

The Gospel of John

The Testimony of the Father

John 5:30-40

INTRODUCTION:

Let's review what has happened thus far in John 5.

Jesus went to the pool of Bethesda located near the Sheep Gate in Jerusalem. There were a lot of people who were sick who would gather around that pool. Because of some superstition that the waters had healing properties when the waters were stirred up. A man had been there 38 years, Jesus heals the man, tells him to pick up his mat and go home. The Jews were insulted because they felt that Jesus had violated the Sabbath because, according their man-made rules, you are not supposed to do work on the Sabbath such as healing and carrying your bed.

So the Jewish leaders confront Jesus about His violation of the Sabbath. Instead of backing off of the issue, Jesus elevates it by basically saying, "I'll do anything I want on the Sabbath because I'm God." That was considered to be the ultimate blasphemy to the Jews.

He has declared Himself equal with God and their fury knows no bounds. He raises the confrontation over the Sabbath to His claim to deity in verse 17 through 29. Jesus stated that...

- **I am equal to God in essence or nature.** I have the same characteristics as God.
- **I'm equal to God in works.** I do the same things that God does, the same way that God does them.
- **I am equal to God in power.** I have the power to give life.
- **I'm equal to God in authority.** I will make the final judgment on everyone's destiny.
- **I'm equal to God in truth.** I am equal to God because everything I say and everything God says are equally true.
- And then that amazing statement in verse 23, **I deserve to be worshipped equally with God.** If you don't honor Me, you don't honor God."

So this is more than they can possibly swallow. Jesus is making his claims clear in their minds.

If someone came up to you and claimed to be God in front of you, what would you say?

It would probably be something like this. "You know what? That's really not enough because that is such an **extraordinary** claim! We need some **testimony** beyond Yourself!" And that's what comes in verses 30 and following.

First the testimony comes through John the Baptist, then it comes through the miracles of Jesus, then it comes through the Scripture. Okay? But it's all the Father's testimony.

This is one long discourse in which Jesus declares His deity. This is the whole point of this section, and frankly the whole point of the gospel of John.

John 20:31 (CSB)

³¹ ...these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

That's John's own statement of why he wrote the gospel under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

So here you have really a high point in this gospel where Jesus declares His deity starting in verse 17 all the way to the end of this chapter. He'll do it again and again and again and again through John's gospel, but never in quite the extensive way and the unique way it is done here. So this has been really a very, very important and instructive portion of Scripture for us.

We also know that all the way through the gospel of John, while our Lord is **declaring His deity** and **proving His deity**, and **demonstrating His deity**, and **doing miracles demonstrating His deity**, and **making I AM statements**, the **response is unbelief** all the way through until the final end when the unbelief reaches its climactic point and they **execute** Him as a deceiver and a pretender and an agent of Satan.

I think we are helped all the way along because there are continual references to their unbelief, and **not JUST to their unbelief**, but also to the **REASONS for their unbelief**. And they frankly are not isolated to the Jewish people or the Jewish leaders to whom Jesus is speaking to here, but they are a general diagnosis of the human race and the human condition. So we learn that Jesus is the Son of God. He is the only hope of salvation. We also learn how sinners respond to that truth even when it's demonstrated beyond doubt. They **respond with unbelief** and the reason is because they are **unwilling** to come to the truth.

That comes out in the section we're going to look at this morning. So let me start reading at verse 30, John chapter 5 verse 30.

All Stand and Read Scripture.

John 5:30-40 (NASB)

³⁰ "I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

³¹ "If I *alone* testify about Myself, My testimony is not true. ³² There is another who testifies of Me, and I know that **the testimony which He gives about Me is true.**

Witness of John

³³ You have sent to John, and he has testified to the truth. ³⁴ But the testimony which I receive is not from man, but I say these things so that you may be saved. ³⁵ He was the

lamp that was burning and was shining and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light.

Witness of Works

³⁶ 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.

Witness of the Father

³⁷ And the Father who sent Me, **He has testified of Me**. 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.

Witness of the Scripture

³⁹ You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me; ⁴⁰ and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life.

Prayer

Here Jesus calls another witness to give testimony to Him. Now who would be the best witness that He could call? No question, God the Father! He is the one they will **say** they worship. He is the one they will **say** they know, even though they don't. He is the one they declare to be their God.

So let's go to the highest possible standard of testimony, let's go to the one and only true God. And that's exactly what Jesus does. So from verse 30 through verse 40, Jesus calls on God the Father to back up His testimony. And it's really an amazing portion of Scripture.

I. JESUS' RELATIONSHIP WITH HIS FATHER.

He starts out by summarizing His relationship to the Father in verse 30. It is a summary of everything He said from 17 to 29.

John 5:30 (NASB)

³⁰ "I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

Again He reiterates the claim that infuriated them and caused them to accuse Him of blasphemy. He says, "I'm equal to God. I do not do anything on My own initiative. I don't act independently of God. I only do what God does the way God does, and when He does it, where He does it, to whom He does it. And in the case of judgment, My judgment is always just because it's not independent of God. My will is not different than His, I only do the will of Him who sent Me." And again He starts out by saying, "I am one with the one who sent Me, God." Contrary to His enemies accusation, that He blasphemed, they are the blasphemers. He always glorified God by acting in perfect unity with God and in perfect accord with God's will.

II. JESUS' TESTIMONY CONCERNING HIMSELF.

John 5:31 (NASB)

³¹ “If I *alone* testify about Myself, My testimony is not true.

Now some people say, “Well, there you go, Jesus didn’t even believe Himself.” That’s not what that’s saying at all. How do I know that?

