**One with the Father**

**John 5**

**Introduction – Some still try to discredit Jesus The following news headline from Yahoo illustrates this: “Self-Professed ‘Bible Scholar’ Makes Explosive Allegation About Jesus That He Believes Could Rock the Christian Faith to Its Core” (Joseph Atwill).**

**Jesus and John 5**

1. John 5-10 is known as the “**Festive Cycle**” (Jewish Feasts in Jerusalem)
2. The Gospel of John is very **eschatological** (connected to idea of “eternal life)
3. The Jewish man Jesus healed shows **no signs of faith** (contrast John 4)
4. The healing miracle in John 5 **illustrates** the deep truth in 5:19-30
5. John 5 was a key **Christological** passage at the **Council of Nicaea** (AD 325) [Athanasius]
6. There is a textual issue in John 5 (verse 4 is absent from the best manuscripts)
7. As Jesus fulfills the Sabbath He is accused of violating it!
8. John 5:19 is **not** teaching that Jesus is inferior to or less than the Father
9. The Jewish leaders understood Jesus to be claiming **equality with God**
10. John 5:19-30 teaches the perfect **unity of will** between Son and Father
11. **Jesus is the Great Sabbath Fulfiller (5:1-18)**
12. **Jesus is willing to fulfill the Sabbath in your life (5:1-9)**
13. **Bless God for His work in your life (5:1-9)**
14. The last phrase in these verses is an important for understanding what happens. Verse 9 ends, “*Now that day was the Sabbath*.” **Furthermore**, we know that Jesus was in Jerusalem and the area where he performs His “third sign” (to reveal His glory) was in the temple. Already, we should be prepared for a confrontation. Again, as we study John 5, let us not forget what happened in John 4. In John 4 we witnessed many Samaritans coming to faith in Jesus as their Messiah as well as another Gentile response of faith in Jesus with the healing of the official’s son. Now we come to John 5 and witness a reaction against Jesus.
15. The non-commitment (apathetic and lethargic) to Jesus in John 1-4 by many Jewish people now gives way to outright **animosity** and **rejection**. Notice in verse 18 of John 5 that the Jewish leaders are now trying to kill Jesus At this point we believe it is about eighteen months (a year and a half) before Jesus is crucified. Let’s talk for a moment about the man who is sick. As we will see, this miracle of healing (of giving renewed life) illustrates the theological truth stated in verses 19-30 perhaps the most important theological teaching in John 5 about Jesus and the Father.
16. All we are told is that he was some kind of invalid and that he suffered for thirty-eight years. That’s a long time to suffer. So when Jesus asked him if he wanted to be healed note well the man’s response in verse 7. When Jesus asked him if he wanted to be healed, he never gives Jesus a positive answer of faith. He simply offers a complaint. His answer to Jesus shows little respect for Jesus and he seems to respond with a bit of sarcastic, self-centered pity (woe is me!). To summarize: Jesus said, “Do you want to be healed?” And the man responds by complaining to Jesus about his situation. This is the first clue that things are not well in Jerusalem. Sadly, faith is not to be found in bountiful supply in Jerusalem at this time. Jesus is about to do a great work in this man’s life and he shows no signs of responding with faith. **D.A. Carson** describes this man by saying, “**Here we have the crotchety (bad-tempered, crabby, irritable) grumblings of an old and not very perceptive man who thinks he is answering stupid questions**.”
17. **Application** – Ask God to give you a thankful heart for all that He does in your life.
18. **Seek the greater truth about Jesus**
19. John is teaching us that the actions and words of Jesus are establishing Himself as having equal authority with the Father (Augustine). The man who was healed fails to understand or perceive the significance of his own healing. This sign should have opened his eyes that Jesus is Messiah, the Son of God, but instead the eyes of his heart remain closed.
20. The healing of this invalid and all the other words and works of Jesus Christ are meant to reveal His glory by showing us that everything He does is in perfect alignment and agreement with His Father.
21. **Jesus makes an astounding Sabbath claim (5:10-15)**
22. **Determine never to blame God for anything (5:10-15)**
23. Jesus is claiming that His signs of healing are parallel to the Father’s activity in sustaining the universe! In these verses, notice that the Jewish leaders were not accusing Jesus of breaking the Sabbath law because He healed the invalid. They were concerned that Jesus violated the Sabbath when he commanded the man to pick up his mat and walk. This was their greater concern. When they first questioned the man who was healed their questions reveal this, “Who told you to pick up your mat and walk?” (“Who told you to break the Sabbath?).
