

Introduction

When each of my sons reached adulthood, one of the things that I did for each of them was to give them some tools. I gave them a starter set of tools with some of the basic tools that you need, like a hammer, screwdrivers, wrenches, etc. Last year when my youngest son was moving out, I bought a nice toolbox, set of screwdrivers, and gave him a starter set of tools to go with it. In my life I have greatly appreciated having a good set of tools. It always helps to have the right tool for the job that you are doing. I have tried to keep my tools organized, and when I needed a certain tool, I could easily find it and use it.

In my spiritual life, I have tried to keep a good set of tools. When I have had the opportunity to share the gospel with people, I have certain scriptures memorized that go with the bridge illustration. If someone has just received Christ, I have certain scriptures memorized, and available in my tool box to share with them to help them get started. If they need wisdom, I have verses in my toolbox to pray for them, or to share with them.

Over the years, one of the areas that has come up a number of times is the deity of Christ. When I have spoken with Mormons, Jehovah Witnesses, Muslims, or others that do not believe in the deity of Christ, I have scriptures in my toolbox to share with them. Some of these would include John 1, Colossians 2:9, 1 John 5:7, and Isaiah 9:6. Our text today is John 5:16-47, where Jesus defends His deity. The Jews were upset that Jesus healed someone on the Sabbath and told him to pick up his pallet and walk, and they began to persecute Him. Then, when Jesus answered them, saying, "My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working," they ratcheted up their persecution and were seeking all the more to kill Him because He was making Himself equal to God.

Jesus does not say that they misunderstood Him and tell them that He was not equal to God. If Jesus was not God, He would have needed to do exactly that. Instead, Jesus gave them four different testimonies of His deity and equality with God. He gave His own testimony. In legal proceedings, one testimony was never sufficient, so He gave three more. The second testimony was that of John. The third thing was the testimony of the Father. The Father testified through the works that Jesus did and through the words that the Father spoke. Fourth, the scriptures testified to who Jesus is. Jesus gave an excellent defense of His equality with God the Father. I wish that I had studied this passage much earlier in my life so that I would have had this in my spiritual toolbox. It would have been very helpful. Open your Bibles to John 5, and we will read verses sixteen through forty-seven.

Jesus' Defense of His Equality with God

1. Testimony of Jesus (Jn 5:16-32)
2. Testimony of John (Jn 5:33-35)
3. Testimony of the Father
 - a. Jesus' Works (Jn 5:36)
 - b. Father's Testimony (Jn 5:37-38)
4. Testimony of the Scriptures (Jn 5:39-47)

(Jn 5:16–17) "For this reason the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because He was doing these things on the Sabbath. {17} But He answered them, "My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working."

(Jn 5:18) "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."

(Jn 5:19-24) "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. {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. {21} "For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son also gives life to whom He wishes. {22} "For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son, {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. {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."

(Jn 5:25-29) "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. {26} "For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself; {27} and He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man. {28} "Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, {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."

(Jn 5:30-32) "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. {31} If I alone testify about Myself, My testimony is not true. {32} "There is another who testifies of Me, and I know that the testimony which He gives about Me is true."

(Jn 5:33-35) "You have sent to John, and he has testified to the truth. {34} "But the testimony which I receive is not from man, but I say these things so that you may be saved. {35} "He was the lamp that was burning and was shining and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light."

(Jn 5:36-38) "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. {38} And the Father who sent Me, He has testified of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time nor seen His form. {38} "You do not have His word abiding in you, for you do not believe Him whom He sent."