John 8:12-14 (NASB)

Jesus Is the Light of the World

¹² Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, “I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life.”

¹³ So the Pharisees said to Him, “**You are testifying about Yourself; Your testimony is not true.**”

Jesus answered and said to them

¹⁴ Jesus answered and said to them, “Even if I testify about Myself, My testimony is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going; but you do not know where I come from or where I am going. ¹⁵ You judge according to the flesh;

Jesus says there, “**Even if I testify of Myself, My testimony is true.**”

Of course, He’s the Way, the Truth and the Life. It’s true.

Where did they get that idea that testifying about yourself is not enough?

Well that’s obvious. If somebody came in and said to you, “I am God, by the way, and I want you to know that, I am equal to God in every sense.” You’d say, “Wait a minute! I need more external, objective evidence, that’s not enough.” Jesus concedes to that, that in their eyes if He testifies alone about Himself, His testimony is not true. And what would they throw at Him? Deuteronomy, “That everything has to be confirmed in the mouth of two or three witnesses.”

So He calls on the testimony of another since Deuteronomy¹⁷ and ¹⁹ says you have to have two or three witnesses.

III. THE TESTIMONY OF THE FATHER.

Let us now turn to the testimony of the Father. What is the Father’s testimony?

You will notice that verse 32 says that God testifies concerning Jesus.

John 5:32 (NASB)

³² There is another who testifies of Me, and I know that the testimony which **He** gives about Me is true.

Who is He referring to? Well the translators rightly put a capital “H” on the word “**He**”. Jesus **is** referring to God. Since Jesus is one with the Father, He knows everything concerning the Father. They are one in divine nature. He knows exactly what the

testimony of the Father is and the truthfulness of it.

Now people get confused with the rest of this passage and they start cutting it up, the NASB adds four headings here in verses 33-39 that make it more confusing.

- Witness of John
- Witness of Works
- Witness of the Father
- Witness of the Scripture

Verses 37-38 in the NASB have a heading of **Witness of the Father**.

But I will contend that verses 33-39 are all testimonies from the father.

You say, Well wait a minute, isn't the Father's testimony at the Baptism where a voice out of heaven said "**This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased?**" Yes, it was an isolated incident where only John the Baptist, maybe a few of his followers, and Jesus were there to hear.

Well you say, doesn't the Father's make another testimony at the Transfiguration, where again He says "**This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; listen to Him?**" Yes, but the only people who were at the Transfiguration were Peter, James and John. No one else heard any of those things.

That's why verse 37 says, in the last half of the verse,

John 5:37b (NASB)

Witness of the Father

37 ...You have neither heard His voice at any time nor seen His form.

Just read it as one paragraph, from verse 33 to 39 is all the Father's testimony from three sources.

So He says, let Me call on the Father who would be the purest, truest of all and let Him give a three-fold testimony just to fulfill the requirement of the Old Testament." The Father will give a three-fold testimony.

First the testimony comes through John the Baptist, then it comes through the miracles of Jesus, then it comes through the Scripture. But it's all the Father's testimony.

Think of these sources as increasingly impactful. The testimony of John is great. The testimony of the miracles is greater, and that's what Jesus calls it, greater testimony in verse 36. But the testimony of Scripture is the greatest.

This is a vital portion of Scripture, and it is an inescapable and devastating judgment on the Jews because they had already affirmed that **John the Baptist was a prophet from God**, that **Jesus did miracles that only God could do**, and that **the Old Testament was written by God**. So they had already affirmed that God spoke through John the Baptist, God allowed Jesus to perform miracles, and God wrote the Old Testament through the writers and the prophets. They are now literally in a dilemma because they have **affirmed**

the divine source of John the Baptist, the miracles of Jesus, and the Old Testament, but **refused to believe** the message. They refused to believe what they confess to be sources of divine revelation and divine truth.

CONCLUSION:

I want you to own this chapter not just because it's challenging, but because it is so important. Here is revealed the most important and foundational truth that any human being will ever come to understand. And that is the truth that Jesus is God! If you don't believe that, you're going to eternal punishment. But you must believe more than that, you must believe not only in **who** He is but **what** He did and the gospel in its fullness. But it all starts with this. So I would say to you what Jesus said many times in the gospels, "**He who has ears to hear, let him hear.**" If the Spirit is talking to you, listen. Because how you react to what you hear will determine your eternal destiny. These things are written, John said, "**that you might believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God and that believing you might have life in His name.**" "**Whoever believes will not perish but have everlasting life.**" If you don't believe, you will die in your sins. And where I go, Jesus says, you will never be.

Now with all that you've heard, I want to close by reading 1 John 5. It is the same writer, John. The language is the same, the vocabulary is the same, the thoughts are the same, and the truths are the same. Let's start in verse 9, 1 John 5. Listen to it personally, would you? It's talking about you.

1 John 5:9-12 (NASB)

⁹ If we receive the testimony of men, (Do you ever receive the testimony of men on things? Sure. The Jews did when they had two or three witnesses. We do when we try to settle disputes.) the testimony of God is greater; (The testimony of God is the ultimate testimony.) for 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 in himself; (If we believe, we proclaim to everyone that Jesus was and is the Messiah.) the one who does not believe God has made Him a liar, (That would be blasphemy) 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.

Let me remind you that every person who has ever lived on this earth will experience eternal life. One life will be in eternal punishment. The other in the glorious presence of God, your Creator.

The final unforgiveable crime is to call God a liar and not believe what He said about His Son. You are a blasphemer who hates the Son and the Father. The final decision that you make concerning Jesus Christ is whether or not you will believe what the Father says about Him, revealed in Scripture. That decision determines your destiny!

The Family of God.