24. Let’s go back to the man who was healed. Notice that when he was questioned by the Jewish leaders, the man who was healed does not even know who healed him! We would think he would at least know his name, **but he is clueless**. His lack of awareness of who healed him further illustrates his dullness of heart and faith. **But it gets worse**. After the Jewish leaders left him, Jesus “just happens” to find him again and at this point the man finally understands that it is Jesus who healed him. But instead of stopping to give God praise and to express his faith in Jesus as the Messiah, he goes back to the Jewish authorities and basically **blames** Jesus for causing him to break the Sabbath. Tragic. “**The man defends himself by blaming the one who told him to do it**.” (D.A. Carson). He is blaming God for his own problem and failing to give God praise for his healing. This is a dangerous situation to be in in life. **A final note here** about what Jesus told the man before he disappeared into the crowd. Stop sinning. All I will say at this point is that Jesus makes some kind of a connection between why he had been sick for so long and warned him not to continue to sin otherwise he would be suffering for not just another thirty-eight years by the pool, but for eternity in hell. There is no question that here in John 5:14 Jesus is teaching that some sickness is due to the sin a person might commit in life (Acts 5:1-11 is another example). **D.A. Carson**, “The command to stop sinning is choses to stress urgency. The “***something worse***” in verse 14 must be final judgment (later explained in verse 29). This is a helpful insight because the One who spoke this has been entrusted with judging all humanity in the future.
25. **Discern the deeper meaning of the Sabbath (5:16-18)**
26. There are two thoughts to consider here from these verses. **First**, the answer Jesus gave when he said, “***My Father is working until now and I am working***.” **Second**, the Jewish leaders understood Jesus claiming to be equal with the Father. This has even greater implication beyond just Sabbath violation and goes straight to the heart of Christology in John’s Gospel. For now we will consider what Jesus was saying when he said, “*My Father is working until now and I am working*.” Jesus says something here that is completely new. He says, “**My Father**.” Jewish people did not talk this way and immediately these words of Jesus would have caused concern to the Jewish leaders. Jesus was already emphasizing His unique relationship with His Father. But what did Jesus mean when he said, “*My Father is working until now and I am working?*” To our modern ears this saying of Jesus may not seem to make any sense, but to the Jewish ears who heard Jesus say this was a shocking Sabbath claim.
27. **D.A. Carson**, “Jesus responds to their charge of Sabbath violation with a surprising defense” (paraphrase). **Carson goes on to say** **this**, “Jesus’ response is quite unlike any he offers in other recorded Sabbath controversies. **At one level**, he adopts the common Jewish opinion. According to Genesis 2:2-3 (our Scripture reading today), on the seventh day of creation week God rested from his creative work. Does God, then, keep the Sabbath law? If not, does not God himself become a law-breaker? But if he observes the Sabbath, who keeps the universe in running order while he rests?” Whether God broke the Sabbath or not, everyone agreed that God continuously works. Jesus simply assumes this and applies it to Himself. Jesus is claiming that his works are just as important as the Creators works in Genesis 1. **Verse 18,** *This was why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God*. The Old Testament is abundantly clear that God is incomparable and without equal (see Isaiah 40:18, 25) The Old Testament also teaches us that those human beings who were foolish enough to compare themselves to God were severely judged – **Pharaoh** in Ezekiel 29:3; **Joash** in 2 Chronicles 24:24; **Hiram** in Ezekiel 28:2; and **Nebuchadnezzar** in Isaiah 14:14; Daniel 4.
28. **Verse 18 summarizes** the reason why the Jewish leaders rejected and opposed Jesus. When they understood His claim to be equal with the Father, they were convinced he had just make the same mistake as Pharaoh, Joash, Hiram, and Nebuchadnezzar, committing blasphemy and therefore deserving death. **Note** – If Jesus was merely a man, then the Jewish leaders were right!
29. Jesus is claiming equality with the Father and the Jewish leaders clearly understood this. This led **Augustine** to say, “**Jews understand what Arians do not**. For the Arians say that the Son is not equal to the Father, and hence sprang up that heresy that afflicts the church” (Tractates on the Gospel of John 17:16). If Jesus had not wished to establish His equality with the Father, then He would have immediately corrected this Jewish understanding. If Jesus is not equal to the Father, Jesus would have been the first person to tell the Jewish leaders and everyone else, “I am not God” or “I am not making myself equal with the Father”, but Jesus never does this!
30. **Jesus is Eternally One with the Father (5:19-46)**

