



John 5
By Chuck Smith

Let's turn now to John's gospel chapter five.

In the second chapter of John's gospel, we find that Jesus was at Jerusalem for the feast of the passover. It was there that He met Nicodemus. He did remain in that area, ministering for a time down by the Jordan river, still in the area of Judaea. Until His fame began to spread and He decided to leave and go up to Galilee. And His trip from the area of Judaea to Galilee is recorded in the fourth chapter as He met the woman of Samaria and shared with her the water of life.

Now in chapter five, we find Him returning again to Jerusalem for a feast. Some have assumed that it was the feast of Pentecost but of course, we really have no way of knowing. The words,

After this (5:1),

just after a period of time, His ministry in the Galilee region where He had gone to that area to minister. And so,

at one of the other feasts (5:1),

and it really doesn't matter which one,

Jesus again went up to Jerusalem. There is at Jerusalem by the sheep market (5:1,2).

Here John is just sort of giving us a little background to the story. He's telling you, "There in Jerusalem by the sheep market."

a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches (5:2).

Bethesda is the house of mercy. So this pool was called the house of mercy, a pool with five porches and near the sheep gate. Which puts it somewhere on the northeast side of the city of Jerusalem.

In these [gates there] lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then was first after the troubling of the water to step in was made whole of whatever disease he had (5:3,4).

An interesting phenomena. All of the sick people around the pool waiting for the waters to be stirred and then there was a mad scramble once the water was stirred to get into the pool first. And whoever was the first in was healed. So you can imagine the commotion whenever the waters were stirred, how all of these people—the blind, the halt and all, were eager to get into the water.

I believe that there is tremendous power in faith. And I believe that God has given to every man a measure of faith because the scriptures declares that is so. And I do believe that what we believe is very important. I do believe that there is such a thing as what we might say triggering our faith.

We read in the book of Acts how that Peter when he would walk down the street, they would place people on the sidewalk or on the streets so that as Peter walked by, his shadow would fall on them, and people were healed as the result of Peter's shadow falling on them. How do you explain that? I believe it's explained by faith. I believe that if a person has faith and he believes that God is going to touch me, the moment Peter's shadow falls on me, I believe that our faith at that moment is triggered, it's activated. And thus, people were healed as the result of Peter's shadow falling on them.

You remember the woman who came through the crowd when Jesus was on His way with Jairus because of his daughter's being at the point of death. And how a woman came through the crowd and grasped the hem of His garment. Jesus turned and said, Who touched Me? And Peter said, Lord, you can't be serious. The way people are pushing and shoving us all around this place, what do you mean who touched Me? And Jesus said, I perceived that there's virtue that went out from Me. And the woman came and kneeled trembling. She confessed that she had had this hemorrhaging for twelve years. She felt that if she could just but touch the hem of His garment, she would be healed. So she had set a point of contact to release her faith. I think that she could have said many things. I think that she could have said, The moment He smiles at me. Or the moment I catch His eye. Or the moment He says a particular word. A place of activating faith.

Again, we read when Paul was in Ephesus, they took Paul's sweat bands and they laid them on the sick people and they were healed. Again I believe that it's just a thing of faith. Because you're believing God to do it when that sweat band is laid on me. It gives you that point of contact where you activate faith.

I think that so often though we believe it is sort of a passive kind of a belief—Yes, I believe God can do it. Oh yes, I believe God will do it and yes. Indefinite though. But I think it's quite another thing to believe that God's going to do it now. And I think that that is really the value where we are commanded in the church to lay hands on the sick and they shall recover. I think that again, it gives that point of contact where a person releases their faith when the elders lay hands on them and pray for them in the name of the Lord, I believe that that just gives them that triggering of the faith to receive and to believe the promise of God.

So that when these waters were stirred, I believe that people had that kind of faith and the first one in was just, I'm healed. And the release of the faith, they were healed. There was always a great number of people waiting for the stirring of the waters and then struggling to be the first in.