(Jn 5:39-47) "You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me; {40} and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life. {41} "I do not receive glory from men; {42} but I know you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves. {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. {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? {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. {46} "For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me, for he wrote about Me. {47} "But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"

1. Testimony of Jesus (Jn 5:16-32)

Jesus was in Jerusalem for one of the feasts of the Jews, and while He was there He healed a man by the Pool of Bethesda, which is by the Sheep Gate. The man had been suffering in his condition for thirty-eight years, and he was laying on a pallet in one of the five porticos at the Pool of Bethesda. After asking the man, "Do you wish to get well?", He told him, "Get up, pick up your pallet and walk." Immediately the man became well, and picked up his pallet and began to walk. It was the Sabbath day and the Jews, i.e., the religious leaders, told him that it was not permissible to carry his pallet. He told them that the one who made him well told him to pick up his pallet and walk. He did not know that it was Jesus that had healed him. Later that day, Jesus found him at the temple and told him, "Do not sin anymore, so that nothing worse happens to you." The man then went to the Jews and told them that it was Jesus who had made him well. For that reason, the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because He was doing these things on the Sabbath.

(Jn 5:16) "For this reason the Jews were persecuting (dioko) Jesus, because He was doing these things on the Sabbath."

The Greek word for persecute is dioko (Strong's G1377), which means to pursue, follow after, or persecute. The Jews were not just following or pursuing Jesus; they were persecuting Him. In Acts 8, after Stephen had been stoned to death, there was a great persecution against the church. The word used is diogmos (Strong's G1375), which is the noun form of the same Greek word.

(Ac 8:1) "Saul was in hearty agreement with putting him to death. And on that day a great persecution (diogmos) began against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles."

In Acts 9 we find the account of Paul becoming a Christian. The Lord met him on the road to Damascus, where he was headed to round up any believers there and bring them back to imprison them or put them to death. When Jesus appeared to Paul, He said, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" When Paul asked, "Who are You, Lord?", the Lord said, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting." Both times the same Greek word, dioko, is used.

(Ac 9:4-5) "and he fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?' {5} And he said, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He *said*, 'I am Jesus whom you are persecuting,'"

On that Sabbath day, a new chapter began in the life and ministry of Jesus. The Jews were no longer just questioning His authority to do things, they made a marked decision to persecute Jesus. From this point forward, the Jews were pursuing and persecuting Jesus.

When Jesus answered those Jews and said to them, "My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working," the persecution took another step up. There was an escalation in the persecution because Jesus called God His Father. He put Himself on the same level as God. For the second time, John uses the phrase, "For this reason." This time, they were not just persecuting Him for healing people on the Sabbath and disregarding their interpretations of the Law regarding the Sabbath; they were seeking to kill Him, because He was calling God His own Father, making Himself equal to God. They were no longer just persecuting Jesus; they were persecuting Him with the intent to kill Him.

(Jn 5:17-18) “But He answered them, “My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working. {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.”

The Greek word for equal is *isos* (Strong's G2470) which means equal. We get our English word, *isosceles triangle* from that Greek word. An *isosceles triangle* has two equal sides and two equal angles. The Jews clearly understood that Jesus was saying that He and the Father are equal. And for that reason, they were seeking all the more to kill Him.

If Jesus was not equal with God, then He would have corrected them and let them know His position and relationship with God. If He was not the Immanuel, God in the flesh, now would have been the time to correct the misunderstanding. But Jesus is God in the flesh, and God is His Father. He is the Son of God, and He and the Father are One. Jesus gives four different testimonies in His defense to these Jews. The first defense is His own testimony.

There are a couple passages that have been a matter of great debate. In John 14:28, Jesus told His disciples that He was going away and then would come to them, and if they loved Him, they would rejoice because He is going to the Father, for the Father is greater than Him. There are two things that scholars point out. Jesus was equal to the Father in form, but He was submitted to the Father in all things. Second, while Jesus was equal to God, He did not hold on to that form and humbled Himself and took on the form of a servant. As a man, the Father was greater. This is substantiated by Philippians 2:6, where Paul wrote that “although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men...” He existed in two forms. In the first form, He was equal with the Father. He did not hold on to, or try to keep that form, but humbled Himself and took the form of a bond-servant, and was made in the likeness of men.

(Jn 14:28) “You heard that I said to you, ‘I go away, and I will come to you.’ If you loved Me, you would have rejoiced because I go to the Father, for the Father is greater than I.”

