incapable of providing the remedy for our own condition – we need a perfect substitute who is willing to be offered in our place.
  - Jesus meets us at the point of our need!

Introduction

- Jesus' miracle creates quite a stir!
- It was done (intentionally) on the Sabbath
- When the Jewish leaders hear they *'persecute Jesus and sought to slay Him'* v16
- Jesus takes this opportunity to make another profound statement – declaring His deity
  - Remember the declaration to the woman at the well?
  - Jesus declares Himself to be the 'I AM'!
    - The voice of the burning Bush Ex 3:14
- Now, to the Jewish leaders He boldly declares:

17b My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.

18 Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.

John 5:17-18

Let the battle commence!

- Jesus launches 4 salvos against the ‘Jews’
- …The Jewish leaders
- …which must have left them stunned, exasperated, and somewhat intimidated.
- Because of what follows here, some commentators regard this chapter as the key chapter in the entire gospel, and a defining moment in the life of Jesus.
- In these verses we will see some of the clearest and most compelling arguments for the Deity of Christ.
- Jesus begins His first three points with ‘verily, verily, I say unto you’.

Let the battle commence!

- Jesus launches 4 salvos against the ‘Jews’
- Verse 19-23 – The relationship between the Father & Son
- Verse 24 – The mission of the Son
- Verse 25-29 – The authority of the Son
- Verse 30-39 – Four witnesses are called
- Verse 40-47 – The verdict is pronounced!

Father/Son Relationship

- This incredible ‘outburst’ from Jesus really puts the cat among the pigeons!
- The fact of His deity and unique relationship with the Father are laid out to the listening Jews.

Father/Son Relationship

19 Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.

John 5:19

- Greek: “Amen! Amen!”
- At the beginning of a discourse
  - *“Surely, truly, of a truth!”*
- At the end
  - *“so it is, so be it, may it be fulfilled”.*

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John 5:19

- Jesus declares that His unity with the Father is so absolute that He cannot act independently of Him!

Father/Son Relationship

- David Guzik points out that a superficial reader might misread "The Son can do nothing of himself" as a sign of weakness or inferiority.
- In reality, it is the exact opposite.
  - *“Jesus is saying it is morally and ontologically impossible for the Son to act independently of the Father, because their wills, natures, and purposes are one”*
- J Vernon McGee notes that:
  - *“No mere creature or prophet—not Moses, not Elijah, not Isaiah—could ever say, "Whatever God does, I do in the exact same way." To do everything the Father does requires omnipotence and omniscience. It is a massive declaration of full Deity”.*

A Lesson For Us!

- *"Our Lord never originated a single enterprise of His own. He watched what the Father was doing and stepped into the Father's work. Most of our frustration in the church comes from inventing projects of our own and asking God to bless them, instead of discerning what the Father is already doing and joining Him."* — William Still

Father/Son Relationship

- Adam Clarke helps us to see what it was about this statement that riled the Jews so much!
  - *"The Son does not merely do similar things, or imitate the Father at a distance; He does the very same things, with the same power, the same wisdom, and the same authority. Where there is an absolute identity of operation, there must be an absolute identity of nature".*
- This was a cold sharp rebuke to the Pharisees and Sadducees' denial of Jesus power and authority

Father/Son Relationship

20 For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel.

John 5:20

Gr. *Phileo*, not *Agape* Relationship between equals

Father/Son Relationship

"The Bible makes it very clear that in and of Himself "God is *love".*

The God of Islam and Judaism could not be love in and of himself. He would have to create other beings in order to have the experience of loving or of being loved.

Yet consistently, from Genesis through Revelation, the Bible presents a God who did not need to create any beings to experience love….

This God is fully complete in Himself, being three Persons… who are separate and distinct yet at the same time eternally one God.

They loved and communed and fellowshipped with each other and took council together before the universe, angels, or mankind were brought into existence - Dave Hunt

Father/Son Relationship

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John 5:20

- The ultimate "greater work" was Jesus laying down His own life and taking it up again (John 10:18), accomplishing the redemption of the world.

