

John 05 - The Healing of the Paralytic; Four-fold Witness of His Messianic Claims

II. Public Ministry (John 1:19—11:57)

(8) Healing of the Lame Man (5:1-18)

(A) The lame man meets Christ (5:1-9)

(a) Wallowing on his pallet (5:1-8)

(i) Misery beside the waters (5:1-5)

(ii) Moving of the waters (5:6-7)

(iii) Healing by the waters (5:8)

(b) Walking with his pallet (5:9)

(B) Healed man meets the Pharisees (5:10-13)

(a) Pharisees' denunciation (5:10)

(b) Healed man's defense (5:11-13)

(C) Healed man reunites with Christ (5:14-15)

(D) The Pharisees condemn Christ (5:16-18)

(a) Healing on the Sabbath (5:16)

(b) Made Himself equal with God (5:17-18)

(9) Christ's Equality with the Father (5:19-30)

(A) Equality in work (5:19-20)

(B) Equality in giving spiritual resurrection and life (5:21)

(C) Equality in judging (5:22)

(D) Equality in honor (5:23)

(E) Believing: from death to life (5:24-25)

(F) Equality in life (5:26)

(G) Equality in judging (5:27)

(H) Equality in giving physical resurrection and life (5:28-29)

(I) Equality in work (5:30)

(10) Christ's Witnesses (5:31-47)

(A) Christ Himself (5:31)

(B) John the Baptist (5:32-35)

(C) Christ's works (5:36)

(D) The Father (5:37-38)

(E) The Scriptures (5:39-44)

(F) Moses (5:45-47)

John 5

(8) Healing of the Lame Man (5:1-18)

(A) The lame man meets Christ (5:1-9)

(a) Wallowing on his pallet (5:1-8)

(i) Misery beside the waters (5:1-5)

1 After these things there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

1 After these things there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

1 Later on, there was another festival of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

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

- "After these things" - after Jesus healed the Nobleman's son (4:43-54)

- "...a feast of the Jews" - an unnamed feast; some manuscripts say "the feast," so some commentators believe it was Passover. If this is the case, it would be the second Passover mentioned in Jesus' public ministry.

- "...Jerusalem" - the scene now shifts from Cana (4:46) back to Jerusalem

— There are 5x in John's Gospel where it says Jesus made a special trip to Jerusalem to celebrate a Jewish feast (2:23; 5:1; 7:2; 10:22; 13:1)

2 Now in Jerusalem, by the **Sheep Gate**, there is **a pool which in Hebrew is called Bethesda**, having five porticoes.

2 Now there is in Jerusalem by the sheep *gate* a pool, which is called in Hebrew Bethesda, having five porticoes.

2 Near the Sheep Gate in Jerusalem is a pool called Bethesda in Hebrew. It has five colonnades,

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

- "...*Sheep Gate*" - a gate in the wall around Jerusalem where they took sheep in and out of the city (Cf. Neh 3:1,32) (see map below)

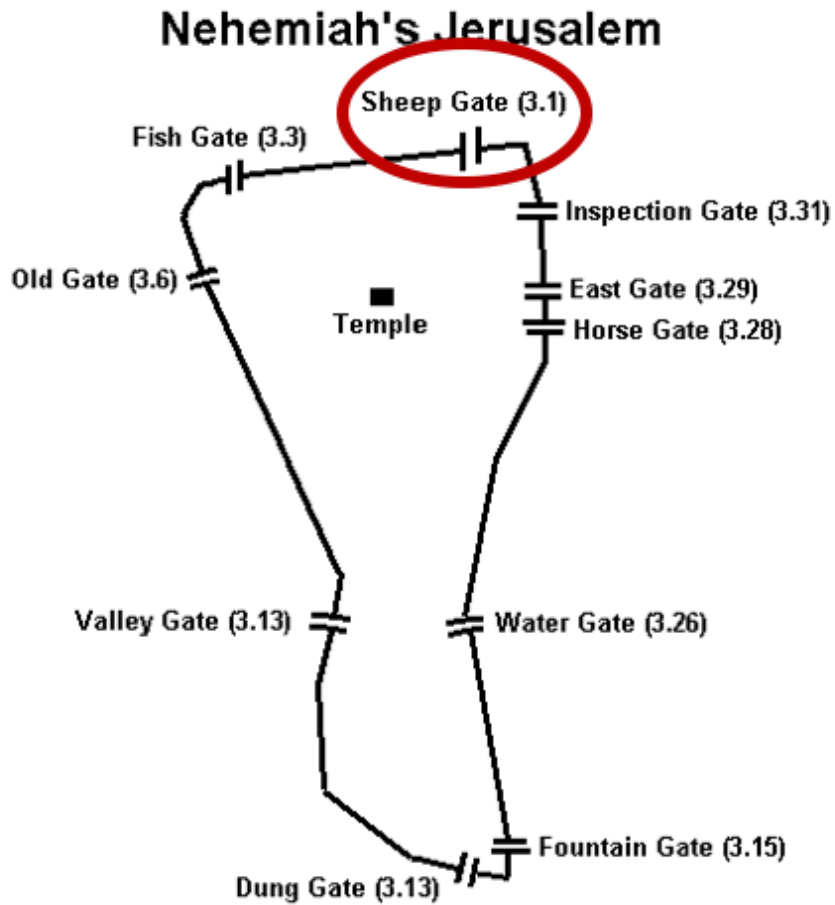
- "...a pool"- see picture below of an exposed portion of the southern pool

- "...which in Hebrew is called Bethesda" - another clue that John is writing to unsaved Gentiles (Cf. 4:9; 19:13,31). A Jewish reader would not need an explanation of the Hebrew as it would've been obvious to them.

— The Bethesda pool was a large rectangular pool for cleaning animals; about 2-3ft deep and about 20-30ft across

— It's located in the Muslim Quarter of the Old City and been uncovered in recent years, and may be seen in Jerusalem today

— It was previously used by skeptics to cast doubt on the truthfulness of the NT, because no such pool was known. However, since that time archaeologists proved John's account correct.





3 In these *porticoes* lay a multitude of those who were sick, blind, limping, or paralyzed.

3 In these lay a multitude of those who were sick, blind, lame, and withered, [waiting for the moving of the waters;

3 and under these a large number of sick people were lying—blind, lame, or paralyzed—waiting for the movement of the water.

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

- A bunch of people gathered, all in a very desperate physical condition...sick, blind, limping or paralyzed

— Jesus gravitated to these types of people and these types of situations throughout His ministry

— Jesus recognized that these people were not just in a state of physical bondage due to their various ailments, but more importantly they were in a state of spiritual bondage. In fact, Jesus is going to use the physical healing of a man to perform an even greater spiritual miracle.

4 [waiting for the moving of the waters; for an angel of the Lord went down at certain seasons into the pool and stirred up the water; whoever then first, after the stirring up of the water, stepped in was made well from whatever disease with which he was afflicted.]

4 for an angel of the Lord went down at certain seasons into the pool and stirred up the water; whoever then first, after the stirring up of the water, stepped in was made well from whatever disease with which he was afflicted.]

4 At certain times an angel of the Lord would go down into the pool and stir up the water, and whoever stepped in first after the stirring of the water was healed of whatever disease he had.