And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there, and He knew that he had been there for a long time in that condition, he said unto him, Would you like to be healed? The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steps down before me (5:5-7).

Interesting, the man didn't answer the question of Jesus at all. The question was, Would you like to be healed? And all the man did was tell Jesus the reason why he wasn't healed. He just sort of repeated his problem. The answer would be very simple, very plain. You bet I would or Yes! That would have been the answer to the question, Would you like to be healed? You bet! But instead he told why he was still in that condition.

I think that a lot of times when the Lord comes and addresses our place of impotence, Would you like to be set free? Well, Lord, you know, I have this problem and I just have tried and we're just telling Him all of the reasons why we can't be set free. All of the reasons why we are continuing in our place of impotency rather than responding, Yes, I'd like to be set free. And so the man gives to Jesus the reasons why he isn't and can't be healed. Got a problem, I don't have anybody to help me. Someone always beats me into the pool. Here he's been lying there for so long. Can you imagine? Waiting for the waters to be troubled. And the moment they're troubled, all of the excitement as he struggles and pushes and somebody plunges in, in front of him. Wait for another indefinite period of time for the waters to be troubled again. Just sad picture.

You probably know all the reasons why you're in the condition you're in. You could probably give the Lord a good explanation what's going on. This is what's happening. This is why I'm still in this same lame condition. Why I'm not healed. The question was, Would you like to be healed? The next thing, I notice, is that

Jesus just then commanded him to, Rise, take up your bed, and walk (5:8).

At this point, the man could have continued to sort of explain to Jesus what's going on. You don't understand. I really can't rise. I can't, I'm lame. I've been this way for thirty-eight years. I got involved with a gal many years ago and she had a venereal disease and this is the result of it, this lameness.

Remember the case of the man with the palsy? He was let down to Jesus. He had the same kind of a situation here. A malady that is directly related to a sin. And so he could have again challenged the command of Jesus and he could have again told of his impotency, why I can't do it. Because you have to recognize what Jesus commanded him to do was impossible for him to do. And he could have pleaded that impossibility.

But wisely, he chose to obey this impossible command of a stranger. He had no idea who Jesus was. Here's just a stranger, comes up and says, Would you like to be healed? Well, you know, I got a real problem. I try to get in the water every time but someone always beats me to it. Rise up and walk. A stranger commanding you to do what is impossible. But somehow, even not knowing who Jesus is, there was such power in that word of faith that the man rose, pick up his mat and started home. Amazing.

When you will to obey what is to you an impossible command by Jesus, the moment you will to obey it, you will discover in that moment He will give to you all that is necessary to obey it. Our problem is that we're prone to rehearse our weaknesses. We're prone to tell why we can't do it. And the Lord is saying to many of you, Be victorious. Overcome that evil in your life. But Lord, for thirty-eight years I've had this dumb habit. And you're just going on and rather than obeying the command or even willing to obey, you've just been locked in that condition and you think, No, I can't do it. It's impossible. And so you are pleading the impossibility of the command rather than willing in your mind, I'll do it.

Be strong, the Lord said. Oh but Lord, I'm so weak. Don't argue with Him, just be strong. Be victorious. Because all that you need to obey is given to you in the moment you will to obey the command of Jesus. He never gives you an impossible command but what if you are willing to obey that command, He will give to you all that is necessary to obey it.

So immediately the man was made whole, he took up his bed, and walked (5:9):

Now John gets into the problem.

but the same day was the sabbath day. The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the sabbath day: it is not lawful for you to carry your bed. He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up your bed, and walk (5:9-11).

The fellow commanded me. They probably knew the man. They no doubt, a fellow can't be around thirty-eight years in that kind of a crippled condition without your being aware of him. Perhaps you've thrown him a shekel or two at times. The fact that the man is walking, after being in that invalid condition for thirty-eight years, doesn't seem to excite them or stir them. What stirs them is this is the sabbath day and you're carrying a mat. They get all excited over that.