Father/Son Relationship

20 For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel.

John 5:20

- Jesus doesn't leave us guessing what the "greater works" are; He defines them immediately in the next two verses:
- *"these"*: Healing a man who had been paralysed for 38 years at Bethesda was a stunning miracle yet that healed man would eventually grow old and die again…

Father/Son Relationship

21 For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.

John 5:21

- Raising the spiritually dead to eternal life—and calling physical corpses out of the grave at the last day—is an infinitely greater work!
- In the Old Testament, only God holds the keys of life and death (Deuteronomy 32:39; 1 Samuel 2:6).
- When the King of Syria asked the King of Israel to heal Naaman of leprosy, the king tore his clothes and cried, *"Am I God, to kill and to make alive?" (2 Kings 5:7).*
- Yet here, Jesus claims that exact power!

Father/Son Relationship

22 For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: **John 5:22**

- Standing before a hostile human court in Jerusalem while secretly holding the authority to judge the entire human race - including the very Pharisees interrogating Him - is a far greater work than any earthly sign.

Father/Son Relationship

22 For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: **John 5:22**

- Adam Clarke notes:
  - *"the office of Universal Judge requires omniscience (to know every secret motive, thought, and action of every human being across history) and omnipotence (to execute the sentence). By committing all judgment to the Son, the Father testifies that the Son possesses full divine omniscience".*

Father/Son Relationship

- Judgment committed to the Son

30 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:

31 Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

Acts 17:30-31

Father/Son Relationship

23 That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.

John 5:23

- In John 5:21–23, Jesus unpacks those "greater works" by claiming three divine prerogatives that every devout Jew knew belonged exclusively to Yahweh:
  - *Sovereign life-giving power,*
  - *Absolute final judgment,*
  - *Equal worship.*

Father/Son Relationship

23 That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.

John 5:23

- This single verse demolishes any theology—whether first-century Pharisaism, modern Unitarianism, Islam, or the Watchtower—that claims to honour God the Father while reducing Jesus to a mere prophet, angel, or good moral teacher.

Father/Son Relationship

23 That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.

John 5:23

- *"To refuse the Son the same worship and honour paid to the Father is not merely to slight Jesus; it is to reject the Father Himself. In the economy of heaven, there is no path to the Father that bypasses the Son."* — Adam Clarke

Let the battle commence!

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The Mission of the Son

- If verses 19–23 reveal the majestic authority of the Son, verse 24 reveals how a helpless sinner steps out from under judgment and into eternal life.
- Many commentators regard it as one of the clearest, most complete single-verse summaries of the Gospel in the entire Bible.

The Mission of the Son

24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

John 5:24

- Notice the T&C's:
  - Hearing & Believing
- Not good works, or anything else!
- Cf. Matthew 13:19-23
- Absolute assurance, not a 'process'
  - Reject the 'being saved' heresy! (see 1 Cor 1:18 / 2 Cor 2:14)

Matthew 13

- Parable of the four soils:

19 When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.

Matt 13:19

Matthew 13

- Parable of the four soils:

20 But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it;

21 Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.

Matt 13:20-21

Matthew 13

- Parable of the four soils:

22 He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.

Matt 13:22

Matthew 13

- Parable of the four soils:

23 But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

Matt 13:23

The Mission of the Son

- “Hearing" in this context means far more than sound waves hitting the eardrum - it means receiving, understanding, and submitting to Christ’s Word.
- Notice carefully what Jesus says: *"heareth My Word, and believeth on Him that sent me."*
- You cannot claim to believe in God the Father while ignoring the Word of Jesus.
- David Guzik notes:
  - *“True faith in God is always demonstrated by how a person responds to the Word of Jesus Christ”*.

The Mission of the Son

24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

John 5:24

- While believers will stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ (Bema) to have their service rewarded (1 Cor 3:11–15; 2 Cor 5:10), they will never stand before the Great White Throne to be judged for their sins—because Christ already bore that condemnation on the Cross (Rom 8:1).

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The Authority of the Son

25 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming,
and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the
Son of God: and they that hear shall live.

26 For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he
given to the Son to have life in himself;

27 And hath given him authority to execute judgment
also, because he is the Son of man.

John 5:25-27

The Authority of the Son

25 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.