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.

[Verse 4 appears to be an explanatory addition]

- Most commentators believed that it was a pagan superstition that this multitude had bought into. They believed, in their sickened state, that an angel would come and stir up the water, and whoever made it to the water first would be healed. So they spent their lives sitting there, waiting for this so-called miraculous healing, that was never promised by God but was promised by paganism and superstition.

- People who are under a physically desperate condition easily become prey to all sorts of false ideas and false doctrine

- So these people were under physical bondage due to various serious health issues, and they were also under spiritual bondage to this pagan superstition which promised them physical healing, but never delivered.

- Religious concepts, when they are not anchored in the Word of God, will always put someone into a state of bondage (Cf. Col 2:8)

[Explanatory Addition]

No extant Greek manuscript before 400 AD contains these words. The earliest manuscripts omit these words which appear to be a later insertion to explain why the pool water was "stirred" (v7). People believed that an angel came and stirred it. According to local tradition, the first one in the water would be healed. This would be contrary to Biblical teaching: a "survival of the fittest" presumption... [Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-). *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*]

5 Now a man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight years.

5 A man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight years.

5 One particular man was there who had been ill for 38 years.

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

- The man's problem appears to be paralysis (v7), which severely limited his mobility, so he sat there year after year after year under both his physical and spiritual condition

(ii) Moving of the waters (5:6-7)

6 Jesus, upon seeing this man lying *there* and knowing that he had already been *in that condition* for a long time, *said to him, "**Do you want to get well?**"

6 When Jesus saw him lying *there*, and knew that he had already been a long time *in that condition*, He *said to him, "**Do you wish to get well?**"

6 When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had already been there a long time, he asked him, "**Do you want to get well?**"

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?**

- John again highlights Jesus' omniscience (1:47-50; 4:17-19) to show that when people were dealing directly with Jesus Christ, they were not just dealing with another human being...they were dealing with the Son of God

- "...Do you want to get well?" - the man has been sitting beside the pool for 38 years, and he (v7) complains to Jesus about his inability to get into the pool (likely due to paralysis).

What kind of question is this? Isn't it obvious that the man wants to get well/be healed?

— The answer likely comes from v14, where Jesus tells the man (after he is healed), "do not sin anymore, so that nothing worse happens to you." So the man was in this predicament because of some kind of sin in his life.

— There are many people who have grown so accustomed to their sin and the consequences that they really don't want to change. Jesus knows this, hence the question.

— Jesus asked this question because He knew that this man was in the physical condition he was in because of sin in his life. Mankind loves sin (3:19-21). The problem is that there is always a payday someday. Sin, regardless of how appetizing or pleasurable it is initially, ultimately puts a person into a state of bondage.

— Jesus asked the question to communicate to the man that whatever sin he was involved in, if he wanted to get well, he'd have to leave that sin behind. So when we connect v6 with v14, we understand where Jesus was going with His question.

Thirty-Eight Years

It appears that the healing at Bethesda is meant to convey much more than meets the eye. The first clue as to what that might be comes with the fact that the man had been an invalid for 38 years. The only other time 38 years appears in the Bible is in Deut 2:14 describing the length of time the Jews had spent in the wilderness where they received the Law.

This little hint tells us the cripple by the pool in his catch-22 represented Israel in theirs. Because they were sinners, they couldn't keep the Law to be saved. But if they could have kept the Law they wouldn't have needed saving. They needed someone to save them just as they were.

Bethesda means House of Mercy. Like the cripple, Israel needed someone to show them mercy in their hopeless condition. The Lord showed His mercy to the cripple and offered to do the same for Israel.

Though Jesus came to the pool specifically to heal this one cripple, the man didn't recognize his Healer and didn't know with whom he was speaking. Though Jesus came to Earth specifically to save Israel (Matt 15:24), they didn't recognize their Savior and didn't know with whom they were speaking. "If you're the Christ," they said, "then tell us" (Luke 22:67). This after He had fulfilled hundreds of prophecies from their Scriptures concerning His coming.

Jesus told the healed cripple to stop sinning lest something worse should happen. He couldn't have been speaking generally because He knew that if man could stop sinning altogether, he could save himself and wouldn't need a Savior. The catch-22 wouldn't exist. So He must have had a specific sin in mind.

By working to keep the Law in an effort to save themselves, the Israelites were relying on their own righteousness, a sin. The Law was never meant to be a means of salvation, but to reveal the need for a Savior (Rom 3:20). In admonishing the cripple, He was also telling Israel to stop committing the sin of self-righteousness lest something worse should happen.

And because they refused, it did. In the Lord's time on Earth Israel was subordinate to Rome but still existed as a nation. 38 years after the crucifixion Jerusalem was destroyed and soon after that Israel ceased to exist altogether. So it looks as if this one crippled man was chosen to send a message to Israel, joining the Lord in acting out a parable. But the Lord and the cripple were also sending a message to us. For which of us has not claimed to be our own Savior at some point in our lives? Which of us has not been proud in our self-righteousness?

Each of us is in the same catch-22 as the cripple, helpless to save ourselves and therefore hopelessly lost. We're destined to carry our sins to the grave unless God extends His mercy. And so meeting us right where we are, He asks us just like He asked the cripple, *"Do you want to get well?"*

7 The sick man answered Him, "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, but while I am coming, another steps down before me."

7 The sick man answered Him, "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, but while I am coming, another steps down before me."

7 The sick man answered him, "Sir, I don't have anyone to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up. While I'm trying to get there, someone else steps down ahead of me."

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 man was physically unable to get into the pool due to his physical limitations (likely paralysis)

(iii) Healing by the waters (5:8)

8 Jesus *said to him, "Get up, pick up your pallet and walk."

8 Jesus *said to him, "Get up, pick up your pallet and walk."

8 Jesus told him, "Stand up, pick up your mat, and walk!"

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

- Sign 3: the healing of the paralytic man, where Jesus demonstrates His authority over lifeless limbs and pagan superstitions

— Jesus is essentially saying to the man, believe whatever you want about this pagan superstition, the angel stirring the waters and getting healed if you're the first one in, but I have authority and power over that superstition, I'm not bound by that superstition, and I don't even need the angel to stir the water or for you to get into the pool...I can heal you right here and now.

— His healing was instantaneous, complete, and forever! (Eccl 3:14)

- At this point in Jesus' ministry, He did not yet demand faith from the receiver of the miracle (see note: **Changes in Jesus' Ministry** in Matt 12) and initially He did not tell the man He claimed to be the Messiah (Cf. v13)

Seven Signs in John's Gospel

1. Changing water to wine (2:11)

2. Healing official's son (4:46-54)

3. Healing an invalid at the Pool of Bethesda (5:1-18)

4. Feeding the 5000 (6:5-14)

5. Walking on water (6:16-21)

6. Healing a blind man (9:1-7)

7. Raising of Lazarus (11:1-45)

(b) Walking with his pallet (5:9)

9 **Immediately** the man became well, and picked up **his pallet** and *began* to walk. **Now it was a Sabbath on that day.**

9 Immediately the man became well, and picked up his pallet and *began* to walk. Now it was the Sabbath on that day.

9 The man immediately became well, and he picked up his mat and started walking. Now that day was a Sabbath.

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

- "Immediately" - no "divine process" here, which many "faith healers" today claim is the case when they pray for someone and the person is not healed. When Jesus healed, it was immediate and complete, no partial healings.