This was the beginning of the determination that Jesus has to go. This is the event that begins the process which will cause them to not be satisfied until He's hanging on the cross. His violation of their sabbath day.

So the man just said, The one who ordered me to be healed, He's the one that ordered me to take my bed and walk. Pretty strong commands.

Then they asked him, Who is it who said unto you, Take up your bed, and walk? And he that was healed didn't know who it was: for Jesus had conveyed himself away, because there were a multitude of people in that place. Afterwards Jesus found him in the temple, and He said unto him, Behold, you are made whole: [and then the command] sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee (5:12-14).

Peter tells about the person whose last estate is worse than the first who has experienced but then turns away. Here's a man who has experienced the power of God. He's been made whole. A malady that probably was the direct result of sin in his life. And Jesus is saying now, You go your way and don't sin any more lest something worse happens to you.

The man departed, and [great fellow] told the Jews that it was Jesus, who had made him whole. And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and they sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day (5:15,16).

That was the thing that irked them. It happened on the sabbath day.

But Jesus answered them, My Father works today, and I work (5:17).

My Father works on the sabbath. Aren't you glad? What if the Lord took every sabbath day off? We'd be in a bad shape, wouldn't we? And so, "He that keepeth Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps" (Psalm 121:4). And that's good. My Father works continually. He works on the sabbath day. And so I work.

Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but now He said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God (5:18).

The Jews understood Jesus much better than the Jehovah Witnesses or the Mormons today or many other groups who would make Jesus something less than equal with God. They understood what His claims were declaring. They caught on in a hurry and it upset them that He would declare that God was His Father, making Him equal with God. This isn't the universal fatherhood of God. They are recognizing something much more that Jesus is claiming here. Equality with God.

Then answered Jesus and said unto them (5:19)

And these Verily, Verilys; when you get into that, it's an emphasis of the truth. It's like saying, Now listen carefully and get this straight. It's sort of the attention-getter. What I'm going to tell you now is important and it's true and you'd better get it straight,

Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son of man can do nothing of himself [interesting statement], but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise (5:19).

He said, My Father works today, I work. Whatever I see My Father do, I do. I'm here to do the will of the Father. I'm here to do the work of the Father. Jesus made that affirmation. I've come not to do my own will but the will of Him who sent Me. And so His life and His ministry was directed by the Father. Whatever He saw the Father doing, that perhaps could be a great asset, He could see God working in a person's life and thus, He would respond to it and He would affirm the work that God was

doing in a person's life. Whatever I see the Father do, I do. I'm not doing it of myself. Which puts an interesting light on the whole subject.

We see how God does desire to work in the lives of those who are in need, whether it be in a physical need or whether it be a spiritual need. God is working and God desires to work. With this man it was in the area of the physical, his impotence for thirty-eight years. But it was also over into the moral. Now "go your way and sin no more."

For [Jesus said] the Father loveth the Son, and shows him all of the things that He himself is doing [or desires to do] (5:20):

Whatever He shows Me, that is what I'm doing. It's not My works, it's His work that I am doing. The things that He shows Me.

and he will show him greater works than these, that you may marvel (5:20).

This is just the beginning. He's going to show you even greater works than these.

For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and makes alive; even so the Son will make alive whom he will. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son (5:21,22):

So Jesus is saying, This is just the beginning. You're going to see greater works than these because the Father wants to do greater works. And the Father doesn't judge men for He has committed all of the judgment unto the Son. Powerful authority that the Father has given to the Son. Jesus said, The Father makes alive and so the Son will make alive. He did. The widow's son of Nain. Jairus' daughter. And then of course, John will record the raising again of Lazarus who had been dead for four days.

That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father (5:23).

Again, so important for the cult groups that have a way of denigrating the deity of Jesus Christ or challenging the deity of Jesus Christ or the equality of Jesus Christ with the Father. Jesus here acknowledges that the honoring of the Son is tantamount to the honoring of the Father. And the Father desires "that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father." Equal honor given to Jesus as is given to the Father.

He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him (5:23).