John 5:25

- As Augustine and McGee both famously remarked: when Jesus stood outside Lazarus's tomb, He had to specify "Lazarus, come forth!"—because if He hadn't used Lazarus's name, every graveyard in Jerusalem would have emptied on the spot!
- One day, He will speak without naming a single individual, and every grave and sea *will* yield its dead.

The Authority of the Son

28 Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice,

29 And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

John 5:28-29

Resurrections

- Resurrection of life
  - Resurrection of the just (Luke 14:14)
  - The first resurrection (Rev 20:6)
  - ‘Better resurrection’ (Heb 11:35)
  - Resurrection of the dead (Phil 3:11)
  - Category rather than a single event
- Resurrection of damnation
  - Resurrection of the unjust
  - Single event

Resurrection of Life

20 But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become
the firstfruits of them that slept.
21 For since by man came death, by man came also the
resurrection of the dead.
22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be
made alive.
23 But every man in his own order: Christ the
firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his
coming.
24 Then cometh the end...

1 Cor 15:20-24

Resurrection of Life

- Christ – the Firstfruits
- Those at His coming (Rapture) – 1 Thes 4:16
- Tribulation martyrs (at 2nd Coming) – Rev 20:4-6

Resurrection of Damnation

- Single event for all unbelievers

12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

Rev 20:12-14

Resurrection of Damnation

- Single event for all unbelievers

13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

Rev 20:12-14

Picture the Scene

- We need to put ourselves in the place of the Pharisees and Sadducees as Jesus is saying this, if we are to begin to grasp the impact of these words when Jesus first spoke them.
- The carpenter from Nazareth is telling these religious leaders that He is going to speak, and the dead will rise from their graves, and that this power has been given to Him from God!
- Not only that, but He will then have the power to pass eternal judgment on all souls – some will inherit eternal life, some eternal damnation!

Picture the Scene

- As C.S. Lewis noted, these are either the ramblings of a madman, or God in the flesh.
- Under no circumstances would a prophet dare to say such things.
- These five verses should end forever the question ‘did Jesus ever claim to be God?’
- Unequivocally, YES!

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Introduction to Jesus' Witnesses

30 I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.

31 If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true.

John 5:30-31

- *"by the mouth of witnesses: but one witness shall not testify"* (Num 35:30)
- *"In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established"* (2 Cor 13:1)
- Here Jesus is simply restating that the testimony of a single witness is not admissible, hence He will now call His witnesses to testify:

Four Witnesses Are Called:

- Witness #1 – John the Baptist v32-35
- Witness #2 – The works of Jesus v36
- Witness #3 – The Father v37-38
- Witness #4 – The Scriptures v39



Witness #1 – John the Baptist

32 There is another that beareth witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true.

33 Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth.

34 But I receive not testimony from man: but these things I say, that ye might be saved.

35 He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light.

John 5:32-35

Witness #2 – The Works

36 But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.

John 5:36

Witness #3 – The Father

37 And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape.

38 And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not.

John 5:37-38

Witness #4 – The Scriptures

39 Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.

John 5:39

Witness #4 – The Scriptures

- The final witness that Jesus calls to testify on His behalf is the scriptures themselves.
- In many ways this is the most compelling of all four;
- Hundreds of details of Jesus birth, life, trial, death by crucifixion, burial in another's tomb and resurrection were foretold in the scriptures.
- As Jesus had already shown Nicodemus, the serpent on a pole in the wilderness was expressly pointing to the work He would accomplish on the cross.
- The obedience of Abraham in presenting Isaac as a burnt offering to God prefigured the Lamb of God, that God said He Himself would provide.

Witness #4 – The Scriptures

- The Passover, with the lamb without blemish, taken on the 10th day, killed on the 14th day all were an anticipatory model looking forward to their fulfilment in Christ.
- Born in Bethlehem, the Seed of the woman, called out of Egypt, growing up in Nazareth – all foretold centuries in advance.
- The incredible mathematical prophecy, given by Gabriel to Daniel that pinpointed the exact day the Messiah would be presented to Israel as king – and the list goes on and on.