(Php 2:5–8) “Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, {6} who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, {7} but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, *and* being made in the likeness of men. {8} Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

Jesus begins His testimony by saying, “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.” Since Jesus had healed a man on the Sabbath, and also told the man to pick up his pallet and walk, this was a difficult thing for them to receive. Their man-made laws and interpretations of God's law were wrong, and it made it more difficult for them to receive what Jesus was telling them.

(Jn 5:19) “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.”

Jesus continued, saying, “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.” What

are these greater works that cause people to marvel or be amazed? People marveled or were amazed when Jesus cast out the demon in the man that was mute, and they said, "Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel." (Mt 9:32-34) There were many things that Jesus did that caused people to be amazed. The greater work that Jesus was referring to was raising people from the dead. Jesus said, "For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son also gives life to whom He wishes." Jesus raised three people from the dead. He raised Jairus' daughter from the dead in Matthew 9:18-26. He raised the widow's son from the dead in Nain in Luke 7:11-17. He also raised Lazarus from the dead in John 11:1-44.

(Jn 5:20-21) "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. {21} "For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son also gives life to whom He wishes."

The Jews may have marveled, but they had already made a decision to kill Jesus. After Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, the chief priests also planned to put Lazarus to death, because many people were believing in Jesus because of his testimony. Jesus' testimony that He gave life to whom He wishes just like the Father was just one of the things that demonstrated His deity and equality with God.

(Jn 12:9-11) "The large crowd of the Jews then learned that He was there; and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might also see Lazarus, whom He raised from the dead. {10} But the chief priests planned to put Lazarus to death also; {11} because on account of him many of the Jews were going away and were believing in Jesus."

The next thing that Jesus testified is that the Father does not judge anyone, but has given all judgement to the Son. The Jews believed that God would judge people. God is omniscient and knows all things. He knows the thoughts of man, and He also knows the hidden secrets and motives in men. Only God possessed the ability to righteously judge, and Jesus has just told them that He is the One that will judge everyone. That means that Jesus is God, and is equal to God the Father.

(Jn 5:22) "For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son,"

God gave all judgment to the Son so that all will honor the Son even as they honor the Father. The Jews knew that they were to honor God. They were to honor Him with their thanksgivings. They were to honor God with their praises. They were to honor God with their tithes and offerings. They were to honor God in all things. Jesus has just told them that they are to honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He said that "he who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him." If Jesus was not equal to God the Father, then it would be wrong to honor Him. This was another proof of His deity.

(Jn 5:23) "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."

Since Jesus is the Judge, those who hear His word and believe God who sent Him, have eternal life and do not come into judgment. Jesus is the key to avoiding judgment. Those who believe Jesus have eternal life and those who reject Jesus will come into judgment. Since the Jews believed that God is the judge and determined who had life and who would not have eternal life, Jesus' testimony that He has this power was a claim of His deity and equality with the Father.

(Jn 5:24-29) "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. {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. {26} "For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself; {27} and He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man."

Next, Jesus told the Jews not to marvel at the fact that He will judge all men, for an hour is coming in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, and will come forth. Those who did good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment. Jesus spoke of two resurrections, the resurrection of the righteous and the resurrection of the wicked. The resurrection of the righteous will take place when Jesus comes the second time. Jesus first came to save men, not to judge. In His second coming, He will come to judge. Those who have not believed in Him will be resurrected to judgment. Those who have believed in Him will be resurrected to life. They have passed out of judgment, and their resurrection is to eternal life with God.

(Jn 5:28-29) "Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, {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."

While the resurrection of the righteous has not happened yet, those in the tombs heard Jesus' voice. When Jesus died, He went to Sheol or Hades, the place of the dead, and the righteous, who were waiting there, were gathered with Jesus and taken to heaven. The wicked are still in the place of the dead, and they will wait there until the resurrection of the dead, where they will be resurrected to face judgment and eternal punishment.