There are those who claim, We worship God and so forth. Listen, if you don't honor the Son, you don't honor the Father. Plain words of Jesus.

Verily, verily [here we have it again, get it straight], 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 (5:24).

Believing on the word, hearing the word and believing on Him who has sent Me.

Verily, verily [again], 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 (5:25).

Jesus, when He was brought by Jairus to the daughter, He said unto her, Little maiden, arise. She was dead. She heard His voice. She arose. When He came to the tomb of Lazarus who had been dead for four days, as He commanded that they roll back the stone, He then cried, Lazarus, come forth. And he who was dead heard the voice and came hobbling out. And Jesus said, Loose him. The graveclothes that were wrapped around him. Let him go free. So those that were dead heard His voice and they were made alive.

For as the Father hath life in himself; so has he given to the Son to have life in himself (5:26);

In a couple of chapters, Jesus is going to be declaring to them, "No man takes My life from Me, I give My life. I have the power to lay it down, and I have the power to take it up again" (John 10:18). Here again Jesus is declaring His power over death. The Father has given to Me to have life in myself. I can lay my life down, I can take my life up again. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming and now is, the dead will hear the voice and shall live. For the Father has life in Himself and He has given to the Son to have life in Himself."

And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man (5:27).

The Son of man is a Messianic title. You'll find it in Daniel and in Ezekiel, a title for the Messiah. And so God has given to Him the authority to work. And then He said,

Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, 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 (5:28,29).

As we were studying through the gospel of Luke in chapter sixteen, we had the account of the rich man who fared sumptuously everyday and the poor man named Lazarus who was brought daily and laid

by the rich man's house and survived on the scraps that were thrown to him from the rich man's table. Covered with sores. The dogs coming and licking his sores. Poor condition. But the rich man died and the poor man died. The poor man was taken by the angels into Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was in hell. And he lifted up his eyes being in torment and he saw Abraham afar off and Lazarus there being comforted in Abraham's bosom. He called and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me. Send Lazarus to me that he might take his finger and dip it in water and touch my tongue. I'm tormented in this heat. And Abraham responded that there's a gulf that is fixed between us. Those that are here can't come over there; neither can those that are there come over here. You in your lifetime had the good things, Lazarus the evil. Now you're tormented while he is comforted.

He said, If Lazarus can't come over here, would you please send him back to earth that he might warn my brothers so that they won't come to this horrible place. Abraham said, They have Moses, the prophets. If they don't believe them, neither will they believe if one should come back from the dead.

In that, Jesus was teaching that prior to His death, Hades, hell, Sheol in the Hebrew, was made up of two compartments, a gulf between them. There was the consciousness of the other side, at least, from the under side to the heavenly side or the comforting side. The rich man was aware of Lazarus. There's no indication that Lazarus was aware of the rich man. But the rich man was aware of Lazarus and he was talking to Abraham. There was the ability to know, to communicate. But you couldn't cross the gulf. The man had an awareness of what was going on back on the earth. Conscious. Though his body was in the grave, yet there was some kind of a spirit body that he possessed. He talked about touching my tongue with water. Talked about being tormented in the heat. He still had the consciousness of life and the things that were going on with his brothers. A concern for them.

The one side of torment, the other side was a place of comfort. Abraham believed God and it was accounted unto him for righteousness. He became the father of all of those who will believe. And so it is only appropriate that Abraham be in charge of that one side as people would die and go into the graves, either into one part or the other of Sheol. Those that went into the compartment where Abraham was were waiting for the fulfillment of the promise of God. God had said to Abraham, "Through thy seed all of the nations of the earth shall be blessed" (Genesis 22:18). Talking about the fact that the Messiah would be born of the seed of Abraham.

Abraham believed God. It was counted to him for righteousness. And thus, he was comforting those that were there, assuring them of the faithfulness of God in keeping His promises. You remember as Isaiah in sixty-one tells us of the ministry of Christ, he said, "To set at liberty those that were bound and to open the prison doors and set the captives free" (Isaiah 61:1). Here they were held captive in Sheol.

