John 5

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The Gospel Of John Chapter 5

Introduction:

1. There is much doctrine in this chapter beyond chapters so far except for the preamble and 3.
2. Consider the record of Jesus' personal care … Nicodemus in 3; the woman in 4; a man here.
3. John in this chapter recorded how Jesus was attacked, and He defended Himself by doctrine.
4. John recorded Jesus as the other gospels do not – His exaltation with the Father in authority.
5. This chapter contains His masterful response to unfounded charges and His claim to Deity.
6. It may be the most potent refutation of His enemies and exaltation of Himself as God's Son.
7. For the great mystery of godliness.
8. For the true sonship of Christ.
9. For regeneration and conversion.
10. For the grammar of salvation.
11. The truth about being born again.
12. Eternal life is unconditional.
13. Salvation in five phases.

Outline:

1-9 Jesus healed one impotent man on the Sabbath

10-16 Controversy with Jews for healing on the Sabbath

17-23 Jesus identifies as God and God's executive

24-30 Salvation and judgment are His assignments

31-38 Jesus was witnessed by John, works, scripture

39-47 Reasons why the Jews did not believe on Jesus

1 After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

After this there was a feast of the Jews.

A. There were three annual feasts that the Jews usually attended (Ex 23:14-17).

B. We might assume this the Passover, to get four into His ministry of 3.5 years.
   1. We know His ministry was 3.5 years by prophecy of Daniel (Dan 9:24-27).
   2. His parents had taken Him to earlier Passovers as a child (Luke 2:41-43).

3. But after His baptism and entering the ministry was a Passover (John 2:13).
4. And the third Passover is found in John 6:4 and the fourth one in John 13:1.
5. They fill out the number of four by this feast and harvest timing (John 4:35).

And Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

A. He had returned to Galilee after His baptism and after Passover (Jn 1:43; 4:3).
B. He had traveled to Judea for baptism, and this was His second trip to Jerusalem.
C. Like David His father, Jesus loved the house and the worship of God (Ps 27:4).
D. Let us make sure that we honor assemblies of God's house as told (Heb 10:25).
E. Jesus went up to Jerusalem to preach and perform a miracle, but for one man!

2 Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches.

Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool.

A. There would have been many sheep in Jerusalem for various needs (John 2:14).
B. Nehemiah makes mention of a sheep gate in Jerusalem (Nehemiah 3:1; 12:39).
C. There were pools in Jerusalem (Is 22:9,11); John mentioned two (Jn 5:2; 9:7).

Which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda.

A. **Bethesda**. House of Mercy (Arabic) and House of Kindness (Hebrew).
B. We have a large military hospital in Bethesda, MD – Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, referred to colloquially as Bethesda Naval Hospital.
C. House of mercy or kindness makes sense for a pool that had healing properties.

Having five porches.

A. **Porch**. An exterior structure forming a covered approach to the entrance of a building. A colonnade, portico, cloister, stoa.
B. The pool must have been large for five porches and the great multitude next.
C. Descriptions have been made of a large pool approximating a football field.

3 In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water.

In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered.

A. The porches covered and protected a large number of very ill persons of Israel.
B. **Impotent**. Powerless to move the whole body or limbs (Acts 3:2; 4:9; 14:8).
C. **Halt**. Similar to lame or limping; the feet do not function normally (Mark 9:45).
D. **Withered**. Bodily members dried up and no longer functioning (Matt 12:10).
E. Why there would be such a large crowd of very ill persons should be explained.

Waiting for the moving of the water.

A. These words introduce the work of an angel to trouble the waters for healing.
    1. The full explanation for the angel's healing work is by the Spirit in verse 4.
    2. There are two references around verse four's explanation – 3b here and 7b.
    3. If verse 4 is not true, then there should not be any reference to it in 3 or 7.

B. These words and verse 4 are missing from most modern versions of the Bible.
    1. If the words are in brackets, it indicates fearful publishers denying scripture.
    2. 5:3b and 5:4 are missing in these: ASV, NIV, Bible in Basic English, Common English Bible, Complete Jewish Bible, HCSB, ESV, GNT, God's Word Translation, The Message, NASB, NCV, NLT, RSV, NRSV, NWT.
    3. The history of these words being included or excluded is damning to them.

C. If 5:3b and 5:4 are not scripture and inserted, what is the troubled water in 5:7?

D. If 5:3b and 5:4 are not part of text, why a crowd of blind and lame for water?

E. If 5:3b and 5:4 are not scripture and inserted, why not get in after the others?

F. We choose by faith to trust the words of God against the doubts or lies of Satan.
    1. His first attack on our first parents was to question and slander God's word.
    2. We have seen his Bible work removing words before (II Sa 21:19; Ac 8:37).
    3. We have seen his Bible work adding whole Apocryphal books to the Bible.
    4. We have seen his Bible work corrupting places like Mark 1:2 and I Pet 3:21.
    5. There is sufficient manuscript and other evidence for the verses, but we choose to place our confidence in the KJV by God's own revealed methods.
    6. For our faith in the King James.

4 For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.

For an angel.

A. John recorded for us the explanation for the great multitude of sick at a pool.
    1. Why would a large number of very sick persons want in any ordinary pool?
    2. Facts of only one healed and of any disease deny natural medicinal value.
    3. There had to be a supernatural reason for blind and lame persons at a pool.

B. We are not confounded, surprised, or ashamed of angels doing powerful things.
    1. The Bible has many examples of angels doing supernatural feats of all kinds.
    2. They had announced Jesus' birth to both parents and to shepherds in a field.
    3. Jesus had testified to Nathanael that angels would be serving Him (Jn 1:51).

C. Why might a scribe remove the verse? He did not believe such a fanciful event.

1. The supernatural is hard to accept for natural men, especially of one source.
2. Luke 22:43 is double bracketed in W&H, Nestle, and Bible Society versions.

D. Why might a scribe remove the verse? He rejected healing only one fit person.
1. Isn't it touching to read the ideas of men of what is fair and right from God?
2. But did they not read that out of the great multitude Jesus only healed one!
3. They forget why their devilish fellows hated Jesus' doctrine (Luke 4:25-27)!
4. These fools are not bright enough to see that in Nazareth He healed none!

E. For many more arguments and evidence for the KJV text, see these sources:
1. Brand Plucked (Will Kinney).
2. Great Bible Hoax of 1881l.
3. *Against John 5:4.*
4. *Against John 5:4* .

F. The angels of God in general.

G. Angels and Jesus.

Went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water.

A. This troubling of the water for healing is mentioned also in both 5:3b and 5:7.

B. We are not confounded, surprised, or ashamed of healing by physical objects.
1. Moses had healed deadly serpent bites by a brass serpent (Numbers 21:8-9).
2. Elisha healed Naaman in the dirty water of the Jordan River (II Kgs 5:9-14).
3. Jesus will heal shortly in this very gospel by clay made from spittle (Jn 9:6).
4. Peter healed by his shadow and Paul by handkerchiefs (Acts 5:15; 19:12).

Whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in.

A. The water did not ordinarily or at other times have any healing properties in it.

B. The healing only applied to certain seasons and then only the first in the water.

C. This explains the great multitude in the porches … waiting for this activation.
1. If the water had natural healing properties, they could have visited any time.
2. If the water retained healing virtue after the first, all might have been healed.
3. Since the water could heal any disease, the crowd had no limiting factor.

Was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.

A. This statement rules out any natural or ordinary healing by mineral springs, etc.

B. The examples in context of impotent, blind, and lame require miracle healing.

5 And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years.

And a certain man was there.

A. Will you let three examples (though we have already seen more) to move you?
   1. John chapter 3 records Jesus teaching Nicodemus precious truth not known.
   2. John chapter 4 records Jesus visiting Samaria to convert one sinful woman.
   3. Here in John 5, Jesus ignored a great crowd to heal just one impossible case.

B. You are a certain man, woman, or child today; you should trust a personal God.
   1. You should not allow your sinful flesh or the devil's darts doubt God's care.
   2. It is true that you do get lost in the crowd … but only considering other men.
   3. God has chosen to deal individually with each man, and this is one example.
   4. David understood and claimed that out of Israel God liked him (I Chr 28:4).
   5. The Hall of Faith lists individuals and specific personal deeds done by them.

C. Every individual person, man or woman or child, is uniquely known by God.
   1. This is one of the most hope-filled facts of our existence to excite our souls.
   2. You are not alone; believers know they will never be forsaken (Heb 13:5-6).