— In Acts 3:6-8, the apostles healed another paralytic "immediately"

- "...his pallet" - before his healing, his pallet was a symbol of his physical bondage; after his healing, the man had authority over his pallet...he could pick it up and walk with it

- "...Now it was a Sabbath on that day" - uh oh, someone's feelings are now going to be hurt. This fact kicks off a whole new scene as Christ, the healed paralytic man, and the Pharisees begin to debate the issue.

— Among the 1500 Sabbath rules, one forbade a person to carry a burden from a public place to a private place, or from a private place to a public place

— The punishment was death by stoning (But according to the *Mishnah*, a man could not be accused of violating the sabbath unless he had first been formally warned against such an action.)

— Jesus knew that asking the man to pick up his bed would raise the issue regarding His Messianic claims, but He wanted the people and leaders to come to a decision concerning Him

— See note: **Historical Background on the Sabbath Day Controversies** in Matt 12:8

- What Jesus asked the man to do in v8 was a breach of *Pharisaic interpretation* of keeping the Sabbath, not the Mosaic Law

(B) Healed man meets the Pharisees (5:10-13)

(a) Pharisees' denunciation (5:10)

10 So the Jews were saying to the man who was cured, "It is a **Sabbath**, and it is not permissible for you to carry your pallet."

10 So the Jews were saying to the man who was cured, "It is the Sabbath, and it is not permissible for you to carry your pallet."

10 So the Jewish leaders told the man who had been healed, "It is the Sabbath, and it is not lawful for you to carry your mat.

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.

- "...Sabbath" - what's the big deal about the Sabbath?

— It goes back to the Babylonian captivity (586 BC), which lasted 70 years because the Israelites did not give their land a sabbath (Lev 25:1-7) over a span of 490 years

- After the captivity was over and some Jews returned to Israel, a group called the Pharisees arose. Well-intentioned at first, they reasoned that if not keeping the Sabbath caused them to go into captivity, and they never wanted to go back into captivity again, they wanted to ensure that the nation followed the Sabbath rules laid out by God.
- Over time, what began to happen is that the Pharisees began to come up with regulation after regulation (the *Mishnah* and two *Talmuds*) covering Sabbath day activities, to the point where a Jewish person could do almost nothing on a Sabbath day.
- These layers of manmade rules and traditions effectively "buried" the Law of God under a pile of minutiae (Cf. Mark 7:13)
- Jesus showed up and respected the original intent of the Law of God regarding the Sabbath, which was to be a blessing to mankind, rather than the rules that the Pharisees developed. Jesus (Matt 12:8) refers to Himself as the "Lord of the Sabbath" meaning that He was present when the Father gave the Law to Moses, so He knew exactly what the Sabbath is and what it is not, and all of these Pharisaical regulations miss the original intent of the Sabbath.
- The moment Jesus began His ministry, He began to target these manmade rules that came down from the Pharisees, which made Him a target. Why did He become a target? Because these manmade rules were the tools that the Pharisees used to control the masses. The rules gave the Pharisees, as the originators and interpreters of the rules, the authority to control the people. This is the very definition of legalism.
- Their rules had gotten so out of hand that a man, who was paralyzed for 38 years and was suddenly healed, could be questioned and punished because he was carrying a pallet on the Sabbath. If the Sabbath was regarded as a blessing for man, which was the original intent, a man healed and made well after 38 years should've led to rejoicing and praise to God, but instead brought derision.

(b) Healed man's defense (5:11-13)

11 But he answered them, "He who made me well was the one who said to me, '**Pick up your pallet and walk.**'"

11 But he answered them, "He who made me well was the one who said to me, '**Pick up your pallet and walk.**'"

11 But he answered them, "The man who made me well told me, '**Pick up your mat and walk.**'"

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

- The man says, Don't blame me. I've been sick for 38 years; a Man walked up to me and asked me if I wanted to be healed. I said Yes. Then He healed me, told me to pick up my pallet, and I got up and walked.

12 They asked him, "Who is the man who said to you, 'Pick *it* up and walk'?"

12 They asked him, "Who is the man who said to you, 'Pick up *your pallet* and walk'?"

12 They asked him, "Who is the man who told you, 'Pick it up and walk'?"

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

- The Pharisees asked, Who is the man who gave you permission to transgress our manmade rules about what you can and can't do on the Sabbath?

— The Pharisees are not asking this question so that they can locate Jesus and give Him some type of award or recognition. They will use this information as part of a heinous plot to eventually murder Him.

13 But the man who was healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had slipped away while there was a crowd in *that* place.

13 But the man who was healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had slipped away while there was a crowd in *that* place.

13 But the one who had been healed did not know who it was, because Jesus had slipped away from the crowd in that place.

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

- The healed man did not have an idea of who it was who healed him...

— The time had not come for Dan 9:25 to be fulfilled yet

— This happens over and over again in the Bible... time after time attempts were made to cutoff the messianic lineage, but time after time God intervened and He slipped away (Cf. 8:59; see [Stratagems of Satan](#) for a complete list).

(C) Healed man reunites with Christ (5:14-15)

14 Afterward, **Jesus *found him** in the temple and said to him, "**Behold, you have become well; do not sin anymore, so that nothing worse happens to you.**"

14 Afterward Jesus *found him in the temple and said to him, "**Behold, you have become well; do not sin anymore, so that nothing worse happens to you.**"

14 Later on, Jesus found him in the Temple and told him, "**Look! You have become well. Stop sinning or something worse may happen to you.**"

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.**

- "...Jesus found him" - *heurisket*, to find after searching

- Jesus reveals to this man, for the first time, that he was in his state of paralysis because of sin

— Jesus is demonstrating that He has the power to not only heal physical sickness (paralysis in this case), but also that He has the power to forgive sin and deal with man's spiritual sickness. The greatest problem we have in this world is spiritual (sin), which we cannot feel, but which separates us from God. This is a lot more significant than any physical problem we may have.

— Here, Jesus dealt with this man's physical problem but more importantly his spiritual problem by forgiving his sin, removing lingering the consequences. The fact that Jesus has authority over sin, as well as lifeless limbs, proves that He is the God-Man (Cf. Mark 2:5-7).

- "...so that nothing worse happens to you" - Jesus warns the man that if he didn't stop his sin, something worse than physical paralysis would come upon him

— Sin has the capability to cause sickness/disease in our lives (Gal 6:7-8). If we sin in our bodies, many times we will reap physical consequences in our bodies.

15 The man went away, and informed the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well.

15 The man went away, and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well.

15 The man went off and told the Jewish leaders that it was Jesus who had made him well.

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

- The man now discloses that it was Jesus Christ who he met at the pool of Bethesda and who healed him

(D) The Pharisees condemn Christ (5:16-18)

(a) Healing on the Sabbath (5:16)

16 For this reason the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because He was doing these things on a Sabbath.