***Jesus demonstrates that His will and that of the Father are one since He is of one essence with His Father and cannot act contrary to the nature He shares with the Father (Cyril, Chrysostom). The Son does the same things as the Father, which demonstrates their unity of substance (Augustine)***

1. **Jesus is perfectly equal with the Father (5:19-30)**

***Athanasius and the Council of Nicaea rightly insisted on using the word ‘homoousios’ (the same in substance) to describe the Son’s relation to the Father***

1. **Believe the Father entrusts all judgment to the Son (5:19-24)**
2. **First of all**, there is so much truth given to us in verses 19-24. These six verses are filled with amazing truth and the implications for Christian belief about Jesus and how this relates to our worship. **So what does verse 19 mean?** Upon first reading this, **it seems** that Jesus is making a kind of ‘helpless’ statement about himself in relation to the Father – as if He were admitting that He is inferior to the Father and that He needs to first get permission from the Father before He can do anything. But this is not what John is teaching us. **John is explaining the beauty of the perfect and united will of God between the Son and the Father.** John is not telling us that Jesus is *another* God or a *competing* God. There is a ***functional subordination*** between Jesus and the Father, but this only applies to the brief period of time from the Incarnation to the Crucifixion. This kind of subordination has nothing to do with equality of essence. The Son and the Father eternally share the same *essence* of nature as God. **Christian monotheism (belief in One God) is distinctly Trinitarian (we do not believe in di-theism or tri-theism**). **John is telling us that the Son always pleases the Father in everything He does (8:29) and the Son always and only does what He sees His Father doing.**
3. John explains the eternal relationship between the Father and the Son through a temporal earthly metaphor of father and son. Sons often copy and imitate their fathers (fathers do not copy and imitate their sons). Whether we can fully understand this or not, in Scripture, the Father initiates, sends, commands, commissions, grants; the Son responds, obeys, performs his Father’s will, receives authority (Carson).here we encounter the **Logic of Eternal Love** – the Father loves the Son and the Son loves the Father. We see this perfect love the Son has for the Father in the cross. Remember **John 1:18**, *No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side,* ***he has made him known***. These verses are expanding and deepening what John said in the Prologue. We will return to this theme in chapters 14-17. The very obedience and dependence that characterize Jesus’ utter subordination to the Father are themselves so perfect that all Jesus does is what the Father wills and does, so it is nothing less than the revelation of God.
4. This is why Jesus will later say, “Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father!” (14:9), another shocking claim. John is teaching us that the Son is unable to act contrary to the Father (**Chrysostom**). The Son enjoys bringing glory to the Father through the works he does, even as the Father enjoys our amazement at what his Son accomplishes (**Basil**).
5. The Old Testament is clear. Only God can raise the dead and give spiritual life to a person or a people. Verse 21, *For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will.* This powerful divine truth was illustrates for us when we read about Jesus healing the man who had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. Jesus chose to restore his health and give him life. In the same way, Jesus chooses who will receive eternal life (divine sovereignty in salvation). This is immediately balances by the promise that all who believe in the Son will receive eternal life (verse 22). When a sinner comes to faith in Jesus Christ it is nothing short of a miraculous spiritual resurrection from the dead. **Remember**, in Jewish thought and expectation resurrection from the dead was something which belonged **only** to the **age to come** (which was simultaneous with the final judgment). So how can John make this astounding claim that sinners can receive