

Who is Jesus Christ? - John 5:16-30

June 7, 2009 - Skip MacMillan

Summary: Eternal Logos became flesh, chose his disciples, performed a sign of turning water to wine, cleared the temple of broken worship, shared the gospel with Nicodemus and with the woman at the well, and healed a 38-year invalid. Now Jesus begins to unveil His identity.

Who is Jesus?

Luke 9:18-20 - Jesus: 'Who do the crowds say I am?'

History, movies, books, rappers to Bono, academia, Bill Maher, Islam, etc.

“. . . But what about you? . . .Who do you say I am?” Who are you following?

Christology, the study of Christ, who He is, attributes, qualities and more.

Importance: Who Jesus is determines the value of your faith in Him.

If a man, what power or effect can your faith in a man have?

If the eternal Word of God become flesh, what effect can your faith in him have?

This section of Scripture is rich in describing who Jesus is. Most importantly it is Jesus defining Himself.

Sabbath Day

- 1. “So, because Jesus was doing these things on the Sabbath, the Jews persecuted him”** (John 5:16).
 - Ongoing issue between Jesus and the Authorities, found in the gospels.
 - Not against the healing but it being done on the Sabbath and this guy carrying his mat
 - Conservative Jews believed:
 - Angels kept the Sabbath
 - Sabbath was greater than all other commandments (Keener, p. 642)
 - 39 various definitions of “work”
 - 100’s of rules were added to the Law, The Torah, the first five books of the Bible
 - **Sabbath**, “meaning “to rest from labour”, “the day of rest . . . as a day of rest and refreshment for the body and of blessing to the soul” -Easton’s Bible Dictionary
- 2. Jesus’ response: “My Father is always at work to this very day, and I, too am working”** (John 5:17).
 - **Different interpretation** of the Sabbath but did not discard the Sabbath - Jesus.
 - “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath” (Mark 2:27).
 - Designed to give rest to everyone and every animal
 - **“My Father is always at work”**
 - “Father” - the way Jesus spoke describes a “unique Father-Son relationship” -Carson, p. 249.
 - Matthew 6:34 - “do not worry about tomorrow . . . Each day has enough trouble of its own.”

- Other rabbis of Jesus' day held that "God works constantly" but within the allowable limits of the Sabbath (Carson, p. 247), pointing to the fact that the Universe is in constant need of attention.
 - "Philo (Greek-speaking Jew) said: 'God never ceases doing, but as it is the property of fire to burn and snow to chill, so it is the property of God to do'" (Barclay, p. 213).
 - Jesus declared:
 - Intimate knowledge of the Father, "as His own Father".
 - I know what the Father is doing and what He does every day, He "is always at work".
 - I am always at work just as My Father is.
 - The authorities received this as Jesus declaring Himself equal with God!
 - Jesus is equating Himself with the Father and goes into great detail in the following verses.
3. "For this reason the Jews tried all the harder to kill him; not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God" (John 5:18).
- Surface issue was the Sabbath Day; the real issue was Jesus' identity!
 - They believed Jesus claimed to be equal with God.
 - **Jesus doesn't correct them**, but explains an inseparable relationship, subordinate to the Father and in complete obedience to the Father.

Jesus deals with the religious authorities in a much different manner than other people in John to this point. He is specific and descriptive as to His identity and His relationship with the Father.

Two Interesting Points

1. Without the hostile questioning of Jesus by the religious, we would not have this section of Scripture which brings clarity as to who Jesus is. So we ought to be thankful for their questioning.
2. **Response.** See the difference in what Jesus said to the disciples and woman at the well versus what He says to the religious authorities and then notice their responses. He is simple with the disciples and woman and they follow with their lives; these are given great explanations and try to kill Him. Faith is the issue! Disciples in John 14-16.

Jesus **submits** Himself perfectly to the Father's will, He is **loved** by the Father, He has authority and power to give **life**, **Judge** over all, to be **honored** as the Father is honored, His voice can raise the dead, and anyone who believes in Jesus has crossed over from death to life.

Subordinate / Oneness "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; He can do only what he sees the Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does" (John 5:19).

- Jesus positions Himself subordinate to the Father, "the Father is greater than I" (John 14:28).
 - **The Father** initiates, sends, commands, commissions, grants; **the Son** responds, obeys, performs his Father's will, receives authority" -Carson, p. 251.
- **Oneness**, "Whatever the Father does the Son also does."
 - The Son moves exactly as the Father, He is perfectly in-tune with the Father's will, doing exactly what the Father wants accomplished, doing nothing the Father does not want.
 - John 14:7-11
"Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father" (John 14:9).

If you want to see God, look at ME, says Jesus!

- **Clarification.** He is not declaring himself to be a new god on the scene, a competing god, a rogue god as in Greek Mythology. He is declaring that He can see what the Father is doing and that His life, actions, attitude and movements are precisely in-tune with the Father.
- Jesus can **see** what the Father is doing and does whatever He sees the Father doing.
 - "apart from Me you can do nothing" (John 15:5).
 - Get in-tune with the LORD, live as he lived, do what He did.

Loved: "The Father loves the Son and shows Him all He does. Yes, to your amazement he will show him even greater things than these" (John 5:20).