When Jesus died, His soul descended into Hades. And there He preached to those who were there captives, no doubt to those that were being comforted by Abraham. According to the book of Hebrews, the Old Testament sacrifices of animals could not put away sin. All they could do was cover sin and point to the cross where the Lamb of God would put away the sins of the world. "Behold, the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). The animal sacrifices could not take away the sin, they could cover. Offered in faith, they could cover. But they couldn't take away your sin. It took the blood of Jesus Christ to bring the cleansing and the taking away of our sins.

Those from Abraham's time to the time of Christ, according to Hebrews, "all died in faith, not having received the promise, but seeing it afar off, embraced it," claimed it, held to it, and these all died in faith not having received the promise. God having reserved some better thing for us that they apart from us couldn't come into the perfected state.

Peter tells us in the second chapter of Acts as he is preaching to the multitude who have gathered because of the phenomenon the day of Pentecost. And as Peter began to preach Christ unto them, he tells them that they with their "wicked hands have crucified and slain Him: but God raised Him from the dead: because it was not possible that He could be held by death" (Acts 2:23,24). For David by the Holy Spirit writing concerning Him said, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither will you allow the Holy One to see corruption" (Psalm 16:10). And Peter testified, "God did not leave His soul in hell, neither did He allow the Holy One to see corruption. But this same Jesus hath God raised" (Acts 2:27,32).

So Paul tells us in Ephesians 4 that "He who has ascended is the same one who first of all descended into the lower parts of the earth. And when He ascended, He led the captives from their captivity" (Ephesians 4:8,9). He opened the prison doors to those who were bound. He set at liberty those that had

been held captive by death. Matthew 27 tells us that after His resurrection, the graves of many of the saints were opened and they were seen walking in the streets of Jerusalem.

Peter tells us that He preached to those souls that were in prison. There is some crazy kind of heresy among some of these faith teachers that were teaching that Jesus went to hell and suffered and all and there's where the atonement was really made. No, no. The cross was sufficient. When Jesus said, "It is finished," He was talking about the finished work of redemption. And He did not suffer in hell but He preached in hell. It was a glorious revival, I'm sure. Here I am, I did it. I paid the price. Your sins have been atoned. I'm going to lead you out of this place. And when He ascended, He led captives from their captivity and then He gave gifts unto men.

So Jesus is here declaring, "the hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves will hear his voice." If the rich man could talk to Abraham, surely when Jesus preached to those that were there being comforted, those that were with him could hear the glorious triumph of Jesus as He declared to them His victory over death, over sin. "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." But there is an interim of time between the two resurrections as is clearly indicated in the book of Revelation. The first resurrection and then the second resurrection which will be a thousand years later.

I believe that the first resurrection began with Jesus. He is the firstfruit of those who rise from the dead. And I believe that the first resurrection is continuing and shall continue until the full number is complete and then the Lord will return in glory and establish His kingdom and a thousand years later, there will be the resurrection of the unjust dead.

Daniel chapter twelve prophesies concerning the two resurrections or the two destinies of those who rise from the dead. And he tells us, verse two of chapter twelve, "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever" (Daniel 12:2,3). Those who rise in the second resurrection will rise to stand before the great white throne judgment of God. Even as the full complement of those that are saved will rise in that first resurrection. At the second resurrection, the full complement of those that have rejected and are to be damned will rise to stand before the great white throne judgment of God. The books will be opened. They'll be judged out of the things that are written in the books. Whosoever's name is not found written in the book of life will be cast into Gehenna. Not Hades, Gehenna. This is the second death.

When the Jews were asking Jesus for a sign, He said, "A wicked and an adulterous generation seeks after a sign; no sign will be given it, except the sign of the prophet Jonah: As Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Matthew 12:39,40). He descended into Hades, Sheol, but when He ascended, when He rose, He led the captives from their captivity. The first and the beginning. The first fruits of the resurrection.