D. Remember the last section of John chapter 2, where Jesus avoided some men.
   1. Many believed on Him for His miracles, but He avoided them (Jn 2:23-25).
   2. Nicodemus also believed by miracles, but was received privately by Jesus.
   3. Not only did Jesus receive him, but Jesus also committed deep truth to him.
   4. The woman of Samaria appears next; Jesus talks to her at length (Jn 4:1-26).
   5. Consider the Gadarene (Mark 5:19-20), the Canaanite woman (Matt 15:21-28), the thief (Luke 23:39-43), a blind man (John 9:1-38), Lazarus and sisters (Jn 11:1-5), the eunuch (Acts 8:26-40), Saul (Acts 9:1-6), Cornelius (Acts 10:1-6), Lydia (Acts 16:13-15), the jailor (Acts 16:25-34), etc.

E. Whatever conviction or opportunity you have toward Christ, run with it, now!
   1. You can come to Jesus Christ today in humble submission as Saul of Tarsus.
   2. Do not turn away from Him that is present today and speaking by His word.

F. There are other foolish men like Agrippa (Acts 26:28) and Felix (Acts 24:25).

G. Do you reflect the character, nature, and love of God by caring for individuals?

Which had an infirmity thirty and eight years.

A. **Infirmity**. Physical weakness or lack of body power by some defect or disease.

B. He is called an impotent man twice, so he was powerless in some sense (5:3,7).

C. This is no week or month long infirmity, but a debilitating condition 38 years.

D. No matter how severe or impossible you think your case, God thinks otherwise.

E. Nothing is too hard for the Lord, and this is an axiom to remember (Gen 18:14).

6 When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole?

When Jesus saw him lie.

A. Do not be so faithless as to think God does not see you in your bed. He does!
B. If you live a righteous life, God will care for you on your bed (Psalm 41:1-13).

And knew that he had been now a long time in that case.

A. Jesus is the Word of God – all things are naked and open to Him (Heb 4:12-14).
B. David took great comfort in God knowing every detail about him (Ps 139:1-18).
C. You do not inform God in prayer – you only show dependency (Matt 6:8,32).

He saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole.

A. Did Jesus know the answer to this question? Of course! But He asked anyway.
B. James warned us that we have not because we ask not, so let us ask (Jas 4:2).

7 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 steppeth down before me.

The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man.

A. You do not need a man, or a woman, or a group of such. You need Jesus Christ.
B. All other men will fail you, but one Man will never fail you in time or eternity.

When the water is troubled, to put me into the pool.

A. What troubling of the water? Without 5:3b and 5:4, what is troubled water?
B. This is the same as modern versions assigning Malachi to Isaiah in Mark 1:2.
C. This is the same as these versions assigning Goliath to Elhanan in II Sam 21:19.
D. God promised and fulfilled His word to confound men (I Cor 1:19-20; 3:18-20).

But while I am coming, another steppeth down before me.

A. Since the healing depended on fitness and quickness, a paralytic had no chance.
B. Are you less than the best? Others more gifted or popular? What is that to Him!

8 Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.

Jesus saith unto him.

A. All you or anyone needs is for Jesus Christ to speak the word (Matthew 8:5-13).
B. His authoritative voice in preaching and healing was astounding (Lu 4:31-37).
C. More of His voice.

Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.

A. We will not hear His audible voice until the resurrection, but He has spoken.
B. What will you do, facing mere difficulty in light of His word? Rise, take, walk!
    1. He has commanded you to forgive and love enemies, so do it (Matt 5:43-48).
    2. He has commanded you to have a great marriage, so do it (Eph 5:22-33).

3. Whatever He has told you to do, without doubts you should obey Him now.

9 And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath.

And immediately the man was made whole.

A. When the Lord Jesus Christ healed, it was instantaneous and entirely complete.
B. If any healing took stages, it was by design for a further display (Mark 8:24).

And took up his bed, and walked.

A. What of physical and occupational therapists? They were entirely unnecessary!
B. Remember the lame man from his mother's womb after Pentecost (Acts 3:1-11;

And on the same day was the sabbath.

A. This transitional clause introduces a Sabbath controversy with the rabid Jews.
B. This was no surprise to our Lord; He knew perfectly what He would do on it.
C. The Jews adored this weekly day … at times … God gave to them as a nation.
D. For the Jewish obsession about the Sabbath, see the next section (John 5:10-16).
E. Short refutation of Sabbatarianism heresy.
F. Medium refutation of Sabbath.
G. Long refutation of it.

10 The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed.

The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured.

A. A Pharisee – a stickler for written law – can spot such violations a mile away.
B. They measure their religion by black and white rules based on their application.
C. They have no ability, conscience, or reason to ever look beyond the appearance.

It is the sabbath day.

A. Isn't it wonderful to have such deep observations about the facts of a situation!
B. Where did the Sabbath come from? God gave it as a special sign to Israel only.
    1. This is a simple fact (Ex 31:12-18; Deut 5:15; Neh 9:13-14; Ezek 20:12,20).
    2. Only Israel kept the Sabbath, from Sinai to Jesus' resurrection (1500 years).
    3. Moses wrote Genesis 2:1-3. No patriarchs read or obeyed it for 2500 years.
C. Was the Sabbath important to God? It was very important punishable by death.
    1. It was included in the Ten Commandments, though not truly a moral issue.
    2. A man presumptuously picked up sticks and was stoned (Num 15:30-41).
    3. God made them captive 70 years for violating it (Le 26:34-35; II Ch 31:21).

D. What was the Sabbath specifically for? It was for rest in mercy to His church.
   1. It was God's mercy to Israel for bondage in Egypt (Ex 23:12; Deut 5:12-15).
   2. Man was made for God (Prov 16:4), but the Sabbath for man (Mark 2:27).
   3. Jesus was the Lord of the Sabbath and could apply it correctly (Matt 12:8).

E. When was the Sabbath changed? Jesus by His apostles ended the Sabbath Days.
   1. This is a simple fact (Col 2:16-17; Gal 4:9-11; I Cor 16:1-2; Acts 20:6-7).
   2. We learned of new worship – the time of reformation (Jn 4:20-24; He 9:10).
   3. The apostles picked the first day, so Christians have ignored it 2000 years.
   4. The Council at Jerusalem gave no order for the Gentiles to keep the Sabbath.

F. Is there a Christian Sabbath today? No, it is a Jewish relic that is entirely gone.
   1. The rest for the people of God is the finished work of Christ (Heb 4:1-11).
   2. The first day of the week is never called the Sabbath, but the Lord's Day.
   3. There are no rules given for or against any activities – so a matter of liberty.

G. But what about Jesus and Paul? Did they not both keep the Sabbath faithfully?
   1. Jesus was born a Jew under the Law of Moses so kept the Sabbath (Gal 4:4).
   2. Paul ordered Sunday worship but evangelized on the Sabbath (Acts 17:1-3).
   3. For differences of the two … Jesus or Paul?

H. But what about its perpetual use? Did not God say to keep it forever and ever?
   1. The Sabbath command was "for ever," so it must still be in force (Ex 31:17).
   2. The same or stronger words are used of circumcision (Ge 17:10-14; Ga 2:3).
   3. The Sabbath was strictly Jewish; it lasted only as long as the OT (Heb 9:10).

I. Short refutation of Sabbatarianism heresy.

J. Medium refutation of Sabbath.

K. Long refutation of it.

It is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed.

A. They misapplied the law by recognizing only the letter and not the spirit of it.
   1. Jesus defended His apostles by the mercy principle and David (Matt 12:1-8).
   2. Jesus defended His apostles by the intent principle and David (Mk 2:23-28).
   3. Jesus condemned them for breaking it for livestock (Luke 13:14-17; 14:5).

B. Jesus taught righteous judgment for the paralytic in a few chapters (Jn 7:19-25).
   1. After chapter 5, Jesus was in Galilee to avoid murderous Jews (Jn 6:1; 7:1).
   2. Jesus then went up to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles (John 7:2,10).
   3. While there it was understood the Jews wanted to kill Him (John 7:19,25).
   4. He warned against ethics or principles that only see appearances (John 7:24).

C. There are some righteous over much, and they can be worse than good liberals.

1. Solomon warned about men like Pharisees being too strict (Eccl 7:16-17).
2. The greatest enemies of Jesus and Paul were Jewish legalists and their rules.
3. They take ordinances out of their place and make them binding. Nehushtan!
4. They misunderstand verses about wine and turn into Temperance teetotalers.

D. Remember to fear … principle … righteousness … and black and white rules.
   1. All men, especially lazy, self-righteous Pharisee types, love simple rules.
   2. Wisdom is gray – requiring careful analysis and application of principles.
   3. For Christian ethics.

11 He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk.

He answered them.

A. He had a sufficient reason that he could tell the Jews – his healer and told him.
B. We will run into a similar response by the man born blind recorded in John 9.

He that made me whole, the same said unto me.

