

The Gospel of John

The Three Sources of God's Testimony

John 5:33-39

INTRODUCTION:

Last Thursday night at youth group, Brooklyn asked the question...

Why does God make life so difficult for us?

Little did she, or I, know that it would be merged into this week's sermon. It is a very important question that all of us through faith must have a clear answer for. It is a question that embraces the very essence of the Gospel. It is the very reason Jesus came to this earth and the reason He is having a conversation with the Jewish leaders here in Chapter 5 of the Gospel of John. He is declaring Himself to be God and the prophesied Messiah in front of the Jewish leaders.

John says it this way...

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.

All Stand and Read Scripture.

John 5:33-40 (NASB)

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.

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.

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.

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.

I. THE TESTIMONY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.

John 5:33-40 (NASB)

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.

He starts the verse with the word "You". Wherever you see the word "Jews" in the gospel of John, He's talking to the Jewish leaders. Jesus is talking to them here because they had confronted Him about violating the Sabbath.

Jesus reminds them that they sent people to John and even you yourselves went to John. He testified the truth about Me. Those words were not from man, it was from God. John the Baptist was a prophet. Everybody knew He was a prophet. He was the lamp that was burning and shining. In other words his message was powerful and effective and you were willing to rejoice for a while in His light.

The range of John's popularity and John's acceptance as a prophet can be seen in the 20th chapter of Luke. Jesus was teaching and preaching the gospel in the Temple, and the chief priests and scribes and elders confronted Jesus.

Luke 20:2 (NASB)

² and they spoke, saying to Him, "Tell us by what authority You are doing these things, or who is the one who gave You this authority?"

In other words, You can't just walk in our Temple and start teaching, you're not official, you don't have any place here. Who gave you the authority?

Luke 20:3-7 (NASB)

³ Jesus answered and said to them, "I will also ask you a question, and you tell Me: ⁴ Was the baptism of John from heaven or from men?" ⁵ They reasoned among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say, 'Why did you not believe him?' ⁶ But if we say, 'From men,' all the people will stone us to death, for they are convinced that John was a prophet." ⁷ So they answered that they did not know where *it came* from.

They didn't want to say that because they were unwilling to believe. So they didn't give an answer. They, by their own lips, are declaring that that the whole nation believed that

John the Baptist was a prophet. If these men had said He wasn't a prophet, they were likely to be stoned to death by a mob. That's how strong the commitment was of the nation of Israel to the fact that John was a prophet, that His message was not from man.

What was his message?

John 1:29 (NASB)

²⁹ The next day he *saw Jesus coming to him and *said, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

That was His message. He was preaching that Jesus was the Messiah Who has come to take away the sin of the world. He was preaching repentance.

The leaders even affirmed John's message. "You were willing to rejoice for a while in his light."

Why didn't they believe?

Because they didn't want to believe.

They loved their religious sin. It wasn't that they loved immorality. Superficially they were very moral. They thought their morality saved them. After all, as they thought in their minds, "We are the **leaders** of God's chosen people."

They accepted the prophet but rejected his message. That's the nature of unwillingness. That's the sinner's heart.

II. THE TESTIMONY OF MIRACLES.

The Father's second testimony is all contained in one verse.

John 5:36 (NASB)

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.

We are moving up one notch, because now we're moving from simply words to signs and wonders, "**For the works which the Father has given Me to accomplish.**"

Jesus is telling them that the miracles that He is performing are God's testimony through Him that He came from God. John the Baptist was a great testimony, but the miracles that I do are even a greater testimony.

You remember Nicodemus in chapter 3? He was a ruler of the Jews who came to Jesus by night. Do you remember what he told Jesus?

John 3:1-2 (NASB)

³ Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews; ² this man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You have come from God *as a teacher*; for **no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him.**"

Nicodemus was a ruler of the Jesus. He **could not deny** that the miracles were real. Instead he believed that Jesus had to have favor from God in order to perform them.

The Jewish leaders were also convinced of the miracles.

John 11:47-48 (NASB)

⁴⁷ Therefore the chief priests and the Pharisees convened a council, and were saying, "What are we doing? For **this man is performing many signs.** ⁴⁸ If we let Him go on like this, all men will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation."

The Jewish leaders confirmed the miracles, but were unwilling to believe because Jesus did not meet their expectations of an earthly king to free them from the bondage of the Romans.

John 7:31 (NASB)

³¹ But many of the crowd believed in Him; and they were saying, "When the Christ comes, He will not perform more signs than those which this man has, will He?"

Many from the Jewish crowds were convinced. They were asking "What do you mean, He is not the Messiah? Someone will do more than this? Ridiculous.

I want you to hear the last words John wrote in the gospel of John.

John 21:24-25 (NASB)

²⁴ This is the disciple who is testifying to these things and wrote these things, and we know that his testimony is true.

²⁵ And there are also many other things which Jesus did, which if they *were written in detail, I suppose that even the world itself *would not contain the books that *would be written.