16 For this reason the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because He was doing these things on the Sabbath.

16 So the Jewish leaders began persecuting Jesus, because he kept doing such things on the Sabbath.

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

- John gives us the reaction of the Pharisees here because over and over he will draw a line between belief and unbelief

— The signs of Jesus Christ will produce one of two results: they will either convince someone that Jesus is the Son of God and they will believe in Him, or they will upset people's apple cart and consequently in unbelief, they become enemies of God.

— Either Jesus is making you angry because He is upsetting something in your life, or you are rejoicing in Christ because He has shown you a higher and better way. At the end of the

day, you are either for Christ or you're against Him.

- Jesus took away the authority, the power and the control of the Pharisees by rejecting their manmade laws and traditions

Declarations of Deity

- Equal with God in Nature (v17-18)
- Equal with God in Power (v19-21)
- Equal with God in Authority (v22-24)

(b) Made Himself equal with God (5:17-18)

17 But He answered them, "**My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working.**"

17 But He answered them, "**My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working.**"

17 But Jesus answered them, "**My Father has been working until now, and I, too, am working.**"

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

- "...My Father" - *Ho pater mou*, the Pharisees explain what he means in v18: He's "making Himself equal with God"

— Jesus is claiming to have a special relationship with God the Father

— Jesus is telling them, As I am doing this miracles, performing these signs, I am working in conjunction with God the Father, claiming equality with the Father

— The Pharisees understand the significance of what Jesus said. They always come to the rescue of Gentiles like us: whenever they are upset, we need to understand why...

18 For this reason therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God.

18 For this reason therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God.

18 So the Jewish leaders were trying all the harder to kill him, because he was not only breaking the Sabbath but was also calling God his own Father, thereby making himself equal to God.

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.

- If someone claims, which many do, that Jesus was a good moral teacher, but He Himself never claimed to be God, you don't understand v17-18

— Jesus claims deity over and over again (Cf. 8:58; 10:30)

— If someone actually believes this, they must not be seeing something that the Pharisees and religious leaders of the day saw very clearly, and plotted to kill Jesus because of His claim

(9) Christ's Equality with the Father (5:19-30)

(A) Equality in work (5:19-20)

19 Therefore Jesus answered and was saying to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless *it is* something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in the same way.

19 Therefore Jesus answered and was saying to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless *it is* something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner.

19 Jesus told them, "Truly, I tell all of you emphatically, the Son can do nothing on his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing, What the Father does, the Son does likewise.

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.

- Verses 19-30 is probably the clearest passage in the Gospels of Jesus claiming to be deity

- Jesus tells His critics...you want to challenge me for claiming equality with God...I am subordinate to the Father. I follow the Father's lead.

— It is impossible for the Son to act independently or separate from what the Father is doing

- Jesus was doing the works of the Father in three ways:

1. He has an equal relationship with the Father (v19). What One does, the Other does. The works of the Father are the works of the Son. Because He does the works of the Father, work that only God can do, Jesus must be God.
2. There is equal love between the Father and Son; both give rise to equally mighty works (v20)
3. There is equal power between the Father and Son; the Son shares the Father's power to give life. Because the giving of life was a divine ability, Jesus must be divine.

20 For the Father **loves** the Son and shows Him all things that He Himself is doing; and *the Father* will show Him greater **works** than these, so that you will be amazed.

20 For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself is doing; and *the Father* will show Him greater works than these, so that you will marvel.

20 The Father loves the Son and shows him everything he is doing, and he will show him even greater actions than these, so that you may be amazed.

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.

- "...loves" - *phileō*, a term of affection between equals. Jesus never acted independently of the Father...

— In 21:15-17, when Jesus is restoring Peter after his three denials of Christ, many people make a big deal about the *agapaō-phileō* distinction, and that Peter's love for Jesus was somehow "lower" than it should have been because he said *phileō* instead of *apapaō*.

However here, Jesus Himself says that the the Father *phileō* the Son.

— John says the same thing about the Father's love for the Son in 3:35, but there he uses the verb *apapaō* instead of *phileō*. These two Greek words for love are used interchangeably throughout John's Gospel:

- The Father's love for the Son: *agapē* (3:35; 10:17); *phileō* (5:20)
- Jesus' love for Lazarus: *agapē* (11:5); *phileō* (11:3,36)
- Jesus' love for John: *agapē* (13:23); *phileō* (20:2)

— Thus, it doesn't appear as if the different Greek words for "love" are a big deal here in Jesus' restoration of Peter. Otherwise, John would've made these different words for love more prominent in his Gospel before now.

- "...works" - *ergon*, describes both His miracles and His ordinary deeds of mercy (see note on Matt 11:21)

- Jesus now clarifies how He can do these great miracles:

1. The Father loves the Son
2. The Father shows the Son what He is doing

— This is similar to how a son would learn a trade from his father. While his father is showing him how and why to do certain things, the son is in submission to the Father while he is learning. It's the same kind of submission outlined here.

— If they were impressed by Jesus' miracle of healing the paralytic man at the pool of Bethesda, that was just small potatoes because the Father is delegating to the Son even greater works, such as giving life to the dead (v21) and pronouncing final judgment (v22)

— Jesus is answering His critics head on, giving them the basis for His authority

(B) Equality in giving spiritual resurrection and life (5:21)

21 For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so the Son also gives life to whom He wishes.

21 For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son also gives life to whom He wishes.

21 Just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to those he chooses.

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

- First century Jews understood something very well: bringing someone back from the dead was only something that God Himself could do (2 Kings 5:7; Ezek 37:13)

— When Jesus says "the Son also gives life to whom He wishes" Jesus is claiming a power that these Pharisees believed only belonged to God Himself

— But Jesus is not only speaking of physical life from the dead, but also spiritual life from the dead. We're all born dead in our trespasses and sin (Eph 2:1), but through faith in the Son of God and His promises, we can be spiritually re-born.

(C) Equality in judging (5:22)

22 For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has **given** all judgment to the Son,

22 For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son,

22 The Father judges no one, but has given all authority to judge to the Son,

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

- "...given" - *dedoken*, committed; the perfect active indicative, emphasizing completion.

- God the Father is the judge of all men (Gen 18:25), but now God has given that authority over to the Son (Acts 17:31), even to judge believers (2 Cor 5:10; Cf. 1 Cor 3:10-15)

(D) Equality in honor (5:23)

23 so that all will honor the Son just as they honor the Father. The one who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.

23 so that all will honor the Son even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.

23 so that everyone may honor the Son as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him.

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.

- The Father sent the Son into the world, so when we honor the Son then we honor the Father

— If you will not honor the One whom the Father sent into the world, you will not honor the Father

— If God is zealous for His glory, but God will share His glory with the Son, then it must mean that the Son is equal in honor/glory with the Father. For the Father to share in His glory with the Son, it must mean that the Father and Son are One in essence.

(E) Believing: from death to life (5:24-25)

24 "Truly, truly, I say to you, the one who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.

24 "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.

24 "Truly, I tell all of you emphatically, whoever hears what I say and believes in the one who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged, but has passed from death to life.

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.

- Jesus is equal in work: an equality in giving resurrection life, an equality in judging, and an equality in honor, so here is the main point: believing transforms us from dead to life.