A. Whether a prophet or the Christ, He that instantly fixed a 38-year issue told me.
B. God made you whole, and what will you do for Him? You owe Him everything.

Take up thy bed, and walk.

A. I am only obeying instructions of the man that performed a very notable deed.
B. Of course, that this man could walk after 38 years meant nothing to Pharisees.

12 Then asked they him, What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk?

Then asked they him.

A. This was not nearly the information they sought of a man violating the Sabbath.
B. Note that there is no query into his physical condition or how long it had been.
C. It is the same with Pharisees for alcohol, divorce, and other visible “violations.”

What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk.

A. They want the man the man that broke their little Jewish law rather than reason.
B. They want him for questioning and judgment, not to inquire, learn, worship.

13 And he that was healed wist not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in that place.

And he that was healed wist not who it was.

A. Jesus had appeared and disappeared so quickly the paralytic did not know him.

B. The paralytic was restricted to the porches of the pool, so he did not know him.

For Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in that place.

A. In the large crowd, Jesus was able to leave while the man rejoiced and packed!
B. Jesus did similar things in avoiding the Jews until it was His time to die (8:59).

14 Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.

Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple.

A. We hope and hereby assume that the paralytic was praising God for healing.
B. What do you do when God favors you? It should be to worship (Ps 50:14-15)!

And said unto him.

A. Jesus had a further word for the paralytic to exhort him for the rest of his life.
B. If you need further instruction and desire further instruction, God will send it.

Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.

A. God can and will judge men for continuing in sin, and the result can be severe.
    1. If you are whole today, and you are, then humble yourself to God (Pr 29:1).
    2. God does chasten bodily – Uzzah's leprosy, Asa's feet, Corinth's troubles.
B. If you think you have experienced all God can dish out, then think again wisely.
    1. The living and true God knows you far better than you know you and pain.
    2. God is not a monster – rebellious sinners are the monsters and deserve pain.
C. While here, let it be remembered that sin is the cause of disease and death.
    1. It is a shame to read or see those that think they have a cure for either result.
    2. Factors of diet, exercise, environment, nutrition, medicine have little effect.
    3. Everyone will die due to sin, and there is no discharge in that terrible war.

15 The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus, which had made him whole.

The man departed, and told the Jews.

A. There is no reason to think from these words that telling the Jews would be sin.
    1. He could easily have desired to answer their question now that He knew.
    2. He could have defended himself by His authority or desired more healings.
B. Discretion is a wonderful trait of wisdom – how and when to do certain things.
    1. A wise man knows he is not obligated to tell everyone everything (Pr 29:11).
    2. A prudent man knows that he should foresee evil and hide himself (Pr 22:3).

That it was Jesus, which had made him whole.

A. Jesus did not broadcast miracles for various reasons (Matt 12:14-21; Jn 7:1-9).

B. Again, the issue was a 38-year paralytic being healed, but the Jews missed it.

16 And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day.

And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus.

A. You may wonder at times why Jesus told beneficiaries to be silent about Him.
   1. Jesus was not a self-promoter; He did not promote publicity (Mat 12:14-21).
   2. Jesus avoided trouble with the Jews until the time to be crucified (Jn 7:1-9).

B. What a rabid nation of people in their history; we should thank God's grace.

And sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day.

A. If you cross a Pharisee in their ignorant, self-righteous zeal, they will hate you.

B. They do not care about love or mercy, because they are unregenerate or wicked.

C. This fact of their desire to kill Jesus is important to understand John 7:19-25.

17 But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.

But Jesus answered them.

A. The audience Jesus addressed was His murderous enemies among the Jews.
   1. Context is who, whom, what, why, when, and where. Grasp the whom here.
   2. The pronoun them in this verse must refer to the antecedent enemies (5:16).
   3. These murderers are confirmed by their response to His first words (5:18).
   4. John again used the pronoun them to identify this particular audience (5:19).
   5. Their reception of John was false, insincere, and only for a season (5:35).
   6. Jesus denied regeneration or conversion by rebellious lack of faith (5:38-40).
   7. He denied that they loved God, though they would have screamed it (5:42).
   8. He condemned them to coming judgment by rejection of Moses (5:45-47).
   9. Following this speech in Jerusalem, Jesus returned to Galilee (Jn 6:1; 7:1).

B. The text does not tell us the circumstances or initiation of the following speech.
   1. The context is persecution and conspiracy to commit murder (John 5:15-16).
   2. There was some sort of confrontation between Jesus and the Jews (Jn 5:16).
   3. The Sabbath charge was either in their hearts or formally declared by them.
   4. The use of answered does not itself fully prove questions (Jn 2:18; 5:19).

C. John prepared us well – consider the preamble (1:1-18) and purpose (20:31).
   1. We can see the dual natures of Jesus Christ and His dual relationship to God.
   2. Jesus will now enter a deep and detailed description of His divine authority.

3. These rebellious Jews will hear far more than His lordship of the Sabbath.

D. Jesus answered rather differently than He had at others times about the Sabbath.
   1. He sometimes used Bible examples and axioms for defense (Matt 12:1-7).
   2. He sometimes used their own practices to defend His actions (Luke 13:15).
   3. Here He used God's example and His own authority (Matt 12:8; Mk 2:28).

My Father.

A. He appealed to God being His Father in a unique way different from all others.
   1. God is Father of all in some respects, as the Spirit says of Adam (Lu 3:38).
   2. God is Father of His people, as He was to Israel and the Jews (Isaiah 63:16).
   3. But God was Father to Jesus in a very unique way (Luke 1:35; Jn 1:14,18).

B. He appealed to God being His Father, and as His Son He had full right to work.
   1. If God were His Father, then He was perfectly holy in all of His own actions.
   2. If God were His Father, then He was independently sovereign in His actions.

C. The doctrine and declaration that Jesus was the Son of God was well known.
   1. John the Baptist declared to the Jews that Jesus was God's Son (John 1:34).
   2. Nathanael confessed the same doctrine to Jesus at his calling (John 1:49).
   3. Jesus declared this truth with a divine feature to Nicodemus (John 3:13-18).
   4. John taught his disciples that Jesus was Christ and Son of God (Jn 3:35-36).

D. John prepared us well – consider the preamble (1:1-18) and purpose (20:31).

Worketh hitherto.

A. **Hitherto**. Up to this time, until now, as yet. See Jn 16:24; Rom 1:13; I Cor 3:2.

B. God rested the seventh day from creation, as the Jews knew well from Genesis.
   1. But that does not mean He rested from His other works on the seventh day.
   2. But that does not mean He chose to rest every seventh day from then on.
   3. But it should be remembered God does not need rest (Ps 121:3-4; Is 40:28).
   4. But He only rested the seventh day as a kind example to Israel (Ex 20:8-11).

C. God is at work at all times preserving, supplying, and energizing the universe.
   1. Does the sun shine on the Sabbath? Does it ever rain? It is God (Matt 5:45).
   2. If God took weekends off, there would be no fruitful seasons (Acts 17:16).
   3. Every birth of man or livestock, among many works, God does every day.

And I work.

A. Jesus Christ, by His divine nature, like the Father, is always working His power.
   1. He created with God in the beginning, so it is assigned to Him (Eph 3:9).
   2. He also upholds all things by the word of His power without rest (Heb 1:3).

3. As God, He is working at all times, for He is the Father in His divine nature.
4. As the executive Officer and Person of the Father, He rules the universe.

B. Jesus was Lord of the Sabbath; He did work above it (Matt 12:8; Mark 2:28).

C. Jesus here and verses following showed equality with God in several respects.
1. He, like God, worked on the Sabbath and could dispense with it for Himself.
2. God and He did the same things, shown and assigned by the Father to Him.
3. What is said of one can be said of the other or both by nature and office.

D. He is so great in Person as Son and work with God that they should have feared.

E. Jesus was Lord of the Sabbath as He said, and the Jews should have submitted.

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.

Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him.

A. Our Lord's answer to the Jews was clearly designed to irritate them with truth.

B. Rather than deny or explain breaking the Sabbath, He claimed divine authority.

C. Any excuse wicked men can find, especially religious men, they will exploit it.

D. The Jews were always watching, listening, or conspiring to justify killing Him.

E. Those that do not believe the gospel will be enraged by its claims against them.

F. They hated His claim to divine authority from God, just as foretold (Psalm 2).

Because he not only had broken the sabbath.

A. The Sabbath was a capital crime, as shown for picking up sticks (Nu 15:30-36).

B. However, they broke the Sabbath in more profane ways each week of existence.

C. They would have used something else to accuse Him, if He had healed Sunday.

But said also that God was his Father.

A. Jesus intended in the previous verse that His Father was God, always working.

B. As in all similar cases, Jesus knew exactly what His doctrine would draw forth.

C. He had claimed equal authority with God over the Sabbath to work (Matt 12:8).

Making himself equal with God.