Witness #4 – The Scriptures

- The Jewish leaders trusted the scriptures for their eternal life, yet here before them stood the One whom the scriptures so clearly testified of;
- Every detail on every page in some way points to Jesus Christ, but the Scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees would not allow themselves the possibility of considering 'could this be the Christ?'*
  - * Except for Nicodemus & Joseph of Arimathea.
- They had something far more precious to protect…
- Their tradition! (Matt 15:6).
- Hence Jesus now concludes the case for the defence by pronouncing His own verdict on the Jewish leaders:

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The Verdict

40 And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.

John 5:40

- David Guzik points out that Jesus does not say "ye cannot come" (as though the evidence were missing), but "ye will not come."
- Their rejection was a moral refusal of the will—they preferred their religious status over life itself.

The Verdict

41 I receive not honour from men.
42 But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you.

John 5:41-42

- J. Vernon McGee notes that the Pharisees wore their devotion to God on their sleeves, yet Jesus looks straight past their outward piety and diagnoses the fatal flaw inside: *"I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you."* If you truly love the Father, you will inevitably recognise and love the Son who bears His exact image.

The Verdict

43 I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me
not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will
receive.
44 How can ye believe, which receive honour one of
another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God
only?

John 5:43-44

- Pride and spiritual blindness are inseparable.
- As long as a person cares more about keeping their reputation among religious peers than pleasing God, saving faith is impossible—because coming to Christ requires admitting you are spiritually bankrupt.

The Verdict

45 Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father:
there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom
ye trust.

46 For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed
me: for he wrote of me.

47 But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye
believe my words?

John 5:45-47

The Verdict

- The Pharisees prided themselves on being "Moses' disciples" (John 9:28).
  - Jesus tells them He doesn't even need to prosecute them before the Father—their own hero, Moses, will stand up in the courtroom and condemn them, because every sacrifice, tabernacle furnishing, feast, and prophecy Moses recorded was pointing directly to Jesus.
- Jesus places written Scripture on the exact same level of authority as His own spoken voice—and establishes that if someone refuses to believe the Old Testament record (including Genesis and Moses' authorship of the Torah), they have cut off the very foundation needed to recognise Christ.

The Verdict

- And so, the defense rests.
- If the ‘prosecution’ had intended to ask any questions of the accused, I’m sure they now quietly withdrew with a ‘no more questions your honour’.
- What else could they say?
- What argument did they have left?
- Answer: None.
- That is why from this point on they (the Jewish leaders) are reduced to mudslinging and name-calling as they seek to find a way to silence this Man.

Moses' Writings…

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth

.ץ rah Taw ם Ymvh ta ם yhla arB tyvarB

Genesis 1:1

- 7 words, 28 letters
- Aleph (1st letter) & Tau (last letter)
- Greek equivalent = Alpha & Omega

- *"In the beginning, God, the Alpha & Omega, created the heavens and the earth"*

Moses' Writings…



- T Tau – originally written as a cross
- O Vav – written as a nail
- R Resh – written as the head of a man
- H Heh – the breath or Spirit of God
- *Man, with the Spirit of God, nailed on the Cross!*

Moses' Writings…

'In the beginning' - a single Hebrew word

.ץrah Taw ם Ymvh ta ם yhla arB tyvarB

Genesis 1:1

B	= bet	= House
r	= resh	= head chief
a	= aleph	=Adoni/God/Yahweh
v	= shin	= to destroy
y	= Yod	= hand
t	= tav	= covenant or cross

Moses' Writings…

'In the beginning' - words withing a word…

TyvarB

Genesis 1:1

rB	=	Bar	= Son
Tyv	=	Shayith	= thorns
var	=	rash	= head
var	=	brosh	= tree
yv	=	shi	= gift

- *"The Son of God destroyed by His own hand on a cross with thorns on His head, hung upon a tree as a gift of the covenant!"*

Moses' Writings…

- Grammatically, 'Beresheth' simply means 'In the beginning' — but what a remarkable devotional picture we can draw tucked away in this very first word of the Bible!
- As Jesus said in John 5:46, "Moses... wrote of me"—and whether we look at the explicit prophecies of the Torah, the tabernacle shadows, or these fascinating gems tucked into Genesis 1:1, the fingerprints of Jesus Christ are unmistakably on every page.


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To be continued…

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