I do believe that now, "To be absent from this body is to be present with the Lord." Paul the apostle said, "We who are in these bodies do often groan earnestly desiring to be freed from the limitations of the body: not that I would be unclothed, or an unembodied spirit. But I desire to be clothed upon with the body which is from heaven. For we know that as long as we are in these bodies, we are absent from the Lord. But we would choose rather to be absent from this body that we might be present with the Lord" (2 Corinthians 5:1-8). So he's not wishing for some unembodied state but desiring to just be present with the Lord.

Paul declared that he had mixed emotions. I got two options here and I don't know. I'm pulled in both directions. For he said, "I have a desire to depart, and be with Christ; which is far better: And yet I know that I'm still needed around here for a while" (Philippians 1:23,24). I understand what Paul was talking about. I have a desire to depart and be with Christ but yet I feel like I'm still needed a bit. And so the Lord keeps me around for a while because He's not quite finished with me yet. But his desire was to depart and to be with Christ. So he spoke about it, an experience he had. He didn't know if he was dead or alive. In 2 Corinthians 12, he said, "There was a man in Christ about fourteen years ago, (whether dead or alive: I don't know) but I know he was caught up to third heaven. And heard such glorious things, it would be a crime to try and describe them in human language" 2 Corinthians 12:2-4).

So the first resurrection is an ongoing process. And it will be concluded when the last martyr is put

to death for his witness for Jesus Christ in the great tribulation period. And that will end the first resurrection. That will culminate. But the second resurrection takes place a thousand years after the Lord is returned to establish the kingdom of God upon the earth. "They shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." Not much of a resurrection, just to stand before the great white throne judgment and then to receive the final sentence of Gehenna.

Jesus again said,

I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I don't seek my own will, but the will of the Father which has sent me (5:30).

So He ties himself together with the Father. His works is what He sees the Father doing. His judgment is what He sees the Father. They are so integrated and so intricately tied together that they work as one. Now Jesus said,

If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true (5:31).

That is, that would be their claim. Under the law of Moses, under the mouth of two or three witnesses every word should be established. And they would not really recognize a person witnessing for himself unless there were others who would collaborate his witness. So if Jesus, and here He is witnessing of His relationship with the Father, but they're not accepting it. But He said,

There is another that bears witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesses of me is true (5:32).

John the Baptist, and what did John witness? This is the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world. He must increase, I must decrease. We got that back in chapter three. So there's another that bears witness of Me.

You sent unto John, and he bore witness of the truth (5:33).

John said, I'm not the Messiah. I'm not the other prophet. But I am the voice in the wilderness crying, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight his paths. And so John bore a true witness concerning Jesus. This is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

But [Jesus said] I don't receive the testimony from man: but the things that I say, that you might be saved. He was a burning and a shining light: and you were willing for a season to rejoice in his light. But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father has given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father has sent me (5:34-36).

So here is this lame man, thirty-eight years in this condition. Now walking around Jerusalem. There's a witness that the Father has sent Me. That I'm of God. The works that I do bear witness. Back in chapter three, you remember that Nicodemus came to Jesus and he said, "We know that You are a teacher who is come from God because no man can do the works that You're doing except God is with Him" (John 3:2).

Moving on to the fourteenth chapter of John, Jesus when Philip said unto Him, "Lord, just show us the Father, and it will suffice us. Jesus said, Have I been so long a time with you, haven't you seen Me, Philip? he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father; how is it that you say, Show us the Father? Believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me: or else believe for the very works' sake" (John 14:8-11).

When Peter preached on the day of Pentecost, in introducing the subject of Jesus, he said, "Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was proved to be of God by the signs and the miracles that He wrought in the midst of you" (Acts 2:22). So Jesus here is calling upon the witness of His works. "No man can do the works thou doest except God is with Him. So the works that I do, they bear witness of Me that the Father hath sent Me."

And the Father himself, which hath sent me, has borne witness of me. But you have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape (5:37).