A. No matter their reasoning or understanding here, our Lord's response is truth.

B. A father and son are equal in nature, but Jesus is not His Son in divine nature.
1. We cannot and will not make the error of assuming eternal divine sonship.
2. Eternal sonship advocates think of no other, denying prudent interpretation.

C. There are other ways in which a father and son are equal other than their nature.
1. Jesus also did the same work as God His Father, which is equality in power.

2. Jesus also worked Sabbaths like His Father, which is equality in authority.
3. God revealed to Jesus their mutual works, which is equality in purpose.

D. The Jews knew the Bible enough that Messiah was God Himself (Is 7:14; 9:6).
1. The prophecy of God having a Son by a virgin was to be the mighty God.
2. God's Son by a virgin was to be called Immanuel, God with us (Matt 1:23).
3. When shown, they did not deny the Son was David's Lord (Matt 22:41-45).
4. For Jews to equate sonship with equality needs no more than the prophecies.

E. A father and son are not equal in office, just as Jesus is under God (I Co 15:28).

F. Jesus proceeded, not with eternal generation heresy, but with their equal works.

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.

Then answered Jesus and said unto them.

A. Jesus did not make any effort to correct their charge of His equality with God.
1. If He were an Arian or Unitarian, surely there would have been correction.
2. But He allowed their true supposition and proceeded to magnify it further.

B. Jesus continued His defense and doctrine against the rabid hatred of the Jews.

C. Note that there is no clear accusation recorded here anymore than before 5:17.

D. Jesus here and following establishes His divine nature and divine assignments.

Verily, verily, I say unto you.

A. As noted before, this double affirmation of truth is unique to John (25 times).

B. As Jesus doubled down with greater detail than 5:17, He affirms perfect truth.

The Son can do nothing of himself.

A. Jesus as the Messiah and Son of God did not work willy-nilly apart from God.

B. He was unbegotten God Himself, the Word of God of the Trinity (John 1:1-3).

C. He was the Son of God in His combined nature to do the will of God (Jn 8:29).

But what he seeth the Father do.

A. This is the Father and Son relationship or equality that Jesus had intended.

B. Human fathers and sons act so similar that we often say, Like father, like son!

For what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.

A. Jesus was God Himself and also in perfect unity of purpose with the Father.

B. Jesus tied Himself tightly to God in unity of divine nature, purpose, power, etc.

C. Jesus kept building a case for His deity and divine authority above the Sabbath.

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.

For the Father loveth the Son.

A. The Jews hated Jesus and sought to kill Him, but Jesus took comfort this way.
B. This is not new doctrine, as we learned already from John the Baptist (Jn 3:35).
C. The unity here is far more than eternal generation – it is filial affection of Jesus.
    1. To go off about the love of God for God is to miss the true identity of Jesus.
    2. Let us instead rejoice in God's love for His only begotten Son by Mary.

And sheweth him all things that himself doeth.

A. The will and works of God in the universe were clearly revealed to Jesus Christ.
B. Not only did God reveal them to Christ but gave Him the authority and power.

And he will shew him greater works than these.

A. There are two great works Jesus will unveil next – giving of life and judgment.
    1. Read the context – following next is giving of life and judgment (5:21-22).
    2. Read the context – following again is giving of life and judgment (5:26-27).
B. These two categories of works are so clearly divine prerogatives as to shout!

That ye may marvel.

A. We do not see marvel to be conviction or faith but mere surprise and wonder.
    1. **Marvel**. To be filled with wonder or astonishment; to be struck with surprise. To feel astonished curiosity: to ask oneself wonderingly.
    2. Compare the Spirit's use of marvel (Mark 5:20; Jn 3:7; 5:28; Ac 3:12; etc.).
B. They marveled at this healing (Jn 7:21), but much greater works were coming.
    1. Recall, Jesus was not impressed nor did He honor their marvel (Jn 2:23-25).
    2. Chief priests and Pharisees saw His miracles but planned murder (Jn 11:47).
    3. No matter the curiosity or wonder, there was not repentance (Mat 11:20-24).
C. He spoke this to reprobates – see the context – so conversion was not the goal.
    1. If conversion was not the goal, then it was His glory (Jn 9:3; 11:4; Ac 4:21).
    2. If conversion was not the goal, then it was their condemnation (Jn 15:18-25).
    3. God has exalted Jesus for all men to give Him His due honor (Phil 2:9-11).
    4. God had mocked their wonder by prophecy and fulfillment (Acts 13:40-41).
D. The works were for God's glory and benefit of the elect … but also this result.

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

For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them.

A. Keep in mind the context – this is the first of two mentions of two great works.
    1. Jesus glorified Himself over these Sabbath-worshippers by greater authority.
    2. Two great works – giving life and judging – are here and repeated (5:26-27).

B. Jews knew by scripture that their God, the LORD Jehovah, had raised the dead.
    1. They knew in general that He could and did make men alive (Deut 32:39).
    2. Elijah had resurrected the son of the widow of Zarephath (I Kings 17:17-24).
    3. Elisha had resurrected the son of the woman of Shunem (II Kings 4:18-37).
    4. There should have been no incredulity that God could raise the dead ().

Even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.

A. Here are powerful adverbs – as … even so – to equate the Father to the Son.
    1. Just like God the Father has power of resurrecting the dead, so does the Son.
    2. Jesus added for good measure that He resurrects according to His own will!

B. Jesus during His ministry on earth raised a few from death to life by His will.
    1. He raised a widow's son at a funeral in the village of Nain (Luke 7:11-18).
    2. He raised Jairus' daughter, though the mourners mocked Him (Lu 8:40-56).
    3. He raised Lazarus after four days, as this gospel records for us (Jn 11:33-44).

C. Here we should see all three resurrections – temporal, spiritual, and eternal.
    1. We start at the physical, but the following context takes it beyond (5:24-29).
    2. Jesus is the executive Person for spiritual and eternal life (Heb 4:12; I Pet 1:23; Jas 1:18; Rev 1:18; 3:7; I Thes 4:16).

D. And it is the will of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, that is the basis of quickening.
    1. Yet true, there is no disagreement in will in salvation, as declared (Jn 6:38).
    2. This great truth of Jesus' will in salvation should have caused repentance.
    3. If you know the Father, it is by the Son choosing to reveal Him (Matt 11:27).
    4. If you know the Son, it is by the Father choosing to reveal Him (Matt 11:25).

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

For the Father judgeth no man.

A. Closely connected to giving of life or resurrection is the authority of judgment.

B. The Father does not judge by Himself but rather includes the Son in the action.
    1. God the Father is involved in judging men (Ps 50:6; Eccl 11:9; 12:13-14).
    2. He chose to judge by and through Jesus (Ro 2:16; Acts 10:40-42; 17:30-31).

But hath committed all judgment unto the Son.

A. This is an incredible thing that the LORD God Jehovah has made Jesus Judge!

B. The judgment seat of Jesus Christ looms for all men to give account (Matt 25:31-46; Rom 14:10-12; II Cor 5:9-11; II Thess 1:7-10).

C. For more of Christ's judgment.

D. This should cause holy terror to persuade all men to repentance (Luke 12:1-5).

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.

That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father.

A. Here is the reason why God made Jesus the resurrection and the life and Judge.

B. How should men honor God the Father? He is an absolute and divine dictator!
   1. He is the Potter and all men are clay, and He does according to His own will.
   2. He demands all men love Him with all their heart, mind, soul, and strength.

C. God loves His Son and gave Him great authority for the glory of this Godman.
   1. Jesus was humiliated on earth for redemption; you must honor Him greatly.
   2. A day is coming soon when all will honor Him (I Tim 6:13-16; Phil 2:9-11).
   3. Do you understand the protective love a powerful father has for a good son?
   4. What about this Father! What about this Son! What about His powerful zeal!
   5. If you have the least faith or wisdom, you should cry out in real repentance.

D. God has guaranteed His Son's honor by name, position, authority, power, etc.

He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.

A. If you do not love Jesus Christ, you can be Anathema Maranatha (I Cor 16:22).

B. Measure yourself the way He measures you, by His commandments (Jn 14:15).

C. Nothing in your life matters … nothing! … but love and obedience to this Jesus.

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.

Verily, verily, I say unto you.

A. Keep in mind these good verses about salvation were spoken to evil reprobates.

B. Jesus continued to declare to perverse murderers He was God and Son of God.

C. Doctrine here is not a lesson to apostles about the ordo salutis of soteriology!

D. Doctrine here is condemnation of those without life and facing His judgment!

He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me.