- Jesus declares a very unique relationship with the Father, one based on love, not need or power.
 - If the Father loves the Son, what do you think you should do? To the religious and you!
- One way the Father shows His love for the Son is by showing Him all He does.
- The Son shows His love for the Father by His subordination and obedience.
- "Shows" much more than prophetic glimpses, sketchy visions but with perfect clarity the Father shows His loved Son all He does! And the Son displays His love through perfect obedience.
 - Jesus is the Father's revealer, manifesting perfectly the Father's will in the world!
- The LORD loves us and shows us His will through the Holy Spirit, Bible and life.
 - "When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you" (John 16:14).
 - We show our love for the LORD by our submission and obedience to His Word.

Life: "For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it" (John 5:21).

- Not an expectation of the Messiah by the Jews. Only God gives life; all the more affront!
 - Giving of life is God's territory, the sole prerogative of God.
 - Jesus declares in no uncertain terms He has the POWER to give life.
 - AND, He gives life to whom He is pleased to give it, sovereign God's choice.
- Life today = a whole new way of living this life: relationships, work, purpose, with God.
- Life Eternal = eternal existence in all that is beautiful, peace, joy, wonder and awe.
- Jesus gives life, the author of life and the giver of life.
- Is this a man?

Judge: "The Father judges no one but has entrusted all judgment to the Son" (John 5:22).

- This got all in their face; Jesus keeps bringing up attributes that only God has and claims them for Himself.
 - Judgment was not expected to be in the hands of the Messiah as the Jewish authorities understood it; Jesus is surpassing their expectation of Messiah.
- The Father has left all judgment to the Son; He will sit on the throne, **Revelation 20:11-15**.

Honor: "that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him" (John 5:23).

- To not honor Jesus is to not honor the Father! Inseparable - Jesus and the Father, One.

- Honor Me and you honor the Father.
- Carson: "Such a statement belongs to one who is himself to be addressed as God (Thomas said, 'My Lord and my God' in John 20:28), or to stark insanity. The one who utters such things is to be dismissed with pity or scorn, or worshipped as Lord."
- John wrote this on his own. "John is supremely deluded and must be dismissed as a fool, or his witness is true and Jesus is to be ascribed the honors due God alone. There is no rational middle ground" -Carson, p. 255.

Because Jesus has an eternal relationship of the Father, is shown exactly what He does, is one with the Father, loved by the Father, gives life to who He pleases, has been given all judgment, so that all may honor Him . . .

This is why:

1. "**Whoever hears my word and believes** him who sent Me has eternal life and will not be condemned; He has crossed over from death to life" (John 5:24).
 - Whoever **hears** Jesus' word (you) and **believes** in the Father, is given eternal life and is free from all condemnation; you have crossed over from death to life.
 - Jesus has the authority to give you eternal life.
 - Jesus has the authority to remove your condemnation.
 - Jesus has the authority to move you from death to life by His word.

This is why:

2. "a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the **voice** of the Son of God and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son to have life in himself" (John 5:25-26).
 - The voice of Jesus has the power to raise a 38-year invalid, to heal a broken woman, the power to raise the dead and His voice has the power to heal, change and raise you up from being spiritually dead and broken!
 - God said let there be light and there was light, God said "get up!" and the man got up.
 - God can speak healing into your life, hope into your life, and purpose into your life.
 - Never give up; Christ's voice can bring life to the most spiritually dead people, to the most dark pits in your life and to the most hopeless situations!

This is why:

3. The Father "has given him authority to **judge** because he is the Son of Man. Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out—those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned. By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, **for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me**" (John 5:27-30).
 - **Jesus is Judge**
 - The Father has given Him the authority to judge all humanity, Matthew 25, Rev. 21.
 - "Son of Man" declares Jesus to be both divine (found in Dan. 7:13-14) and human.
 - Oneness with the Father: "By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear."
 - Each one of us will stand before Him, held accountable, holding in our hands good or evil.
 - **Good** – your faith in Jesus Christ, then you are created anew to do good works
 - **Evil** – refusing to believe in Jesus Christ and continue to live in selfishness and rebellion towards God
 - The heart of Jesus "I seek not to please myself but him who sent me."

- Singularly devoted to the Father, not devoted to Me but the Father!
- What about you, what are you devoted to? Whom are you seeking to please?
This is your singular purpose in life.
One Purpose: I preach to One; we sing to One; you live for One; you live to please One, your Father in heaven!

This is what Jesus said about Himself!

Conclusion:

1. Jesus is unlike any other major religious leader. Jesus stands up and declares Himself to be GOD!

- a. "If you knew me, you would know the Father as well" (John 14:7).
- b. "Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father" (John 14:9).
- c. One with the Father, loved by the Father, has life in Himself, reigns as Judge over all, deserves all honor and praise, calls us to believe in Him, has power to resurrect the dead with His voice and to judge rightly each one of us.

2. The challenge:

Mere Christianity, C.S. Lewis: "A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic--on the level with a man who says he is a poached egg--or he would be the devil of hell. You must take your choice. Either this was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us."

Religious authorities chose to deny Him; many others followed Him.
What will you do?

3. This is why we who believe, pray "in Jesus Name," why we revere His word, why His name is the only name we call on to be saved, that is why He is the hope of glory, King eternal, immortal, why we call ourselves "Christ-ians," why we follow Him alone, why we have devoted our lives to Him, why we say only He is worthy, that is why we place our lives in His hands and obey His commands to love one another. And that is why "at the name of Jesus every knee will bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:9-11).