You think you've heard from God, you haven't. You haven't heard His voice. You remember when Jesus was baptized, as He came up out of the water when the Spirit of God descended in a form of a dove and lighted upon Him, and the voice of the Father spoke from heaven saying, "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." The Father bore witness. He is so proud of His Son, seeing the obedience and all in baptism, He just couldn't hold it. He just had to say, This is, That's My Boy! In whom I am well pleased.

So we have here the witness of John, the witness of the works, the witness of the Father, and concerning that, Jesus said,

And you have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, you do not believe (5:38).

Therefore, you cannot have God's word abiding in you. If you did, you would believe on the One that God sent.

And finally, the final witness that he calls are the scriptures themselves.

Search the scriptures (5:39);

More literally, and you search the scriptures. They were in the scriptures. They studied the scriptures. They were diligent in their study of the scriptures. You do "search the scriptures,"

for in them you think you have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And you will not come to me, that you might have life (5:39,40).

Jesus is saying that the scriptures are testifying of Him. And He opened the understanding of the disciples to the scriptures as He showed them from Moses through the prophets and in the psalms all of the things that were spoken concerning Him. And as we pointed out this morning, there were over three hundred conditions for the Messiah. Prophecies of the Messiah, conditions that the Messiah must fulfill in order to be a claimant as the Messiah. And all three hundred Jesus fulfilled. No man could do that by accident. We look at the impossibility of one man fulfilling just sixteen by chance. But when you get over three hundred, you've only compounded the chance factor by so many that it just, our brains can't conceive of it. We can't even conceive of sixteen, much less three hundred.

Because we made 20,000 universes out of silver dollars, and all of the stars in the two trillion galaxies and the one silver dollar being marked and a person by chance just grabbing it, you can't even conceive that. I can't even conceive the universe. I can't even conceive the Milky Way galaxy, a hundred billion stars? Give me a break. I can't conceive that. They tell me that's so and I accept that. I sure can't grasp it.

You will not come to Me that you might have life. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life: and no man comes to the Father but by Me" (John 14:6). But if you don't come to Him you can't have life.

I receive not honour from men. But I know you, that you have not the love of God in you (5:41,42).

That's a strong indictment. I know what's in your heart. You don't have the love of God in you.

I am come in my Father's name, and you receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him you will receive (5:43).

It is interesting that today when you talk to the Jewish rabbis, one of their main objections concerning Jesus is right here in John chapter five, His claim to be the Son of God. And they will tell you that we do not believe that the Messiah will be the Son of God. He will be a man. Because of Moses' prediction, "And there shall arise a prophet like unto myself, and to him you shall give heed" (Deuteronomy 18:15). Moses was a man, the prophet, the Messiah will be a man. And they base it all on that passage of Moses.

They do not look at the passages in Psalm 2, "Thou art my beloved Son; this day I have begotten Thee" (Psalm 2:7). Or "unto the son He saith" (Hebrews 1:8). Or "Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government will be upon His shoulder" (Isaiah 9:6). But they deny Jesus as the Messiah and their reason is His claimant as being the Son of God.

Jesus said this here. "I've come in My Father's name and you receive Me not. If another comes in his own name, him you will receive." When the antichrist comes, he will deceive the nation of Israel and they will acclaim him as the Messiah. It is very interesting today that there is high expectation in Israel among many of the Orthodox Jews that the Messiah is coming very soon. They have a lot of Messianic hopes right now. If you ask them if the Messiah is a man, how will you then recognize him? They will tell you, He is going to lead us in the rebuilding of our temple. That is very interesting in the light of Daniel chapter nine which talks about the prince of the people that shall come and make a covenant with the nation of Israel. But in the midst of that seven-year period, he'll break the covenant and set up the abomination that causes desolation. The covenant no doubt including the rebuilding of their temple. He will be acclaimed as their Messiah.

Jesus said,

How can you believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only (5:44)?

God help us. I have seen so much of people seeking honor, one from another. These banquets where they give these introductions. You think that God Himself is going to be speaking to you for the next

hour. They honor these men or honor others. And Jesus said, You are those that are receiving the honor from each other. You don't seek the honor that comes only from God.