A. He identified those that heard the Son of God preach and believed on God for it.

B. The murderous haters before Him had rejected Him, His word, and His Father.

C. These verbs are present tense – heareth and believeth – of a gospel response.

Hath everlasting life.

A. **Hath**. *Archaic*. Third person singular present tense indicative of the verb have.
B. **Have**. I. As a main verb (trans. or intr.). * In the sense possess, and uses thence arising. 1. a. trans. To hold in hand, in keeping, or possession; to hold or possess as property, or as something at one's disposal. 4. To possess, as an attribute, quality, faculty, function, position, right, etc.; to be characterized by; to hold; to be charged with.
C. A man believing the gospel possesses eternal life as his property and his right.
D. The grammar here by itself does not prove any priority or any cause and effect.
E. However, we know from many other places eternal life precedes gospel faith.

And shall not come into condemnation.

A. Now we have some priority and a condition of evidence – faith proves no hell.
B. The form here is present tense hearing and believing and future justification.

But is passed from death unto life.

A. Now we have some priority and a cause and effect – faith proves regeneration.
B. The form here is present tense hearing / believing and perfect tense is passed.
C. The grammar of regeneration.

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.

Verily, verily, I say unto you.

A. Jesus continued to declare axioms or rules of doctrine of His role in salvation.
B. He has risen to heights of glorious doctrine that fully justify this expression.

The hour is coming, and now is.

A. Note the difference between an hour present and one that was yet to come (28).
B. Compare His words of timing, of transition, to the woman of Samaria (4:21-23).
C. Jesus now had the authority as the Son of God to resurrect men in regeneration.

When the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God.

A. We do not confuse this quickening with the few persons He raised from death.
    1. The son of the widow of Nain, Jairus's daughter, and Lazarus are not here.
    2. Jesus progressed from temporary resurrection to the general resurrection.
    3. This resurrection comes in close connection to the gift of eternal life (5:24).
B. We do not confuse this quickening by His voice with the general resurrection.
    1. The general resurrection is rather clearly distinguished by the words of v. 28.

2. That resurrection is of all men that are in graves, neither fact is true here.
3. There is different timing in that one was presently true and the other future.

C. We receive this quickening by the life-giving voice of Christ as regeneration.
1. This resurrection comes in close connection to the gift of eternal life (5:24).
2. The general resurrection is rather clearly distinguished by the words of v. 28.
3. There is a quickening from death to life to be identified here (Eph 2:1-3).
4. This is the first resurrection to save some from the second death (Rev 20:6).

D. It is the voice of the Son of God here, not the voice of preachers about the Son.
1. If we insert the voice of preachers or soul winners here, we must in 28 also.
2. His shout will raise all dead bodies (28-29), so His voice is effectual here.

And they that hear shall live.

A. The hearing here is limited – it is not all as in the next resurrection of bodies.

B. The hearing here is passive – in that dead cannot hear but come alive anyway.
1. When Jesus resurrected Lazarus, His call was not an offer or a suggestion.
2. When Jesus raised Lazarus, His call was effectual with power to give life.
3. This is just as true of the son of the widow of Nain and of Jairus's daughter.
4. In comparison to the next resurrection, all corrupt bodies respond passively.
5. There is no consideration or cooperation by dead souls or by dead bodies!

C. The grammar of regeneration.

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

For as the Father hath life in himself.

A. Almighty God, Father of Jesus Christ, is the ultimate Source and Power of life.
1. He breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life for him to be a living soul.
2. He was the power in Elijah and Elisha in the cases of resurrecting two sons.

B. The LORD Jehovah has eternal life Himself and give it to whomsoever He will.

So hath he given to the Son to have life in himself.

A. The same independent, sovereign way God has life, He has given it to the Son.

B. Jesus Christ has the sovereign authority to give or withhold life from anyone.

C. He lives, was dead, and is alive forever (Rev 1:18). He rules hell and death.

D. He has the key of David as Almighty King (Rev 3:7). He only opens and shuts.

E. Jesus is the resurrection and the life in all ways – bodily, spiritual, and eternal.

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

And hath given him authority to execute judgment also.

A. Note both and and also here, for Jesus Christ has authority of life and judgment.

B. Not only does He have authority to give or withhold life, but also to judge men.
   1. God has ordained Jesus to be Judge (Rom 2:16; Acts 10:40-42; 17:30-31).
   2. It is an incredible thing that the LORD God Jehovah has made Jesus Judge.
   3. The judgment seat of Jesus Christ looms for all men to give account (Matt 25:31-46; Rom 14:10-12; II Cor 5:9-11; II Thess 1:7-10).
   4. For more of Christ as Judge.

C. This should cause holy terror to persuade all men to repentance (Luke 12:1-5).

Because he is the Son of man.

A. Because God sent Jesus to be humiliated as man on earth, He has exalted Him.

B. Jesus is God's chosen Son to rule the universe and to save His chosen people.

C. The Jews foolishly and ignorantly revolted at the humility of Christ (Is 53:1-4)

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

Marvel not at this.

A. Power of life and judgment were to marvel (20-22), but He continued upward!

B. The fact that regeneration is by the voice of the Son of God is not Christ's limit.

C. Jesus will now teach His ultimate role in the general resurrection and judgment.

For the hour is coming.

A. Note the difference between an hour present and one that was yet to come (28).

B. Compare His words of timing, of transition, to the woman of Samaria (4:21-23).

C. Jesus now had the authority as the Son of God to resurrect men in regeneration.

In the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice.

A. There is one resurrection of bodies coming, so forget Scofield and LaHaye lies.
   1. The idea of Christ coming and resurrecting believers and then raising the wicked after another 7 years or 1007 years is fantasy and heresy by futurists.
   2. As the next verse states, all in the graves shall come forth to final judgment.
   3. Paul taught this very same doctrine of only one resurrection (Acts 24:15).
   4. When Jesus Christ comes again, it is the final day of time (II Thess 1:7-10).

B. The hearing here is passive – in that dead cannot hear but come alive anyway.
   1. When Jesus resurrected Lazarus, His call was not an offer or a suggestion.

2. When Jesus raised Lazarus, His call was effectual with power to give life.
3. This is just as true of the son of the widow of Nain and of Jairus's daughter.
4. There is no consideration or cooperation by dead souls or by dead bodies!

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.

And shall come forth.

A. All in graves shall come forth! There will be no resistance or lingering by any.
B. All men shall stand before Jesus to be judged (II Cor 5:9-11; Rev 20:11-15).

They that have done good.

A. The criterion for heaven is not accepting Jesus but rather obeying His words.
B. Compare His warning at the end of the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 7:21-29).
C. For similar statements.

Unto the resurrection of life.

A. This is ultimate authority of life and judgment combined – giving eternal life.
B. Jesus is the resurrection and the life, as you may read about regarding Lazarus.
C. If you seek this resurrection, make your calling and election sure (II Pe 1:5-11).
D. Paul gave us an example of a man seeking to be in this resurrection (Phil 3:11).

And they that have done evil.

A. Many men will still be considered evil, just as Jesus will pronounce (Matt 7:23).
B. Those cast in the lake of fire are sinners, for their sins yet remain (Rev 21:8,27).
C. Jesus Christ did not die for all the sins of all men, or they would have no sin.
D. Limited atonement for elect only, also see the limited atonement FAQ.

Unto the resurrection of damnation.

A. This is condemnation of eternal torment with the devil and angels (Matt 25:41).
B. This condemnation shall not occur to any that believe and obey the Son (5:24).
C. Those hearing the words directly did not have the evidence nor honor the Judge.

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.

I can of mine own self do nothing.

A. Jesus does quicken and judge by His will, but He always agrees with the Father.
B. These murderous Jews charged Jesus with blasphemy and sins against God.

As I hear, I judge.

A. Jesus judges based on the perfect will of Almighty God, His Father in heaven.
B. Jesus elsewhere acknowledges God charging or teaching Him (John 8:18,26).
C. He already made this point under the terminology of shewing Him (John 5:20).

And my judgment is just.

A. Jesus' judgment of overriding the Sabbath or eternal damnation is perfectly just.
B. There is no error, fault, or partiality in this perfect Judge commissioned by God.

Because I seek not mine own will.

A. There is no independent spirit in Christ Jesus to go counter to God the Father.
B. The spirit of Jesus Christ and the Spirit of Christ are in total union with God.

But the will of the Father which hath sent me.

A. All that mattered to Jesus Christ in judgment of eternal life was the will of God.
B. He will teach in chapter six He came to do God's will in eternal life (6:37-40).

Transition from the declaration of His Sonship authority and power to its evidence.