— Because Jesus shares in these qualities with God, He has the power to do something in your life that no one else can do: to take a person from death into life through the simple act of believing in Him by faith.

- "Truly, truly, I say to you" - a phrase Jesus uses when He is going to reveal very important information to us. Jesus uses this phrase 3x in this passage (v19,24,25).

- "...the one who hears My word" - at some point, every person needs to hear the truth in order to respond to it. Evangelism without the Word is fruitless.

— If you're in a church that doesn't practice basic Bible teaching, you're in a dying church. If people aren't hearing the truth every Sunday, people are not getting saved, and they will eventually die or leave to go to another church.

— The Bible consistently puts the responsibility to believe on man, not on God (Cf. 1:12-13; 3:16,36; 5:24; 6:47; Acts 16:31; Rom 3:21-22,25-26; 4:3-6; Eph 2:8. The Bible also consistently puts the responsibility for not believing on man (Cf. 3:18; 5:40).

- "...believes" - *pisteuō*, to put trust in; to hear the Word of God, and to believe that it has the power to right my relationship with God. I put my faith in Christ that He is who He says He is, and that He has the power to save me from the punishment for my sin.

— Belief, which triggers "eternal life" and "passing out of death into life" is a punctiliar action meaning it takes place at a specific point in time, a nano-second or a span of time that is so small that you cannot measure it. It is instantaneous, not gradual. If you have a mindset that you're going to live for Jesus today and that you're gradually crossing out of death into life, you don't understand this verse.

- "...has" [2x] - *echō*, present tense verb; once we are in belief, we have eternal life right now as a present possession. When you understand that this verb is in the present tense, you understand that you do not receive eternal life at some point in the future, after death...you have (own, possess) eternal life right now.

— If you believe in Christ, trust in His provision, then the promise of Christ to us (not on any promise we make to Him) is that we (presently) possess eternal life. We don't need to wait to die to have eternal life...we possess eternal life now, in the present. It's a present tense possession.

— The present tense usage of *echō* here proves two things once you believe in Christ:

- a. You possess eternal life NOW, not after you die
- b. You have passed out of death into life NOW, not after you die

— So if I hear things from John Calvin or John Piper that contradict the words of John the Apostle (and Christ Himself), I will 100% of the time depart from Calvin and Piper and go with what John the Apostle is saying.

- "...eternal" - *aiōnios*, the same word used to describe the eternality of God Himself

— Eternal life is not eternal if there is a way that we can somehow lose it; how can eternal life be eternal if it can be lost?

- "...does not come into judgment" - there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus (Rom 8:1)

- "...passed out" - *metabainō*, perfect tense, meaning a one time event that happened in the past, but with lasting results. When a person believes, they pass from one realm (under death, judgment) to another (eternal life). For a believer, this "passing out" is a past event, something that has already happened.

— In the OT, the One who has the ability to provide eternal life is God. If the Son has the power to provide eternal life, He too must be God.

— So how do you pass from eternal death to eternal life? This verse gives a single condition: "believe" in Him, which means to trust in Him as your Savior. Once you do this, you obtain eternal life...you already possess it. You don't wait until you die to obtain eternal life...Christians have eternal life today.

- When you stack up and understand what Jesus says in this single verse, you develop an iron clad doctrine for the assurance of our salvation

— Many Christians do not understand the doctrine of assurance of salvation, so they live their entire lives wondering if they are really saved. That is a satanic bondage and is contrary to what this verse (and the whole of Scripture) teaches.

— When you understand the doctrine of assurance of salvation, it completely changes your motives for service. You're no longer serving God to prove to yourself (or others) that you really are saved, but they have no assurance. That is serving God out of fear.

— When we understand that the moment we put our faith in Christ, we passed from death to life, you don't serve God out of fear but out of gratitude. It alters your whole philosophy of life as a Christian.

- The idea of Lordship Salvation and Final Salvation deny this verse. However, if you understand the simple Greek verb tenses in this verse, it completely destroys the heresies

of both Lordship Salvation and Final Salvation.

— Both heresies don't distinguish between the various judgments in Scripture. They consolidate all of the mentions of judgments into one huge judgment at the end.

— By teaching this, they make believers think that God is in heaven collecting all this information about them for their entire life, then will at the last minute make a decision whether that person is really saved. John Piper is the most famous proponent and teacher of Final Salvation.

— Final Salvation is the Calvinistic idea that says a child of God is regenerated first so that they can believe, because you're one of the elect and you're infused with the gift of faith (because they don't think you can believe on your own). If you have these things, there's going to be a lot of works in your life.

— It's just an outworking of their Calvinistic system which says a child of God is regenerated first so that they can believe because you're one of the elect, and you're infused with the gift of faith (because they don't think you can believe on your own). If you have these things, there's going to be a lot of works in your life.

— So the Lord is going to look at your life at this judgment and determine whether you really were one of the elect or not. This is what is called Final Salvation.

— Your justified status in the sight of God is really up in the air

- See the following notes for additional information on Lordship Salvation:

Soteriology 07 Lordship Salvation (Matt 16:24-25).

Soteriology 08 Lordship Salvation (Matt 3:2).

Soteriology 09 Lordship Salvation (John 5:24; James 2:14-26).

[John 6:47; 1 John 5:13]

It is the privilege, not only of some, but of all by the Spirit through faith who are born again in Christ as revealed in the Scriptures, to be assured of their salvation from the very day they take Him to be their Savior and that this assurance is not founded upon any fancied discovery of their own worthiness or fitness, but wholly upon the testimony of God in His written Word. [Chafer]

If you say that you don't feel like you've passed from death to life...the problem is, you're going off your feelings rather than fact. Facts > Feelings. You can't live the Christian life on feelings...you live the Christian life on the promises of God. A God that is so holy that He cannot lie has made you a promise...at the point of faith in Him, you have permanently passed from death to life.

25 Truly, truly, I say to you, a time is coming and even now has arrived, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live.

25 Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live.

25 Truly, I tell all of you emphatically, the time approaches, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear it will live.

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.

- Two interpretations, both are plausible:

1. Christ's ability to raise the dead from the grave. A person who was once dead will hear the voice of God (Cf. John 11)

2. It speaks of God's ability to bring about the final resurrection from the grave (v28-29)

— But this reference is not speaking of the physical reality of bringing life from the dead, but it's also speaking to the spiritual reality...we are dead in our trespasses and sin (Eph 2:1) but that is reversed when the Spirit of God, which is eternal, comes into us at the point of faith in Christ.

— Eternal life is not just a future reality, it's a present (right now) reality

(F) Equality in life (5:26)

26 For just as the Father has life in Himself, so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself;

26 For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself;

26 Just as the Father has life in himself, so also he has granted the Son to have life in himself,

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

- This explains how Jesus can perform these signs...He has life resident inside of Him, He is self-existent. Human beings, on the other hand, receive their life from God.

(G) Equality in judging (5:27)

27 and He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is *the Son of Man*.

27 and He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is *the Son of Man*.

27 and he has given him authority to judge, because he is the Son of Man.