Paul said "if I seek to please all men, I'm not the servant of Jesus Christ" (). It is so much more important that we receive honor from God than honor from man. So Jesus said, How can you believe when you're looking just for plaudits for honor to come from men? You're not concerned about the honor that comes only from God. He said,

Do not think that I am going to accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuses you, even Moses, the one you are trusting in (5:45).

I don't have to accuse you. You've already violated the law. Going back to the third chapter again, when Jesus was talking to Nicodemus, He said, "God didn't send Me into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Me might be saved. He who believes is not condemned: but he who doesn't believe is condemned already" (John 3:17,18). The law has condemned him. Moses has condemned him. He has violated the law of God. The law of God was intended to show man his sin and his guilt. It isn't a standard by which we were intended to live. You can't live by it.

It was intended to show you how far you are living below the standard so that you'll be forced to come to Jesus Christ. "The law was our schoolmaster to drive us to Jesus Christ" (Galatians 3:24), to make us realize our spiritual bankruptcy. "He that believeth," Jesus said, "is not condemned: but he that believeth not is already condemned, seeing he has not believed on the only begotten of the Father. And this is the condemnation, light has come to the world, but men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (John 3:18,19). They would not come to the light lest their evil deeds be exposed.

So Jesus is saying, Don't think I'm going to accuse you to the Father. He's not up there in heaven saying, Dead, not that one. But He is up there interceding for those who believe in Him. Father, just put that one on My account. They're mine. They're believing in Me and trusting Me so Father, just erase it, put it on my account. I took care of that one in My death. I bore their sins.

As Paul said in quoting David, when the prophet said to David, Your sins are forgiven. After David had condemned himself to death, That man shall surely be put to death. Nathan said, You're the man. But you're not going to die. David said, I sinned. Nathan said, God's forgiven your sins (2 Samuel 12:1-13). O how happy is the man whose sins are forgiven, O how happy is the man to whom God does not impute iniquity. O how happy we are!

God doesn't impute iniquity against our account. He imputes on our account the righteousness of Jesus Christ by our faith and trust in Jesus and our surrendering our lives to His Lordship. I am in Christ and in Christ, there is no condemnation. For Paul the apostle, writing in Romans chapter eight, "There is therefore now no condemnation to those that are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1). That's why I go around smiling all the time. O how happy is the man to whom God doesn't impute iniquity. What a glorious position we have in Christ. I wouldn't want to be any place else but in Christ Jesus.

"Don't think I'm going to accuse you to the Father. There's one that accuses you, even Moses, the one in whom you are trusting."

Because if you had believed Moses, you would have believed me (5:46):

You really don't believe Moses. If you did, you would believe Me,

Because Moses wrote of me (5:46).

So it's interesting that whenever Jesus was going back, He quoted more from Deuteronomy than any other Old Testament book. Moses wrote of Him.

But if you don't believe his writing, how are you going to believe My words, [Jesus said] (5:47)?.

So quite an indictment against them. And this is the first real confrontation. There are going to be more. They're going to get heavier. They're going to get more directed.

And so John deals with a lot of these confrontations between Jesus and the Jews and how heavy the confrontation grows until finally, they see Him hanging on the cross declaring we won't have this man to rule over us.

Father, we thank You for the life that Jesus gives. The life we have in Christ this night. We thank You Lord that there is therefore no condemnation for those that are in Christ Jesus. And we thank You Lord for that place of security, that place of assurance, that place of hope. That place of comfort in Christ Jesus. O Lord, it's so glorious to know that our guilt has been taken away. That we stand before You in the righteousness of Christ. That You've imputed that righteousness to our account because of the commitment of our life to believe in Him, to trust Him. Lord, bless we pray as we go out into this

world that is controlled by the powers of darkness. May our lives radiate with the love of Jesus Christ that men might be drawn to the light and be saved. In His name we pray, Amen.