A. The section before us (5:17-47) hardly has a precedent or peer in the Bible.
B. This gospel's purpose should constantly be remembered and stressed (20:31).
C. Jesus declared some of the most wonderful claims about Himself (5:17-30).
D. On trial of a sort, He will now produce evidence via three witnesses (5:31-38).
E. He will then show the heart and professional issues withholding faith (5:39-47).
F. What Jesus did here is the true gospel (Phil 2:9-11; Ac 17:30-31; II Cor 5:9-11).
G. Our religion is focused on Jesus Christ, and He is known by the Bible record.

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

If I bear witness of myself.

A. He had just borne witness of Himself in very clear terms of great consequence.
    1. Like so many places, both phrases of this verse must be divided (II Ti 2:15).
    2. He is a perfectly faithful witness, as the Holy Spirit declares (Rev 1:5; 3:14).
    3. His witness was absolutely true, but He gave evidence they could accept.
B. Jesus had declared an incredible commission from God and unity with Him.
    1. God had given Him the power of life and death and made Him Judge of all.
    2. God was His Father, and He did the very same things that His Father did.
    3. God would prove these things for the wonder of men by even greater deeds.
C. Jesus accommodated their idea of truth and integrity by denying His own word.
    1. In other places, Jesus referred to His own witness, how it was true (Jn 8:14).
    2. God and men generally hold an axiom that man is a liar (Jn 8:13; Rom 3:4).

3. Solomon taught that another should praise rather than thy mouth (Pr 27:2).

My witness is not true.

A. Of course the witness of Jesus Christ was absolutely true, but not as evidence.
B. In fact, Jesus will respond to the Pharisees that it was true (John 8:13-14).
C. I will grant your desire for greater witness of my Messiahship than my witness.
D. It is not only a legal issue, but also a moral issue, to let another testify (Pr 27:2).
E. External witness.

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

There is another that beareth witness of me.

A. Jesus now introduced the first of three witnesses to provide fabulous evidence.
    1. Since Jesus could not bear witness of Himself, He introduced another (5:31).
    2. He did not introduce another witness as if there was one already, for He Himself did not count as proper and valid evidence for capital crimes.
    3. By context of 5:31, grasp this verse in its simplest, plainest sense – another man distinct from myself is a proper basis for true evidence and proof.
B. This is the first of three witnesses – the divine ministry of John the Baptist.
    1. Jesus has raised the ultimate defense (or offence) by calling three witnesses.
    2. Both testaments require two or three witnesses (Deut 17:6; Matthew 18:16).
    3. The three witnesses are not ordinary, but extraordinary in the highest degree.
    4. John was the prophesied Jewish messenger that would come before Messiah.
    5. The Jews expected and required signs like Moses (Ex 4:1-9; I Cor 1:22).
    6. Of greatest authority and acceptance by Jews was their scriptures from God.
C. I have another; I am not alone in my claims; another has testified – the Baptist!
    1. God sent John the Baptist for this precise reason – to witness (John 1:7,33).
    2. By extensive testifying in John chapters 1 and 3, John is a principal witness.
D. There is no need to assume God here, for God is found later in the progression.
    1. Jesus built His case of evidence from the lesser to the greater (note 5:36).
    2. The next verse clearly identifies John; this verse identifies his legal validity.

And I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true.

A. There is no need to assume true here is different from 5:31, legally acceptable.
B. By the context of 5:31, understand this verse in its simplest, plainest sense – another man distinct from myself is a proper basis for true evidence and proof.
C. Not only true in itself, but authentic and valid in such cases of controversy.

D. The emphasis on the truth of his preaching comes next, which they admitted.

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

Ye sent unto John.

A. The Jewish leadership confronting Jesus had inquired of John about his role.
B. If they had inquired of him about his role, then they accepted his testimony.
C. This gospel already reviewed the history of their meeting (Jn 1:19-34; 3:25-36).

And he bare witness unto the truth.

A. Here we see truth in the ordinary sense of usage – accurate, right information.
B. John was a simple man with great holiness that was highly regarded by Israel.
C. He had proclaimed God's truth of sins, coming judgment, and the Son of God.
D. The Jews turned from John when his Messiah did not meet carnal expectations.

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

But I receive not testimony from man.

A. Jesus most definitely does receive witness from men, so we must rightly divide.
    1. The apostles were chosen to be witnesses to testify of Jesus (Acts 10:42).
    2. His greatness was so much higher than men that they cannot add to Him.
B. John Baptist, as great as he was and is, did not add anything to the Son of God.
C. Jesus restated his principle regarding John about other men later (John 5:41).

But these things I say, that ye might be saved.

A. John came with salvation by repentance and to forgive sins and avoid 70 A.D.
    1. John's ministry to avoid judgment is from the prophet Malachi (Mal 4:1-6).
    2. John himself expressed it very clearly to visiting Pharisees (Matt 3:7-12).
    3. Though not needing John Himself, the Jews needed Him and His message.
B. Jesus reminded the Jews of the ministry of John to avoid the coming judgment.
C. Peter did when preaching at Pentecost to warn them with Joel (Ac 2:16-21,40).
D. The language here is not fully sincere, for He knew all that would not believe.
E. Compare the salvation message here with similar statements (6:37-67; 8:31-32).
F. Though John could not add much to Christ, he did have crucial truth for Israel.

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

He was a burning and a shining light.

A. He was a light himself, but John was the lesser light to present the greater light.

B. In this epistle we have already learned John's relationship to Jesus (John 1:6-9).
C. Jesus considered John the greatest man born of woman. Of course He used him.
D. What a preacher to Israel! Looking and teaching like Elijah (Mal 4:5; Lu 1:17).

And ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light.

A. Most of Israel went out to hear John and had a relatively high regard for Him.
B. They put up with him until he pointed them to the lowly Jesus of Nazareth.
C. Compare the responses of four kinds of ground in the parable of the sower.
D. It is not enough to spring up with joy and then wither away. Beware, reader!

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.

But I have greater witness than that of John.

A. Here is the second witness Jesus identified for His identity as God's Messiah.
    1. He rejected His own witness to introduce John as witness for Him (5:31-35).
    2. He now introduces a witness greater than John, His own signs and wonders.
B. The works Jesus did were intrinsically a greater proof than the Baptist's words.
    1. The Jews knew Jesus was special from God by the miracles He did (Jn 3:2).
    2. Jesus and apostles appealed to His works as witness (Jn 14:11; Acts 10:38).
C. John the Baptist did not do any miracles, but Jesus did very many (John 10:41).

For the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me.

A. A miracle caused this confrontation – healing a very lame man after 38 years!
B. The Jews knew God was with Jesus for many stupendous miracles (John 3:2).
C. Jesus often appealed to miracles (Jn 7:31; 10:25,38; 11:47; 14:10-11; 15:24).
D. The apostles immediately reminded Israel of His miracles (Acts 2:22; 10:38).
E. When John wanted reassurance, Jesus told him about miracles (Luke 7:22).
F. This was the Jewish way – to expect miracles done consistently (Deut 18:22).

That the Father hath sent me.

A. Nicodemus knew God was with Jesus for many stupendous miracles (John 3:2).
B. Jesus presented miracles He did as sufficient evidence of the Father (Jn 10:38).
C. They had a curse of blindness that caused them to miss miracles (Jn 12:37-41).

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.

And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me.

A. This is the third of three witnesses – the prophets and their scriptures (Jn 5:39).
    1. Jesus has raised the ultimate defense (or offence) by calling three witnesses.
    2. Both testaments require two or three witnesses (Deut 17:6; Matthew 18:16).
    3. The three witnesses are not ordinary, but extraordinary in the highest degree.
    4. John was the prophesied Jewish messenger that would come before Messiah.
    5. The Jews expected and required miracles like Moses (Ex 4:1-9; I Cor 1:22).
    6. Of greatest authority and acceptance by Jews was their scriptures from God.

B. We assume here for several reasons that this witness of Christ is the scriptures.
    1. Since it is a Jewish legal dispute, we must reject anecdotal evidence (5:31).
    2. Since it is a Jewish proceeding, we need a witness very acceptable to them.
    3. The witness here is one God gave of Christ, not to Him, for men to believe.
    4. We rule out His voice at baptism, since it was for John (Matt 3:17; Jn 1:33).
    5. There is no proof others heard that voice, like they will later (Jn 12:28-30).
    6. John's ministry and Jesus' miracles were known by all, but not God's voice.
    7. We use I John 5:6 for that event as a witness, but by its place in scripture!
    8. We rule out His voice at transfiguration: only Peter, James, John heard it.
    9. We rule out His voice at all, for the next clause totally excludes that idea.
    10. Jesus's apostles trumped the transfiguration with scripture (II Pet 1:16-21).
    11. We find scripture being mentioned in the next verse (5:38), but not believed.
    12. Jesus will go on to identify His word as scripture they should search (5:39).
    13. Jesus will conclude without a break from here about Moses' writings (5:47).
    14. God did speak to His people of Israel by prophets by the scripture (Heb 1:1).
    15. Scripture is so closely connected to God it is as Him speaking (Rom 9:17).
    16. Jesus progressed (lesser to greater witnesses; 5:36), and scripture is greater.
    17. God expected His people to value revelation above miracles (Deut 13:1-5).
    18. Jesus appealed to scripture as being better than miracles (Luke 16:29-31).
    19. The apostles used John for Christ (Ac 1:5,22; 10:37; 11:16; 13:24-25; 19:4).
    20. The apostles used miracles extensively (Mark 16:16-20; Acts 1:8; Heb 2:4).
    21. But they used the scriptures as their greatest tool for Christ (Acts 17:1-3).