Jesus told the Jews that He could do nothing on His own initiative. As He heard, He judged, and His judgment was just, because He was not seeking His own will, but the will of the Father. One of the biggest problems with leaders in the government, leaders in business, and leaders in the church is that they do things on their own initiative. They seek their own will and not God's will. Our selfish and ambitious pursuits cloud our judgment. Jesus always sought the will of the Father. He also taught us to pray that God's will would be done on earth and in heaven. When Paul gave the qualifications of elders, one of those qualifications was for them not to be self-willed. The pastors of a church are to seek God's will for the sheep, not their own will.

(Jn 5:30) "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."

(Mt 6:10) "Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."

(Tt 1:7) "For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward, **not self-willed**..."

Jesus ends His testimony by saying that if He testified about Himself alone, His testimony would not be true. In all legal matters, two or more testimonies were required. Jesus told them that there is another who testifies of Him, and His testimony about Him is true. He is referring to the Father's testimony.

(Jn 5:31-32) "If I alone testify about Myself, My testimony is not true. {32} "There is another who testifies of Me, and I know that the testimony which He gives about Me is true."

2. Testimony of John (Jn 5:33-35)

The second testimony that Jesus brought up to the Jews was the testimony of John. He said that John testified to the truth. What was it that John testified? He testified that Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. John testified that Jesus existed before him, even though John was born six months before Jesus. John testified that Jesus is the Son of God.

(Jn 5:33) "You have sent to John, and he has testified to the truth."

(Jn 1:29-30) "The next day he saw Jesus coming to him and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! {30} "This is He on behalf of whom I said, 'After me comes a Man who has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.'"

(Jn 1:34) "I myself have seen, and have testified that this is the Son of God."

Jesus said that the testimony that He received was not from man, meaning that His testimony had come from the Father. Jesus said these things so that the religious leaders could be saved.

(Jn 5:34) "But the testimony which I receive is not from man, but I say these things so that you may be saved."

John was the lamp that was burning and was shining and the religious leaders were willing to rejoice for a while in his light. They went to John to hear him, but when he called them to repentance, they rejected him. John was not the light, but he came as a witness to testify about the Light, so that all might believe through him.

(Jn 5:35) "He was the lamp that was burning and was shining and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light."

(Jn 1:6-8) "There came a man sent from God, whose name was John. {7} He came as a witness, to testify about the Light, so that all might believe through him. {8} He was not the Light, but *he came* to testify about the Light."

When Jesus was asked about what authority He had to cleanse the temple, He asked the religious leaders to answer a question first. He asked them if John was from heaven. The Jews were in a quandary. If they said he was not from God, they would lose support from the people, because people believed he was a prophet from God. If they said that John was from God, then Jesus could ask them why they did not believe what John had testified about Him. The testimony of John was a significant one that Jesus brought up on more than one occasion.

(Mt 21:23-27) "When He entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to Him while He was teaching, and said, "By what authority are You doing these things, and who gave You this authority?" {24} Jesus said to them, "I will also ask you one thing, which if you tell Me, I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. {25} "The baptism of John was from what *source*, from heaven or from men?" And they *began* reasoning among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say to us, 'Then why did you not believe him?' {26} "But if we say, 'From men,' we fear the people; for they all regard John as a prophet." {27} And answering Jesus, they said, "We do not know." He also said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things."

3. Testimony of the Father

The third testimony that Jesus brought up was the testimony of the Father. He gave two ways that the Father had testified of who Jesus is. First, the Father testified through the works that Jesus was given by the Father to accomplish. Second, the Father audibly testified of who Jesus is.

a. Jesus' Works (Jn 5:36)

The third testimony was even greater than the testimony of John. It was the testimony of the Father. The Father had given Jesus works to accomplish, and those were the very works that Jesus did. Those works testified that the Father had sent Jesus.

(Jn 5:36) "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."

When Jesus was at the Passover Feast, He had performed many signs. Nicodemus had testified that nobody could do the works that He did unless He was from God. Jesus had done many works, and only a few are recorded. He had just healed a man at the Pool of Bethesda, a man that had been stricken for thirty-eight years. These signs all testified that the Father had sent Jesus.