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

- In v22, Jesus stated that He received the authority to judge from the Father. Here, Jesus repeats what He said in v22, then adds a little more info...the fact that God gave Him authority to judge because Jesus is the Son of Man

- "...Son of Man" - a clear, unambiguous claim of deity from Dan 7:13-14

— Jesus claims this title for Himself again (Mark 14:61-64) just before He was crucified, which was the final nail in the coffin for the Pharisees

- In Judaism, if you take the title Son of Man and apply it to yourself, you are claiming to be God Himself and you would immediately be stoned to death for blasphemy (Lev 24:16)
- But in this case Jesus was not blaspheming because it is this OT title that refers directly and only to Him. No one else can ever rightfully be called the Son of Man.
- Jesus is not some type of usurper, who transgressed a boundary that did not belong to Him to claim this title. Jesus is the only and forever Son of Man.

(H) Equality in giving physical resurrection and life (5:28-29)

28 Do not be amazed at this; for a time is coming when **all** who are in the tombs will hear His voice,

28 Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice,

28 Don't be amazed at this, because the time is approaching when everyone in their graves will hear the Son of Man's voice

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

- "...all" - Jesus here clarifies the completeness of the resurrection

— Daniel used the term "many" (Dan 12:2), a term that could be interpreted as less than "all"

— One eschatological fact that many Christians are unaware of is the fact that every single person who ever lived will be resurrected one day

— Everyone will experience resurrection...either to eternal life in heaven with the Lord, or to eternal damnation and torture in hell, separated from the Lord

— In one of John's other book, Revelation, John tells us that these two resurrections are separated by 1000 years (Rev 20:4-5). The resurrection of the righteous takes place after the Second Coming, before the millennial kingdom; the resurrection of the unrighteous takes place after the 1000 year messianic kingdom.

— So here, Jesus is revealing the two resurrections, but not revealing the 1000 year timespan in between the two

29 and will come out: those who did the good *deeds* to a **resurrection of life**, those who committed the bad *deeds* to a **resurrection of judgment**.

29 and will come forth; those who did the good *deeds* to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil *deeds* to a resurrection of judgment.

29 and will come out—those who have done what is good to the resurrection that leads to life, and those who have practiced what is evil to the resurrection that ends in condemnation.

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.

- Jesus is not inventing new doctrine here...He's simply restating what Daniel said in Dan 12:2; Paul taught this same doctrine (Acts 24:15)

- What about the Rapture? When Jesus made this statement, the Church had not yet been revealed. It was still a "mystery" in God, completely unknown to man.

- "...resurrection of life" - the first resurrection; three parts:

1. Christ's resurrection (the firstfruits) (Matt 27:52-53)
2. General Harvest - the Rapture of the Church (John 14:1-4; 1 Cor 15:51-54; 1 Thess 4:13-18)
3. Gleanings - OT saints and Tribulation martyrs (beginning of kingdom, Rev 20:4)

- "...resurrection of judgment" - the second resurrection; reserved only for unbelievers, at the end of the Millennium (Rev 21:8)

Because this passage (along with Dan 12:2; Acts 24:15) does not mention a "gap" of time between the two resurrections, postmillennialists and amillennialists conclude that there will be a "general resurrection" of both the saved and unsaved at the Second Coming. However, none of these passages exclude the possibility of a time distance (1,000 years+) between the two. The concept of divine progressive revelation allows for the time factor to be disclosed later, to ensure a proper understanding.

(I) Equality in work (5:30)

30 "I can do nothing on My own. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of Him who sent Me.

30 "I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

30 I can do nothing on my own accord. I judge according to what I hear, and my judgment is just, because I do not seek my own will but the will of the one who sent me."

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.

- Jesus is equal with the Father in His work because He is fully submissive to the Father

— Jesus exists to advance the will of the Father

— Even the work Jesus will do at the final judgment, He will do to please the Father, so His judgment will be absolutely just

— No one will walk away from the final judgment and accuse God of being unjust, biased, or unfair

Jesus' life of complete dependence upon God is the supreme example of the Creator's purpose for people. Many believers make their own plans, then ask God to bless them. Jesus chose to do "nothing by Himself."

(10) Christ's Witnesses (5:31-47)

(A) Christ Himself (5:31)

31 "If I *alone* testify about Myself, My testimony is not true.

31 "If I *alone* testify about Myself, My testimony is not true.

31 "If I testify on my own behalf, my testimony is not trustworthy.

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

- After testifying about Himself in v19-30, Jesus now says that He's not the only Person to testify of who He is

— To understand this statement, you have to think like a Jew thought, from the OT. The OT required 2-3 witnesses for something to be established as truth (capital crimes, Deut 17:6; any accusation of sin, Deut 19:15; church discipline, Matt 18:15-17; to accuse an elder, 1 Tim 5:19).

— Jesus here is saying that, while I have testified of Myself, and what I said is true, My testimony has not yet attained the full evidentiary level required by the OT

(B) John the Baptist (5:32-35)

32 There is another who testifies about Me, and I know that the testimony which He gives about Me is true.

32 There is another who testifies of Me, and I know that the testimony which He gives about Me is true.

32 There is another who testifies about me, and I know that the testimony he gives about me is true.

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

- John the Baptist was sent by the Father to testify about Jesus, just as Jesus was sent by the Father to testify about the Father

33 You have sent *messengers* to John, and he has testified to the truth.

33 You have sent to John, and he has testified to the truth.

33 You have sent messengers to John, and he has testified to the truth.

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

- John the Baptist's purpose: 1:6-8

- John the Baptist's first testimony of Christ: 1:29-34

- John the Baptist's additional testimony of Christ: 3:31-36

34 But the testimony I receive is not from man, but I say these things **so that you may be saved.**

34 But the testimony which I receive is not from man, but I say these things so that you may be saved.

34 I myself do not accept human testimony, but I am saying these things so that you may be saved.

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

- "...so that you may be saved" - the purpose for Jesus testimony of Himself, and for listing these other people or works that testify of who He is, is so people will understand who He is and be saved

— This isn't all just for a neat theology lesson...it's designed to evoke faith on the part of the listener, in this case the Pharisees

— "saved" - in the subjunctive mood, which means that it is within the realm of possibility. Maybe they will respond to the light, maybe they won't, but the evidence is there. Whether or not they respond positively is a decision that they will have to make.

— The means to respond positively is to believe (*pisteuō*)

35 **He was the lamp** that was burning and shining, and you were willing to rejoice **for a while** in his light.

35 He was the lamp that was burning and was shining and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light.

35 That man John was a lamp that burns and brightly shines, and for a while you were willing to rejoice in his light.

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

- "He was the lamp" - John the Baptist was a lamp, lighting the way so people could see and recognize the Messiah, a light shining in a dark place (Cf. 1:6-8)

— There isn't a better description of a Christian's calling in our world other than being a "light" (Phil 2:15)

— The world is going to hell, quickly, yet God has seen fit to work in such a way that those who are believers in Jesus Christ can receive the Holy Spirit and consequently we can reflect and radiate the life of God to a world that is in spiritual darkness.