eternal life in this present age? **The answer** is found in what we have called “**realized (inaugurated) eschatology**”. Furthermore, John is also revealing another important truth about the final, last day judgment. For everyone who puts his or her faith in Jesus Christ, not only does God give that person eternal-resurrection life now, but also announces the verdict of final judgment in your life now! **D.A. Carson concludes**, “That in turn demands that we see in the life the believer may now obtain from Jesus is not only a foretaste and an anticipation of the resurrection life to come, but something of its real substance – a down payment of it (to borrow from Paul’s category).
6. **Verse 24**, to hear the words of Jesus is to hear the voice of God. They are in perfect agreement. The believer does not come to the final judgment, but leaves the court already acquitted. Nor is it necessary for the believer to wait until the last day to experience something of resurrection life: the believer has eternal life and has crossed over from death to life (Carson).
7. **Know the Father and Son possess eternal life (5:25-30)**
8. John is attributing some magnificent truths to Jesus Christ in these verses about resurrection and judgment. Everything the Old Testament taught about God’s ability to bring about resurrection and the final judgment is now described as the ability of the Son.
9. Notice again in verse 25 the phrase, “***an hour is coming, and is now here***” – this is a **thoroughly eschatological concept** in John’s Gospel. Consider carefully the following statement by **George Eldon Ladd**, “The Kingdom of God is the redemptive reign of God dynamically active to establish his rule among human beings, and…this Kingdom, which will appear as an apocalyptic act at the end of the age, has already come into human history in the person and mission of Jesus to overcome evil, to deliver people from tits power, and to bring them into blessings of God’s reign.” Only God can give eternal life because He alone possesses eternal life by virtue of His very nature. Eternal life means participating or sharing in the resurrection. Eternal life is resurrection life.
10. **Practically**, when John says that the Son has been given authority to grant eternal life (or resurrection life) we are given a remarkable statement about who can enter the Kingdom of God. Tom Schreiner writes, “**He is the king and judge, deciding both who enters the kingdom and who is excluded from it** (see also Matthew 25:31-36).”
11. **Note well the exclusive statement of Jesus in verse 23, a failure to honor the Son is a failure to honor the Father.** If the Jewish leaders are right, and then Jesus would be a lunatic blasphemer, but if Jesus is correct, then He is to be worshipped as God. **Furthermore**, if John is wrong he is supremely deluded and must be dismissed as a fool, but his witness is true and Jesus is to be ascribed the honors due to God alone.
12. **Throughout the history of salvation**, God revealed himself through the prophets, and sadly, many of the Jewish people did not believe what God revealed in those times, but now they are rejected God’s greatest revelation in the person of His beloved Son, Jesus. **Verse 26 says,** *For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself*. We do not have time to discuss this in detail but this verse helps us to understand the Christian doctrine of the **Eternal generation of the Son**.
13. **Deep Thoughts about the Father and Son**. The relationship between God the Father and God the Son (Jesus) is not the same as the relationship between human parents and children. Human fathers are not fathers before their sons or daughters are born. If you were an only child, for example, could your dad ever have been called a father before you existed? No. Until a son or daughter is born, no man is a father. So if you think in those terms, you may think that God the Father did not exist before the Son (Jesus) was born. But the Church says that God the Father has always been the Father. So if the Father has always been the Father, then the Son (Jesus) has always been, too. Jesus is the eternal Son of the Father. The Father did not exist without the Son for even one instant, one second, or microsecond, because the Father was always Father and the Son was always Son. Unlike our human experience, God the Father does not exist before the Son, both exist at the same time. The two words depend on each other and the two Persons of God the Father and God the Son have always existed together simultaneously” (John Trigilio, 71).