(Jn 2:23) "Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name, observing His signs which He was doing."

(Jn 3:2) "this man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, 'Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him.'"

(Jn 5:9) "Immediately the man became well, and picked up his pallet and began to walk. Now it was the Sabbath on that day."

b. Father's Testimony (Jn 5:37-38)

Second, the Father testified of Jesus. When Jesus was baptized, a voice came out of heaven and testified, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Jesus said that they had neither heard His voice at any time nor seen His form. Even though the Father had spoken, they had not heard. They had not heard Him at any time, and they had not seen His form. (Jesus had come from the Father and had heard Him and seen His form.)

(Jn 5:37) "And the Father who sent Me, He has testified of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time nor seen His form."

(Mt 3:16–17) "After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove *and* lighting on Him, {17} and behold, a voice out of the heavens said, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.'"

While we think of hearing as audibly hearing, the Jewish concept of hearing was obedience to what has been spoken. The religious leaders had not accepted what the Father had testified at Jesus' baptism, even if they had heard it.

4. **Testimony of the Scriptures** (Jn 5:38-47)

The fourth testimony is the testimony of the Scriptures. Jesus then said that they do not have God's word abiding in them, for they do not believe Jesus, whom the Father had sent. The Scriptures were full of prophecies about the Messiah. Moses had spoken about the Messiah. David had spoken about the Messiah. The prophets had spoken about the Messiah. They did not have God's word abiding in them, and the proof of that was they did not believe Jesus, whom the Father had sent.

(Jn 5:38) "You do not have His word abiding in you, for you do not believe Him whom He sent."

Next, Jesus told them that they searched the Scriptures because they thought that in them they had eternal life. However, it is the Scriptures that testify about Jesus, and they are unwilling to come to Jesus so that they can have life. The Pharisees and religious leaders had taken vows to keep the Law, and they thought that keeping the Law was going to give them eternal life. The Law could never give life; it merely revealed our need for Christ. The Law was a tutor to bring us to Christ, but it could never take away our sins. Because of our sins, we need a Savior, one to take away our sins. The Scriptures all pointed to Christ, the Savior, and in Him we have eternal life.

(Jn 5:39-40) "You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me; {40} and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life."

Then Jesus told them that He did not receive glory from men. Jesus always sought to please the Father, and to do His will. His glory was going to come from the Father. At the end of His ministry and life on earth, He prayed what is called the Priestly Prayer, and it is recorded in John 17. Jesus said, "I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do. Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was." Jesus glorified the Father by doing the work that the Father gave Him to do, and He did not receive glory from men.

(Jn 5:41) "I do not receive glory from men;"

(Jn 17:4-5) "I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do. {5} "Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was."

Jesus set a great example for all of us to follow. We should not be seeking the glory of men. We should do all things for the glory of God. In 1 Corinthians 10, Paul wrote that whatever we do, do all to the glory of God. In Galatians he wrote that if we try to please men, we cannot be bond-servants of Christ. A true servant of God seeks to please God, not men.

(1 Co 10:31) "Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God."

(Ga 1:10) "For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ."

After telling the Jews that He did not receive glory from men, He told them that He knows them, and that they do not have the love of God in themselves. How did He know that? He knew that they did not receive Him, and He came in His Father's name. He said that if another came in his own name, they would receive him. They received one another because they received glory from one another. He said, "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.

(Jn 5:42-44) "but I know you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves. {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. {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?

This is a key principle in Biblical leadership. Godly leaders try to please God and do the things that are pleasing to God. They don't try to please men; they try to do the things that please God. Sometimes, the things that we do may not be the popular thing, or what the culture thinks is right, but we do it because it pleases God. Some churches and denominations have gone astray because they have followed the culture rather than following God's word. We have to do what pleases God, and we find that in the Scriptures.

Jesus concluded his testimonies by telling the religious leaders not to think that He will accuse them before the Father, for it will be Moses who accuses them. They had set their hope in Moses, but Moses wrote about Jesus and they did not believe his writings. Since they did not believe Moses' writings, they did not believe Jesus' words.