— God doesn't have us on the earth necessarily to condemn the darkness, but to be a lighthouse so that the unsaved world may be able to recognize who Jesus is, and thus place their trust in Him

- "...for a while" - early on in his ministry, John the Baptist was very popular (Cf. 1:19)

— But then one day John said something very politically incorrect (Matt 14:2-3). He got into trouble because He took Scripture and applied it to the world that he lived in.

— John the Baptist didn't understand the difference between church and state; he didn't understand that "the Bible only pertains to spiritual things." John applied Scripture to the marriage of a political leader (Herod, who was having an affair with his sister?) and he later died (martyred) because of it.

(C) Christ's works (5:36)

36 But the testimony I have is **greater than *the testimony of John***; for the works which the Father has given Me to accomplish—**the very works that I do**—testify about Me, that the Father has sent Me.

36 But the testimony which I have is greater than *the testimony of John*; for the works which the Father has given Me to accomplish—the very works that I do—testify about Me, that the Father has sent Me.

36 "But I have a greater testimony than John's, because the actions that the Father has given me to complete—the very actions that I am doing—testify on my behalf that the Father has sent me.

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.

- "...greater than *the testimony of John*" - this should get our attention based on what Jesus said of John the Baptist in Matt 11:11

— Of all of the OT prophets, John the Baptist was greater than all of them (Cf. Daniel, Ezekiel, Isaiah, Zechariah, Habakkuk, et al), because he *saw* with his own two eyes what the OT prophets only wrote about.

— Jesus here is saying that if you have John the Baptist on your side, giving positive testimony, there is no greater witness than that. He is the gold standard, the top of the line when it comes to prophets.

— But there was a greater testimony than even John the Baptist...Christ's works, that He was doing right before their eyes

- "...the very works that I do" - what "works" is Jesus talking about?

1. His signs...the turning of water to wine in Cana (2:11); the healing of the nobleman's son (4:46-54); the healing of a paralytic at the pool of Bethesda (Cf. Acts 2:22).
2. His character...Jesus did things that men just don't do. For example, when traveling from Judea to Galilee, He went through Samaria because He had a divine appointment with a woman who had been rejected and condemned by society.
3. His teaching...and the authority in which He taught the Scriptures (Matt 7:28-29). He spoke as if He had written the Scriptures.

Now, there was about this time Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man, for he was a doer of wonderful works—a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews, and many of the Gentiles. He was [the] Christ; (64) and when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principal men amongst us, had condemned him to the cross, those that loved him at the first did not forsake him, for he appeared to them alive again the third day, as the divine prophets had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning him; and the tribe of Christians, so named from him, are not extinct at this day. (Josephus, *Antiquities*, 18.63-64).

(D) The Father (5:37-38)

37 And the Father who sent Me, **He has testified about Me.** You have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His form.

37 And the Father who sent Me, He has testified of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time nor seen His form.

37 Moreover, the Father who sent me has himself testified on my behalf. You have never heard his voice or seen what he looks like,

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

- "...He has testified about Me" - at Jesus' baptism (Matt 3:17) and His transfiguration (Matt 17:5)

- Jesus tells them they have not heard His voice or seen God, spiritually. They were ignorant about spiritual truth because they wanted to be ignorant about it. They did not know by their own choice.

— The Bible teaches a lot about this, most notably in Rom 1:18-23 which says that the human mind knows about God, through both general revelation in creation and in their conscience, but actively suppresses that truth.

— In 2 Peter 3:3-10, Peter warns that in the last days the world would reject/suppress two doctrines: creation and the second coming. The verb used indicates that they are ignorant of these doctrines because they want to be.

38 Also you do not have His word remaining in you, because you do not **believe** Him whom He sent.

38 You do not have His word abiding in you, for you do not believe Him whom He sent.

38 nor do you have his word at work in you, because you do not believe in the one whom he sent.

38 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.

- "...believe" - *pisteuō*, trust, reliance, rest

— Jesus is very clear that the only way to the Father is through the Son (5:23; 14:6; Acts 4:12; 1 Tim 2:5)

— This is important because we're living in a time of great spirituality, where many people are comfortable with "God" because they can make it mean whatever they want, but many people are uncomfortable with Jesus, because you can't generalize that name.

(E) The Scriptures (5:39-44)

39 You examine the **Scriptures** because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is those *very Scriptures* that testify about Me;

39 You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me;

39 You examine the Scriptures carefully because you suppose that in them you have eternal life. Yet they testify about me.

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

- "...Scriptures" - the OT (Hebrew Bible; *Tanakh*)

— Jesus says to the Pharisees that they have made a career out of studying the Scriptures, yet you have missed the main point

— You had one job...to understand the OT and the coming Messiah, yet you failed to do that because He is standing directly in front of you

— The Pharisees were intoxicated with their own extra-biblical revelations and legalistic criteria that they put on top of the Scriptures (Mark 7:13)

— It is a frightening thing that we have the ability to make a career of going to church and studying the Bible, yet as fallen human beings, we have the capacity to miss the central point of what the Bible is telling me.

— We have the capacity to fall so in love with extra-biblical concepts and ideas that God is no longer speaking to me through this book because His Word is constantly being filtered through this manmade lens that I have used to put in front of His Word.

— We do this today through Bible study that never open the Word, calling something Bible study that does nothing more than read a book written by man (or woman). What are you intaking every day...the pure Word of God, or do you have so many layers of manmade lenses on top of God's Word that He is no longer speaking to you?

- This was quite an insult Jesus gave these religious leaders, who prided themselves in their knowledge of the Scriptures. Josephus (a secular historian) even understood that the OT Scriptures pointed to Jesus Christ—see quote above).

— Jesus, on the road to Emmaus after His resurrection gave an eight-mile Bible study about Himself from the OT (Luke 24:27)

40 **and yet you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life.**

40 **and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life.**

40 **But you are not willing to come to me to have life.**

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

- The evidence was literally right in front of their faces, yet they would not believe (Cf. 3:20)

— You would think that once the Messiah came into the world, people would gravitate toward Him and yet they didn't because the closer we get to Jesus Christ the more mindful we become of our own sin

— This is a level of discomfort that many people just don't like, but it's in this discomfort that we begin to understand the need for transferred/imputed righteousness from Christ. This is not my own righteousness, but the righteousness that is pleasing to God, that of Jesus Christ Himself, and by this righteousness I have standing before God (Phil 3:9).

- "...you are unwilling" - *thelō*, wish or desire; it's interesting that many people will blame God for the fact that many people aren't saved, yet the evidence is available, sometimes right in front of our face, and yet many still don't believe. Unbelief is not on God, it's on man.

— Jesus is clear in this verse that you have the opportunity to come to belief in Him, but instead you didn't want to. There is no denial of any man's the ability to come to Christ...people don't come to belief in Christ because they don't want to (Cf. Luke 16:29-31).

— This verse doesn't make any sense if a person has no ability to come to God. There is no way the Lord could hold a person responsible for their unbelief if they never had an opportunity to believe in the first place. That would be unjust.

— The Bible consistently puts the responsibility to believe on man, not on God (Cf. 1:12-13; 3:16,36; 5:24; 6:47; Acts 16:31; Rom 3:21-22,25-26; 4:3-6; Eph 2:8. The Bible also consistently puts the responsibility for not believing on man (Cf. 3:18; 5:40).