14. **Multiple Witnesses Demand a Just Verdict (5:31-47; Deuteronomy 19:15-21)**
15. **Remember the Father faithfully testifies of Jesus (5:31-38)**
16. Jesus briefly reminds us of the human testimony of John the Baptist, but he does not dwell very long on John’s testimony. One reason for this is because Jesus will now produce greater testimonies than John the Baptist.
17. Notice that in all of these verses (5:31-47) Jesus is establishing the importance of how **Deuteronomy 19:15-21** still applies today. One witness is not sufficient to establish the truth, but we always need multiple witnesses (two or more) to verify the truthfulness of something. This is the high standard of truth and justice. **In verse 36**, Jesus makes a bold claim. The works He does (all the miracles and signs) were given to Him by the Father and these works are a supernatural testimony to who Jesus is. The truth in verse 36 supports the whole thesis of John in chapter 20. This should have been obvious to the Jewish leaders.
18. **In verses 37-38**, Jesus claims that His Father is the greatest witness. The other Gospel accounts tell us that when Jesus was **baptized** by John the Baptizer, the **Father’s voice** was heard from heaven giving divine approval of the Son, “*This is my beloved Son, listen to him*” (Mark 1:11).
19. **In verse 37-38 Jesus says something shocking**. Note that he is speaking to the religious leaders of Israel who studied and knew the Scriptures well. Jesus said too them, *His voice you have never heard, his form you have never seen, and you do not have his word abiding in you, for you do not believe the one whom he has sent*. This statement of rebuke not only tells us that if we reject the Son we must also reject the Father, but furthermore testifies that we must also reject Scripture because it is God’s voice, His revelation to us. **This is the significance of knowing who Jesus is**. In the next point, Moses will be another testimony to accuse the unbelieving Jewish leaders. Jesus is vigorously defending who He is and in the process He is giving a triple indictment to His opponents. And He’s not yet done. In verses 31-38 Jesus gives three witnesses, now we move on to the next point where we encounter two more witnesses in favor of Jesus.
20. **Study Scripture as a powerful witness to Jesus (5:39-47)**
21. **Verse 39 is powerful** **statement from Jesus**. What a rebuke from Jesus.
22. Jesus acknowledges their diligence to study the Scriptures in search of eternal life, but then turns right back around at them and claims that their study of Scripture was accompanied with a heart of unbelief and they deny the possibility of possessing eternal life because they have denied Scriptures witness to Jesus Christ!
23. **D.A. Carson writes**, “Their tragic failure to grasp God’s truth was nowhere more clearly manifest than in their approach to the Scriptures. There is nothing life-giving about studying the Scriptures, if a person fails to discern their true content and purpose.”
24. **Verse 39 is one of six verses in John which tell us the Old Testament (i.e. the Scriptures) testify to Jesus Christ** (1:45; 2:22; 3:10; 5:45-46; and 20:9). D.A. Carson implies that what is at stake here is a **comprehensive hermeneutical key**.” The whole Old Testament points to and testifies to Jesus Christ. This is how we should read all of Scripture.
25. **Therefore** if the Jewish leaders refuse to come to Jesus Christ for life, one possible reason is because they were not reading their Scriptures as they were meant to be read. Their “searching” of Scriptures made them deaf to the words and works of Jesus Christ.
26. Finally, Jesus claims that Moses testifies against their unbelief. In the last day, Moses will serve as a testimony for Jesus and against their unbelief. Moses will be their accuser, the one they claimed to believe and venerate so much**.**

**Jesus is One with the Father.**

**Have you been united to the Father through faith in Jesus Christ?**