

A Sermon in Four Parts
John 5:16-47

A discourse in four Parts...The remainder of the 5th chapter of John – John 5:16-47 – contains a lengthy discourse or sermon in which Jesus answers His critics' challenge to His authority to do the things He had been doing; particularly those things He had been doing on the Sabbath...

This sermon can be divided into four parts...

Jesus declared Himself to be God (5:16-23)

Jesus promised eternal life and condemnation (5:24-30)

Jesus called on witnesses to verify His claims (5:31-47)

Jesus explained why the Jews rejected Him (5:41-44)

Jesus Declared Himself to be God (5:16-23)

John 5:16-23.¹⁶So, because Jesus was **doing these things on the Sabbath**, the **Jews persecuted him**.¹⁷Jesus said to them, "**My Father is always at his work** to this very day, and I, too, am working."¹⁸For 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**.

¹⁹Jesus gave them this answer: "I tell you the truth, the **Son can do nothing by himself**; he can **do only what he sees his Father doing**, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.²⁰For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does. Yes, to your amazement he will show him even greater things than these.²¹For 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**.²²Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has **entrusted all judgment to the Son**,²³that 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.

- **Normally Jesus defended Himself by pointing out the flaws in their thinking** ...Normally, when Jesus was attacked for supposedly breaking the Sabbath Law, He would defend Himself by pointing out that His attackers had a flawed understanding of Sabbath keeping.

For example, on one occasion Jesus was criticized for healing a man's withered hand on the Sabbath and He defended Himself by pointing out the law allowed a man to lift a sheep out of a pit it had fallen into on the Sabbath, so it was, therefore, lawful to help a man on the Sabbath (Matt. 12:9-13).

- **Jesus defended Himself by claiming to be God and Lord of the Sabbath**...On this particular occasion, however, Jesus chose to defend Himself by **declaring Himself to be God**. And as God He was **Lord of the Sabbath** and could do all of the work He wanted to do on the Sabbath.

Luke 6:5 Then Jesus said to them, "The **Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath**."

- Everyone recognized the exceptions to keeping the Sabbath Law... Both God and the Jews understood that there were some obvious exceptions to keeping the Sabbath Law.

For example...

- a. God worked on the Sabbath... The Sabbath was given by God to men as a gift; the Sabbath was not a law God had to keep. In fact, the Jews recognized that it was desirable for God to work on the Sabbath. They recognized that if God stopped working on the Sabbath that the universe would stop functioning and that would be bad. So, it was good that God worked on the Sabbath; this was a welcome exception to the Sabbath Laws.
 - b. Priests worked on the Sabbath (Matt. 12:1-8)
 - c. Giving aid and comfort to men and animals was okay on the Sabbath (Matt. 12:9-13)
- One of Jesus' clearest declarations of His deity... The healing of the paralytic provided the occasion for one of the most profound passages in the Gospels; Jesus used this occasion to lay out His claim to be God. Jesus could have answered His critics by pointing out the flaws in their thinking about the Sabbath Laws. Instead, however, He told them that He was God and as God He could do all of the work He wanted to do on the Sabbath.

Five ways in which Jesus Declared His Deity

1. God is always working ...which is why I can always work

- *Therefore...I am God*

John 5:17-18 ¹⁷Jesus said to them, "My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I, too, am working." ¹⁸For 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.

- It is perfectly okay for God to work on the Sabbath... The Jews knew that God must work on the Sabbath, otherwise, all of creation would fall apart. Jesus' assertion was simply this: You know that God must work on the Sabbath and in doing so you would not for a moment suggest that He would be sinning. I claim the same right! I claim the right to work on the Sabbath because I am God.
- God is "My Father"... A Jew would never refer to God as "My Father," but rather "Our Father."

Bruce wrote, "In their synagogue services of prayer and thanksgiving the Jews were accustomed to address God as 'our Father'; but Jesus appeared to be claiming God as 'his own Father' in an exceptional, if not exclusive, sense."

2. God the Father and I...do exactly the same things

- *Therefore...I am God*

John 5:19-20, 30 ¹⁹Jesus gave them this answer: "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because **whatever the Father does the Son also does.** ²⁰For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does...³⁰By 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.

- Only God can do exactly what God does

Barclay wrote, "The things that God does are the things that Jesus does; and the things that Jesus does are the things that God does. The great, salient truth about Jesus is that in Jesus we see God."

- Don't be confused by the statement...

"I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself:

Jesus was not suggesting that He has less power than God the Father or that He must imitate the Father. Jesus was simply pointing out that within the Trinity all members act with absolute harmony. Each does nothing apart from the others. What One does, the others are doing. There is, after all, only one God; one God, three Persons, in complete harmony and unity with each other. They are never at odds with one another.

- Each member of the Trinity would say the same thing.