— God does not simultaneously call all unbelievers to be saved, desire that all come to repentance, but only give a small percentage that actual ability to do so. However, this is what Calvinism's doctrine of Unconditional Election and Limited Atonement argue in favor of.

— If it is impossible for an unbeliever to respond to the gospel without first being given the gift of faith, why does God hold unbelievers responsible for what it is impossible for them to do? This is the same as holding a legless man responsible for being unable to walk.

41 I do not receive glory from people;

41 I do not receive glory from men;

41 "I do not accept human praise.

41 I receive not honour from men.

- Jesus is not here to win accolades from men...it's not a contest that He has entered hoping He'll win

— The Pharisees, on the other hand, sought only the glory of man (Cf. v44; 12:43)

42 but I know you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves.

42 but I know you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves.

42 I know that you do not have the love of God in you.

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

- They were seeking self-glory, so they would not believe. Thus, the Holy Spirit would not indwell them, changing them from the inside out, so how in the world could they have the love of God inside of them.

— If they sought the glory of God rather than self, they would believe, the Spirit of God would enter them, and would cause them to radiate the love of God

— The tipping point, the decision spot, is whether to believe in the God-Man Himself, or not

43 I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if **another comes in his own name**, you will receive him.

43 I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, you will receive him.

43 I have come in my Father's name, and you do not accept me. Yet if another man comes in his own name, you will accept him.

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.

- Because the Jews would not accept the One who came in the Father's name, they became open to all types of spiritual deception
- Throughout the ages, many false teachers have deceived many Jews because of this problem
- "...another comes in his own name" - one of 13 titles for the Antichrist in the NT; see [Allusions to the Antichrist](#)
- The ultimate deception is coming in the Man of Sin, the Antichrist, who will deceive the entire nation of Israel into thinking he is the messiah (Dan 9:27)...then stab them in the back
- Israel will fill the spiritual void in their lives by trusting in someone who comes in his own name, doing as he pleases, and sets himself against everything that is of God (Dan 11:36-37)
- Because Israel rejected the One who came in the Father's name, they are sitting ducks for spiritual deception, open to vulnerability (2 Thess 2:9-11). The principle at work here is that Israel won't receive their true Messiah, so they open themselves up to the greatest horror that has ever come upon the scene, the delusion that will be brought upon them by the Antichrist during the Tribulation period.
- They put themselves in this position by rejecting truth. This is not just a principle governing national Israel...this same principle governs us if we will turn our back and reject truth. When we do this, we become sitting ducks for spiritual deception.
- It's astonishing the things that Christ rejecting people believe:
 - This universe assembled itself accidentally through a gigantic cosmic explosion
 - That men can become pregnant, have a cycle, just because they "want to"

44 How can you believe, when you accept glory from one another and you do not seek the glory that is from the *one and* only God?

44 How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another and you do not seek the glory that is from the *one and* only God?

44 How can you believe when you accept each other's praise and do not look for the praise that comes from the only God?

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

- There is an impediment standing in the way of their believe...the Pharisees were making a choice to not believe because they did not seek glory from the Father, but were seeking glory from men and from one another

— The reason why they didn't believe is that their own sense of self-glory was at stake

(F) Moses (5:45-47)

45 Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; the one who **accuses** you is Moses, **in whom you have put your hope**.

45 Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; the one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you have set your hope.

45 Do not suppose that I will be the one to accuse you before the Father. Your accuser is Moses, on whom you have set your hope,

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

- Moses is the prophet to whom God gave the Law; Ps 147:19-20 says that Israel is the only nation to ever receive the oracles of God

- This was the highest privilege, and Moses was the intermediary that God used

- "...accuses" - a very strong word here. Jesus is saying that if you reject Me, you get Moses.

- The very thing that Israel was setting its hopes on (keeping the Law) was the very thing that would stand in accusation against them, because they couldn't keep it

- If a person does not accept the salvation that comes through Jesus Christ, by faith, then the only thing they can be judged on is their works (by the Law)

- "...in whom you have put your hope" - Israel set their hopes on the Mosaic Law, and their capacity to obey God's Law

- History should've taught them that attempting to obey the Law was a losing proposition...the entire OT bears witness to this

- Before Paul was saved, he was "blameless in his own eyes" (Phil 3:6), thinking the way to heaven was through perfect obedience to the Law

- What these Pharisees didn't understand, and what most Christians don't understand today, is that the Mosaic Law wasn't given to redeem a nation, it was given to an already redeemed nation. The Law of God was never designed as an instrument of salvation. It was designed to help a nation already in faith experience progressive sanctification and be the nation that God called them to be to the rest of the world. The Law had absolutely no power to save/redeem anyone.

- The nation of Israel was saved at Passover, by applying the blood of the Lamb to the doorposts, and thus exempted from the 10th plague (death of firstborn). They passed through the Red Sea, and believed (Ex 14:31).

- Two months later (Ex 19:1) God brought them to Mount Sinai and gave them the Law, not to save them, but to instruct them on how to live (progressive sanctification).

- This is Paul's whole point in Galatians, and why he uses Abraham as an example (Rom 4; Gal 3). Abraham believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness (Gen 15:6).

- Abraham's salvation was in about 2000 BC; the Law was given to Moses at Sinai in 1445 BC, a full six centuries later. Abraham was saved with no knowledge of the Law because

the law wouldn't be given by God to Moses for another 500+ years.

- So the Pharisees misunderstood the purpose of the Law and turned it into a perverted device, something that God never intended nor set up, and used it as a stairway to heaven through works righteousness, rather than believing God by faith.

— If we treat the Law that way, the Law becomes a curse to us. The Law exposes our inability to meet God's standard, it highlights our deficiencies. The more we try to keep the Law, the more we fall short.

— The Law of God does not just sit in judgment of my actions; it also sits in judgment of my motives and impulses (i.e. covetousness). This was Jesus' point in the Sermon on the Mount...if I lust, I commit adultery in my heart; if I am unjustly angry, I've committed murder in my heart.

— If we see the Law as a stairway to heaven, the more the Law becomes a curse and begins to sit in judgment upon us. It shows us our failings. The more you study the Law of God, the more you realize that your heart has committed sins that your hands just haven't gotten around to yet.

— This is why Paul says the Law is our "schoolmaster" or "tutor" to lead us to Christ so that we might be justified by faith, not by works. So I look at the Law, knowing I can't keep it, and ask the Lord if He has a better deal. He says, I'm glad you asked, let me take you back to the first principles: salvation is by faith.

46 For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me.

46 For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me, for he wrote about Me.

46 because if you believed Moses, you would believe me, since he wrote about me.

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

- Now Jesus gives them the correct view of the Law: the Law is not a stairway to heaven, but it points to Jesus Christ, who must be accepted by faith (Gen 3:15; Num 24:17; Deut 18:15)

— God gave Moses the Law to point out the depravity of man versus the holiness of God

47 But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"

47 But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"

47 But if you do not believe what he wrote, how will you believe my words?"

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

- Jesus says that if you will not trust in the words of Moses, whom they revered, then I can sit here and give you sermon upon sermon and talk about the OT until I'm blue in the face, but you will not believe Me