The world, John says, couldn't contain the books that could be written about the things that Jesus did. This is massive testimony through the miracles of Jesus. And still, verse 40 tells us, they are **unwilling** to believe.

So the testimony of the miracles was the Father's second means of giving testimony to the Son, to the deity of Jesus Christ.

III. THE TESTIMONY OF THE SCRIPTURES.

The third testimony of God as to the deity of Jesus comes from verses 37-40.

John 5:37-40 (NASB)

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.

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.

Now we're coming to the greatest testimony. The first level was great, John the Baptist. Then it was greater, the miracles. Now here's the greatest. "The Father who sent Me, He has testified of Me." This is still the Father's testimony.

“You have neither heard His voice at any time or seen His form.”

You have not had access to this testimony because WHY? Because, verse 38, “You do not have His”...what?...“His Word abiding in you.”

So this then is the Father’s testimony through the Word...which is not abiding in you. If it was, you wouldn’t be in the situation you’re in. It’s obvious you don’t have the Word abiding in You because, verse 38, “you don’t believe Him whom He sent. ³⁹ You search the Scriptures”, the Word, “because you think that in them you have eternal life. It is these that testify about Me.”

So if you started in verse 37, take the line, “He has testified of Me,” then go to verse 39, referring to Scripture, “It is these that testify about Me.” This means the Father is using the **Old Testament**, the only Bible Jesus ever had, the only Bible the disciples ever had, the only Bible anybody in Jesus day ever had. And the Father in the Old Testament gives testimony to Jesus Christ.

All that in the Old Testament? Yes, all that in the Old Testament.

Do you realize that the name Jesus is not found once in the Old Testament? But the Messiah, Who **is** Jesus, **is** found all through it. Both in prophecy and foreshadowing.

The Jewish leaders read the scripture diligently, but they did not understand the trinity (God the father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit) as all being unique but yet being one, being God.

So they claimed to know the scriptures, but they rejected the message.

CONCLUSION:

The Jews were in a terrible dilemma because **if** He was a prophet from God, they should have believed what He said. They confirmed that the miracles of Jesus were real and humanly impossible to do, but they unwilling to believe He was the Messiah. They claimed to believe in the scriptures, but they were unwilling to believe the truth contained within them.

So this brings us back to the start. Why **did** Jesus come to this earth? It was for this very reason, that man was lost in their sin and they needed a savior.

Luke 19:10 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

¹⁰ For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.”

You see, the Jews, as well as the world cannot know that we are lost in sin from our own human experience. The scriptures were written by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and Jesus came to this earth for that very purpose. That we could understand the predicament that we are in and be freed from our sin through Jesus.

So. Why does God make life so difficult for us?

When Adam and Eve were created by God they were made in the image of God. God is righteous. He has no sin. Adam and Eve had no sin. They did not even know what sin was. But Satan told them that if they ate of the Tree of Good and Evil, they would be like God and know the difference between Good and Evil. When they disobeyed God's

command to not eat of that tree, they caused themselves and all mankind to fall under the curse of sin.

What does that mean to us?

It means that through **faith**, we are to believe that we live in a fallen world ruled by Satan. Because of that we face innumerable difficulties in our life here on earth. This includes health, emotional problems, anger, murder, coveting, adultery, theft, drunkenness, addiction to drugs, immorality, and a host of other problems that we face. These are called the lusts of the flesh. Satan tries to convince us that these things will be satisfying and enjoyable. And for a very short time, they might be. But in the end these things just make us more miserable.

Do you see where the difficulties in this life is coming from? **God** is not causing the difficulties, **it is Satan and the curse of SIN!!**

All of this has separated us from God. His desire is that we return back to the way we were created, free of sin--**RIGHTEOUSNESS!**

So He gave us scripture and evidences for our faith that we could understand the plight that we are in and how we can be made righteous again. How we can become heirs of a heavenly kingdom where God dwells.

This righteousness frees us from our sin, **but it does not free us of the curse of sin that we have to continually live in until we die or Jesus comes again.** The scriptures say that even creation is affected by this sin nature.

Romans 10:17 (NASB)

***17** So faith *comes* from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.*

We learn of the saving grace of Jesus by reading and hearing the God's word, the Bible. This "hearing" is more than just a physical sound that reaches our ears. We must **believe** what it tells us and let it **penetrate within us**. The word must become a part of us.

God wants us to understand the difference between righteousness and those things that are unrighteous. These are things we cannot understand without God revealing them to us through the scriptures. It is impossible for us to completely avoid the unrighteous things of this world but, as a Christian, our desire is to follow Christ as well as we can. We no longer desire the things of this world because we understand the brevity and the consequences of that lifestyle.

John 10:27-28a (NASB)

***27** My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; **28** and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish*

You have the choice to live life your way or God's way.

When we hear and live by God's Word through faith, we are promised eternal life with God in his glory and we will **finally** be freed for all time from the curse of sin.

Working for God is hard, but His retirement plan is out of this world!

The Family of God.