C. How else did God Jehovah bear witness of Christ acceptable to this hearing?

Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape.

A. Since you have never met God verbally or visually, He is revealed by prophets.
B. This is history Paul gave of Israel when he opened the Hebrew letter (Heb 1:1).
C. If they had seen or heard God, scripture is a more sure word (II Peter 1:16-21).
D. The Bible says Israel did hear (Ex 20:19; De 4:12), so we limit it to these Jews.

E. Real evidence of Jesus Christ is the Bible, for without it we cannot know Him.

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

And ye have not his word abiding in you.

A. The third witness is the Lord's Father testifying by way of prophets in scripture.
   1. God has not communicated by voice or shape – but by writings of scripture.
   2. Jesus will refer to the writings of Moses before He ends His defense (5:47).
   3. He will challenge them to study the scripture about the Person revealed in it.
   4. This can hardly be the word declared at His baptism but rather the scriptures.

B. They had it memorized and could relate its facts but missed its exalted doctrine.
   1. They had no real, substantial, spiritual affection for His word by obstinance.
   2. They had a curse of blindness upon them as taught elsewhere (Jn 12:37-41).
   3. They had a veil over their hearts to blind them to Christ (II Cor 3:12-15).

C. There is much more than reading the Bible; you need it written in your heart.
   1. A term of the New Covenant is God writing His word inside us (Heb 8:10).
   2. Jesus will introduce this aspect of regeneration in the next chapter (Jn 6:45).

D. God puts His word in men and opens hearts to it, but not all men (Acts 16:14).

For whom he hath sent, him ye believe not.

A. If God has changed a man's heart and put His word there, He will love His Son!

B. In spite of three witnesses I have offered, it does not matter, you do not believe.

C. There is a heart issue here that leaves you unwilling for God's Son (Jn 5:40-42).

D. Jesus condemned Jews for not believing and why (Jn 6:44-45; 8:43-47; 10:26).

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

Search the scriptures.

A. They adored this third witness, but they did not perceive its greatest content.

B. Dive into this third witness I have stated and exhaust it for truth of eternal life.

C. The Bereans were noble for searching scripture, but that is not here (Ac 17:11).

D. As Jesus was wont to do (see Moses below), He turned them upside down.

E. They had a veil over their hearts to blind them to Christ (II Cor 3:12-15).

For in them ye think ye have eternal life.

A. They knew that the scriptures were a special gift to Israel only (Ps 147:19-20).

B. Instead of learning the doctrine, they wore scripture on their body (Matt 23:5).

C. Roman Catholics and her daughters are similar, liturgically kissing the Bible.

D. It spoke of a Savior throughout, but they trusted to save themselves by works.

And they are they which testify of me.

A. The scriptures of the prophets of God are filled with prophecies of Jesus Christ.
B. From the Garden of Eden, Moses wrote about the Seed of the woman (Ge 3:15).
C. Malachi closed out the O.T. canon with the Sun of Righteousness (Mal 4:2).
D. In Bible reading, look for the Person, Jesus Christ, both directly and indirectly.

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

And ye will not come to me.

A. At this stage in His detailed and personal presentation of evidence, He said this.
    1. The issue was not one of evidence, though they might accuse Him (8:13).
    2. The issue was heart rebellion that caused them to obsess for peer approval.
    3. They had neither the word of God or love of God in their hearts (5:38,42).
B. Though they adored the scriptures, they would not believe revelation of Him.
    1. They adored the Old Testament for its distinguishing exaltation of Israel.
    2. They adored the Old Testament for its culture of ceremonies and holidays.
    3. They did not adore the scriptures for the glorious Seed and Sun it presented.
C. The issue is will! Total depravity is of the will far more than it is of the ability.
    1. Do not confuse our doctrine of depravity by taking it father than you should.
    2. Death in trespasses and sins is lack of love of God, not intellectual ability.
    3. The issue is will, which should cause us to fear and tremble (Phil 2:12-13)!
D. Coming to Christ is far more than the foolish act of going forward to the "altar."
    1. No man will come to Christ without God taking the first measures (Jn 6:44).
    2. Coming down to the front is an invention of Finney, Moody, Graham, Hyles.
    3. When Jesus gave the invitation to believe, the price was high (Lu 14:25-33).
    4. When Jesus gave the invitation, the doctrine was very hard (John 6:37-67).
    5. There is no shortcut – if you want Christ, take up your cross (Matt 16:24).

That ye might have life.

A. If you come to me in repentance and faith, you could lay hold of eternal life.
    1. This is the gospel message, and it should be repeated very often and loud.
    2. From the jailor to the book of Romans, you must believe on the Son of God.
    3. Paul told Timothy and the rich how to lay hold of life (I Timothy 6:12,19).
    4. We cannot let our monergistic view of regeneration alter the gospel demand.
B. I do not need you; you need me. The reason I have said these things is to save.
    1. He had explained previously they could be saved from God's wrath (5:34).

2. He had identified life and salvation were evidenced by faith in Him (5:24).
3. Without faith in Him and His Father, they would be condemned (5:24,29).

41 I receive not honour from men.

A. He did not charge the Jews with willful rejection due to seeking their affection.
B. This is one of several places in this chapter that needs to be rightly interpreted.
    1. Jesus did receive honor from men like John Baptist and His own apostles.
    2. However, He did not seek it, nor was His life or ministry dependent on it.
    3. Remember that our glorious Lord would not allow the healed to publish it.
    4. When fools of a lesser pedigree try to make Him king, He disappears (6:15).
    5. He was not ambitious in the way that they and all other religious leaders are.
C. He corrected any false notion in these reprobates that He needed their honor.
    1. He chose to remove any idea from these men that their choice affected Him.
    2. He had declared the truth, He did not care what they thought of Him or it.
    3. In general, He did not care about the opinions of men or need any of them.
    4. I don't need your affection or obedience; it will not add to me (Job 35:5-8).
    5. He said faith is proof of salvation (5:24), yet they would not believe (5:40).
D. We hardly honor God believing His gospel for salvation; we honor ourselves!
E. Jesus restated his principle regarding other men about John earlier (John 5:34).
F. They had a serious problem seeking honor of others as He will teach (5:43-44).

42 But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you.

But I know you.

A. Jesus condemned them here for a heart matter that resulted in a peer problem.
    1. He did not care if men honored Him; He did not seek their honor (Jn 5:41).
    2. He sought approval and honor of God far more than human honor (Jn 5:44).
    3. They did not love God enough to give Him His proper place of preeminence.
    4. Without God's grace, men like these Jews will love man most (Jn 12:42-43).
B. Jesus had just told these very religious men that they would not obey scripture.
    1. Jesus charged them to study the Bible to see God's witness of Him in it (39).
    2. He then told them they would not believe the Bible witness about Him (40).
    3. They received honor from men, rather than God, as Jesus will expand (41).
    4. He knew they would still reject Him due to not being born again (3:3; 5:38).
C. Jesus, the living Word of God, saw right through the facade of great religiosity.
    1. He did not need any man to testify about man (John 2:23-25; Matthew 9:4).
    2. All things are naked and opened to the eyes of Jesus the Son (Heb 4:12-14).

3. Jesus will tell such “lovers of God” that He never knew them (Matt 7:23).

D. Jesus Christ knows you and me, and we should examine ourselves in its light.
   1. He knew Abraham and discussed him with His angels (Genesis 18:16-22).
   2. He knows every secret about you, so you should tremble (Pr 15:3; Ec 12:14).
   3. Let us be like Paul and do everything possible to be approved (II Co 5:9-11).

That ye have not the love of God in you.

A. Jesus declared that evidence had nothing to do with it – but regeneration did.
   1. You have no life in you, and evidence I have presented has no value to you.
   2. He had carefully detailed His relationship to God and provided witnesses.
   3. He had carefully challenged them and told them how they could know Him.
   4. But the issue was a heart issue, which only He could correct, but did not.
   5. He declared the truth to them, and it would save them, if believed (4:34).