(Jn 5:45-47) "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. {46} "For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me, for he wrote about Me. {47} "But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"

Conclusion and Applications

There are a number of ways that we have in Scripture to validate the deity of Christ. Our passage today is a wonderful proof of Jesus being the Son of God, and equal to God the Father. Jesus gave His own testimony about how He always did what He saw the Father doing, and how all judgment had been given to Him by the Father. Just as the Father raised the dead and gave life, He could give life to whom He wished. He said that He did nothing on His own initiative, and that He always did the will of the Father, who had sent Him.

Jesus also gave the testimony of John the Baptist. John had testified of Jesus' identity, but the religious leaders had not received it.

Third, Jesus gave the testimony of the Father. The Father testified of Jesus through the works that Jesus did. The Father also testified audibly at the time that Jesus was baptized by John. The Jews had not heard His voice or seen His form.

Fourth, Jesus gave the testimony of the Scriptures. Moses and the prophets had all testified about Jesus. The Jews searched the Scriptures thinking it would give them life, but the Scriptures do not give life; they point to Jesus, who does give life. Since the Jews did not believe Moses, it would be Moses that accused them in judgment. Since they did not believe Moses, they did not receive Jesus' words.

There are lots of applications that can be made from this powerful text. The first application is to be ready to make a defense of the gospel. Study the passage so that we can be ready to share it with anyone that is questioning the deity of Christ. Peter exhorted us to be ready to make a defense to anyone who asks us, and this is a good passage to have in your toolbox.

(1 Pe 3:15) “but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always *being* ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence;”

A second application would be to do the things that we see the Father doing. We should ask the Father to show us what He is doing, and what our part is. We should keep our eyes and ears open to what the Father will show us, and then do that.

A third application is to always do the things that please the Lord. We cannot be God's servants if we are trying to please men. We must be God-pleasers, and focus on doing what pleases God. We should seek only the glory from God, not the glory from men.

Closing Prayer

Father, thank You for this passage and all the testimonies that You included to show and prove that Jesus and You are One. Thank You for the example that Jesus set of always doing what You showed Him, and for always doing the things that please You. Help us to keep our eyes on You and on what You are doing. Show us what You are doing. Make it clear to us, and help us to do nothing on our own initiative, but always do Your will. Help us to seek Your glory and to do the things that please You. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Discussion Questions

- Have you ever been persecuted for your faith?
- Have you ever been in a situation where you needed to prove the deity of Christ?
- How does our daily prayer time with the Father play a role in what we do?
- What are some ways that the Father shows us what He is doing?
- Why is seeking the glory of God and not the glory from men so important for leaders, and for all of us?
- Jesus said his judgment is just because He did not seek His own will. Why are unselfish and pure motives so important for judges?
- In Exodus 18:21, Moses gave some requirements for leaders who would serve as judges. One of those requirements was to hate dishonest gain. Why is that important for those serving as judges or leaders?
- What is one application or one thing in this passage that has made an impression on you?

Jesus' Defense of His Equality with God

Introduction (Jn 1:1-3, Col 2:9, 1 Jn 5:7, Is 9:6, Jn 5:16-47)

1. **Testimony of Jesus** (Jn 5:16-32, Ac 8:1, 9:4-5, Jn 14:28, Php 2:5-8, Mt 9:32-34, Jn 12:9-11, Lk 7:11-17, Jn 11:1-44, Mt 6:10, Tt 1:7)

2. **Testimony of John** (Jn 5:33-35, Jn 1:29-30, 1:34, 1:6-8, Mt 21:23-27)

3. **Testimony of the Father**
 - a. **Jesus' Works** (Jn 5:36, Jn 2:23, 3:2, 5:9)

 - b. **Father's Testimony** (Jn 5:37-38, Mt 3:16-17)

4. **Testimony of the Scriptures** (Jn 5:38-47, Jn 17:4-5, 1 Co 10:31, Ga 1:10)

Conclusion and Applications (1 Pe 3:15)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.