

John 5:30-47

“I can do nothing on my own. I judge as God tells me. Therefore, my judgment is just, because I carry out the will of the one who sent me, not my own will.

³¹ “If I were to testify on my own behalf, my testimony would not be valid. ³² But someone else is also testifying about me, and I assure you that everything he says about me is true. ³³ In fact, you sent investigators to listen to John the Baptist, and his testimony about me was true. ³⁴ Of course, I have no need of human witnesses, but I say these things so you might be saved. ³⁵ John was like a burning and shining lamp, and you were excited for a while about his message. ³⁶ But I have a greater witness than John—my teachings and my miracles. The Father gave me these works to accomplish, and they prove that he sent me. ³⁷ And the Father who sent me has testified about me himself. You have never heard his voice or seen him face to face, ³⁸ and you do not have his message in your hearts, because you do not believe me—the one he sent to you.

³⁹ “You search the Scriptures because you think they give you eternal life. But the Scriptures point to me! ⁴⁰ Yet you refuse to come to me to receive this life.

⁴¹ “Your approval means nothing to me, ⁴² because I know you don’t have God’s love within you. ⁴³ For I have come to you in my Father’s name, and you have rejected me. Yet if others come in their own name, you gladly welcome them. ⁴⁴ No wonder you can’t believe! For you gladly honor each other, but you don’t care about the honor that comes from the one who alone is God. ⁴⁵ “Yet it isn’t I who will accuse you before the Father. Moses will accuse you! Yes, Moses, in whom you put your hopes. ⁴⁶ If you really believed Moses, you would believe me, because he wrote about me. ⁴⁷ But since you don’t believe what he wrote, how will you believe what I say?”

Background

In John 5, Jesus healed a paralyzed man at the Pool of Bethesda. The Jewish leaders didn’t rejoice; instead, they condemned Him for doing so on the Sabbath. They were infuriated when He claimed to be equal with God. Jesus didn’t retreat from this claim; He boldly asserted His deity, stating that honoring the Son is equal to honoring the Father (v23).

According to Old Testament Law, a claim needed two or three witnesses to be valid (Deut. 19:15). So, when Jesus said in John 5:31, *“If I were to testify on my own behalf, my testimony would not be valid...”* He wasn’t denying His truthfulness but affirming the legal standard. He then presented multiple sources to confirm His claim to be God.

Teaching Points

1. The deity of Christ was confirmed by more than two witnesses.

In John 5, Jesus presents multiple witnesses to support His claim to be God:

1. **God the Father** (v32): Through the context, we believe the “someone else” of verse 32 refers to the Father. Jesus refers to the Father’s testimony, particularly at His baptism, when God declared, *“This is my dearly loved Son”* (Matthew 3:16-17).
2. **John the Baptist** (v33-35): John testified to Jesus as the Lamb of God (John 1:29).
3. **Jesus’ Miracles** (v36): The miraculous works Jesus performed testify to His divine authority and power, confirming His deity.
4. **The Scriptures** (v39): The Old Testament, particularly the Messianic prophecies, point to Jesus as the Messiah.
5. **Moses** (v45-46): Jesus references Moses' writings, especially Deuteronomy 18:15-18, which prophesy about the coming Prophet like Moses.

These sources solidify the truth of Jesus’ divine nature and continue to testify to this truth today.

2. “The Word” cannot be separated from “the word.”

Jesus Christ, “the Word,” is inseparable from “the word” of Scripture. He tells the Jews that if they truly knew the Scriptures, they would believe in Him, for the Scriptures testify about Him (v39-40). He emphasizes that belief in Scripture and belief in Him go hand in hand. If you truly accept God's Word, you must accept Jesus, and vice versa.

Application

1. Whose approval do we really want?

In verse 44, Jesus challenged His critics for seeking honor from people rather than from God. This question prompts us to reflect: Whose approval do we truly desire? Is our goal the glory of God or the glory of ourselves? If we seek God's approval, our lives and priorities will reflect that. We must ask ourselves, whose approval do we really want?