B. It is a wicked delusion that the heart of men and regeneration cannot be known.
   1. Many say preachers do not know their hearts so as to justify disobedience.
   2. First and foremost, Jesus is God and knows absolutely every detail perfectly.
   3. Second, we can know the hearts of men by their conduct (I John 2:4; 3:9).

C. Consider the critical nature of our Lord’s condemnation of these religious men.
   1. There are only a few men accessible today that preach anything like this.
   2. The idea that Jesus was likeable and nice to everyone is absolutely ludicrous.
   3. Consider Rude Preachers.
   4. Consider Instant Preaching.

D. Do you love God? Measure correctly – all His ways (De 10:12; 11:13; 30:16).
   1. How can we know we are regenerated? By righteousness (I John 3:9; 5:8).
   2. Hearing the words of God preached to us and doing them (John 8:47).

E. Jesus condemned Jews for not believing and why (Jn 6:44-45; 8:43-47; 10:26).

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.

I am come in my Father’s name.

A. Almighty God is my Father; He is my witness; and my authority is from Him.
   1. There could not have been stronger evidence than that stated (Jn 5:17-42).
   2. Jesus did not come (primarily) in His own name, but rather in His Father’s.
   3. He was the Son of God … barJehovah … or however you might identify it.

B. He does not appeal to Gamaliel like Paul did before King Agrippa (Acts 22:3).

C. They honored John to some degree, but Jesus was far superior to the Baptist.

And ye receive me not.

A. These wicked Jews rejected Him spite of coming in the name of Almighty God.
B. These wicked Jews rejected Jesus in spite of John, miracles, and the scriptures.
C. Jesus does not coddle those not believing on Him; let us follow His example.
D. They did not receive Jesus for the man-worshipping camaraderie now follows.

If another shall come in his own name.

A. They adored each other, like scholars and theologians today, on their own merit.
B. Sir, who are you? I am John of Jerusalem, a lifetime student of Holy Scripture.
C. Sir, who are you? I am Saul of Tarsus, a Pharisee and the son of a Pharisee.
D. It is nauseating to hear them refer to Dr. So-and-So and flatter one another.
E. Who cares about your name, education, school, accomplishments, etc.?

Him ye will receive.

A. These few examples would have been readily accepted by mutual sycophants.
B. Who are you? Your name, birthplace, education, intelligence? All of it vain!
C. Childish sessions of bloated egotists mutually admiring each other is sickening.
D. Paul by the Spirit condemned such ministerial peer measures (II Cor 10:12).

44 How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?

How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another.

A. How can you believe the testimony of a Man sent by God with divine evidence?
    1. By habit and peer pressure they honored their own kind among themselves.
    2. Like many pastors and theologians today, they seek approval by their peers.
    3. This preference for the praise of man will corrupt others of them (12:42-43).
    4. Paul condemned ministers measuring themselves by peers (II Cor 10:12).
    5. Such a predilection to praise of man will turn men away from Jesus Christ.
B. The fear of man brings a snare; wise men will learn early to ignore it (Pr 29:25).
C. It is lawful and right to honor every man, especially those in ordained offices.
    1. The Bible teaches us to honor parents and the king (Eph 6:2-3; I Peter 2:17).
    2. The righteous condemnation here is desiring the praise and applause of men.
    3. Employees must honor masters, but they do with regard to God (Eph 6:5-8).
    4. These Jews found their comfort among themselves rather than fearing God.

And seek not the honour that cometh from God only.

A. Above any honor that men can give, we should seek the honor that God gives.

B. It does not matter what anyone or everyone thinks of you relative to your God.

C. Let Him be your fear and dread, for man can do nothing to you (Luke 12:4-5).

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

Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father.

A. Remember, we learned Jesus did not come primarily to condemn (John 3:17).

B. When evidence is unnecessary by circumstances of a case, it may be dropped.

C. Our Lord, always perfect in wisdom, chose rather to turn Moses against them.

D. He added weight to His defense this way and condemned them by their religion.

There is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust.

A. They trusted in Moses as their great teacher, as they will declare (John 9:28-29).

B. Moses provided plenty of information to direct them to Messiah and to Him.

C. This defense by Jesus to their charges had made belief in Him crucial (5:23-24).

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

For had ye believed Moses.

A. They did believe Moses in many respects in both moral and ceremonial matters.

B. They did not believe the prophecies of Moses concerning God's coming Seed.
   1. If they had embraced his prophecies of the Messiah, they would see Christ.
   2. There is spiritual content in scripture that points men to a Saviour (5:39).

C. God owes the truth to no man, and each level of revelation brings responsibility.
   1. Jesus held the rich man's brothers accountable to scripture (Luke 16:27-31).
   2. We should fear to neglect one form of revelation and so be denied the next.
   3. We should fear that disobeying one form of revelation is our total depravity.
   4. Men often claim to believe the Bible until it condemns their favorite views.

D. Note the Lord Christ's authoritative endorsement of the O.T. and of Moses.
   1. Let no man say that He is a Christian while rejecting either O.T. or Moses.
   2. Those words of Moses we find hard to accept were approved by our Lord.

Ye would have believed me.

A. First, believing one writer or part of scripture indicates a man taught by God.

B. Second, believing Moses' part of scripture would have revealed Christ to them.

C. The prophecies of the Old Testament are solid proof of our Christian religion.

For he wrote of me.

A. There are four main prophecies – Gen 3:15; 22:16-18; 49:10; Deut 18:15-19.
B. Once introduced to a coming Seed, they could have studied the rest of the O.T.
C. The prophecy of one like unto Moses points very much to Jesus the teacher.
D. Let us be diligent to look for Christ and learn about Him from all of scripture.

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

But if ye believe not his writings.

A. Jesus referred to Moses' writings, continuing use of the third witness (5:37-47).
B. The mindset of the Jews gave Moses every advantage and leverage for belief.
    1. He was a national hero by many wonderful works and 40-year leadership.
    2. He exalted their nation, delivered them from Egypt, and gave them the Law.
    3. He is credited as writing the first five books of the Bible for the Israelites.
    4. The Jewish leaders will soon boast of their learning from him (Jn 9:28-29).
C. Jesus condemned the Jews here for not believing Moses' prophecies of Him.
    1. They misapplied the Law in other places (Matt 5-7), but here it is of Christ.
    2. There are four main prophecies – Gen 3:15; 22:16-18; 49:10; Deut 18:15-19.
    3. There should have been great research and anticipation of the coming Seed.
    4. If they had embraced his prophecies of the Messiah, they would see Christ.
    5. There is spiritual content in scripture that points men to a Saviour (Jn 5:39).
    6. But they had a veil over their hearts to blind them to Christ (II Cor 3:12-15).
D. How can the Jews be said to trust in Moses (5:45) and yet not believe him here.
    1. They trusted Moses more by possessing his writings, rather than by doctrine.
    2. They venerated the scriptures by wearing them, like Catholics kissing them.
    3. But what Moses taught – especially concerning Christ – they did not believe.
    4. This vain confidence is like trusting descent from Abraham (John 8:39; etc.).

How shall ye believe my words?

A. If Moses their hero could not move them about Jesus, His own words could not.
    1. Moses did not have more authority or glory than Jesus, only in their minds.
    2. They neglected his prophecies of Christ – they rejected fulfillment in Jesus.
B. We should not foolishly wish God would speak to us, if we neglect the Bible.
C. Those who boast of God talking to them while rejecting His scripture are fools.
D. We read of no answer by the Jews to Him, and understandably so by His blast.
    1. What could they say? It was a masterpiece of evidence, logic, and revelation.
    2. They had no ability or hear for real spiritual reasoning as He had exercised.
E. Jesus condemned Jews for not believing and why (Jn 6:44-45; 8:43-47; 10:26).

Conclusion: there is no recorded end to this confrontation between Jesus and Jews.

A. The next recorded information in this gospel is His presence in Galilee (Jn 6:1).
B. Did He walk away with protection around Him like at Nazareth (Luke 4:30)?
C. Did His answers confound or shame them enough to let Him go (Matt 22:46)?
D. Did He hide Himself in some way and simply slip away (Jn 5:13; 8:59; 10:39)?
E. Did He demonstrate some power as He did later in Gethsemane (John 18:1-9)?

Application: what will you do with the Person and doctrine of Jesus exalted here?

A. John's purpose in the book (20:31) was gloriously fulfilled in this chapter alone.
B. Jesus declared His glorious relationship with the Father and then proved it well.
C. He summarized salvation by His authority and power and role of faith in Him.
D. What will you do with Christ? Do you have life and love? Can you reject peers?
E. Will you fall before Him, believing His words, and live for Him, unlike Jews?