The Son	...can do nothing apart from the Father and the Holy Spirit
Father	...can do nothing apart from the Son and the Holy Spirit
Spirit	...can do nothing apart from the Father and the Son

3. I am the giver of life...

- *Therefore...I am God*

John 5:21 ²¹For 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.**

- The Jews believed that only God can give life and Jesus was claiming to have the same authority to give life that the Father has. The Jews believed that prophets like Elijah and Elisha were only instruments that God used to raise the dead. Jesus was claiming much more: He was claiming to have an authority that was parallel to that of the Father. Both give life to whom they please. This was an unquestionable claim to equality with God the Father.

- **Subordination and divine authority** are seen in our Lord's statements...

John 5:19 Jesus gave them this answer: "I tell you the truth, **the Son can do nothing by himself**; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.

John 5:21 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.**

- **The Jews believed that God held three great keys...**

a. **The key to open the heavens and give rain**

Deuteronomy 28:12 The LORD will **open the heavens**, the storehouse of his bounty, **to send rain on your land** in season and to bless all the work of your hands. You will lend to many nations but will borrow from none.

b. **The key to open the womb and give life**

Genesis 30:22 Then God remembered Rachel; he listened to her and **opened her womb.**

c. **The key to open the grave and raise the dead...**

Deuteronomy 32:39
 "See now that I myself am He!
 There is no god besides me.
I put to death and I bring to life,
 I have wounded and I will heal,
 and no one can deliver out of my hand.

1 Samuel 2:6 "The LORD **brings death** and **makes alive**; he **brings down to the grave** and **raises up.**

Jesus was claiming to possess one of the keys that only God possesses and He was, therefore, claiming to be God

4. **I am the final judge...**

- ***Therefore...I am God***

John 5:22 ²²Moreover, the **Father judges no one**, but has **entrusted all judgment to the Son,**

- **Every Jew knew that only God is the final judge...** Just as every Jew knew that only God could give life, every Jew knew that only God was the final judge. In claiming that "all judgment" had been assigned to the Son, Jesus was claiming to be God.

Bruce wrote, "From ancient days God had been acknowledged as 'the judge of all the earth.' His judgments were constantly being exercised in the lives of men and nations; but at the end of time, it was believed, he would consummate his work of judgment in one last judgment. Then, in fact, he would combine his twin prerogatives as a raiser of the dead and judge of all. But, as the son has claimed authority to raise the dead, so now he claims authority to execute final judgment."

Moses wrote...

Deuteronomy 1:17 Do not show partiality in judging; hear both small and great alike. Do not be afraid of any man, for judgment belongs to God. Bring me any case too hard for you, and I will hear it.

Abraham said this in conversation with God

Genesis 18:25 Far be it from you to do such a thing--to kill the righteous with the wicked, treating the righteous and the wicked alike. Far be it from you! Will not [you] the Judge of all the earth do right?"

Paul in a sermon in Athens said...

Acts 17:31 For he [God] has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead."

5. I am the receiver of the honor due God...

- *Therefore...I am God*

John 5:23...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.

- All must honor Me in the same way they honor God...For Jesus to say that He, Himself, should be honored by men in the same way they honor God the Father is a very clear declaration that He was fully God.
- *He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him.*

To reject Jesus is to reject God...This is a very powerful statement. God is making it clear that any failure to honor Jesus Christ will be viewed as a failure to honor God...they are a package. A man cannot say (...as many Jews said then and say today) that they honor and worship Jehovah God and at the same time reject Jesus Christ. To reject Jesus Christ is to reject Jehovah, the Creator God of the universe.

Bruce wrote, "Yet so completely one are the Father and the son, so perfectly does the Son manifest the Father, that no one can at the same time refuse the Son's claims and pay honor to the Father. Jesus' opponents thought they could do this very thing, but they were mistaken."

Jesus Promised Eternal Life and Condemnation (5:24-30)

John 5:24-30 "I tell you the truth, 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**.²⁵ I tell you the truth, 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.²⁶ For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son to have life in himself.²⁷ And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man.

²⁸"Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when **all who are in their graves will hear his voice**²⁹ and **come out**—those who have **done good will rise to live**, and those who have **done evil will rise to be condemned**.³⁰ 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.

- **The emphasis is on Jesus' role in eternal life and in condemnation**...In this second section of our Lord's sermon in John chapter five, Jesus emphasizes His role in condemning some men and in giving eternal life to others.

1. Jesus tells us... that believers will receive eternal life
2. Jesus tells us... that unbelievers will be condemned
3. Jesus tells us... that eternal life is a present reality
4. Jesus tells us... that believing Jesus and believing the Father are a single package
5. Jesus tells us... that men will be resurrected through His voice
6. Jesus tells us... that He has inherent life
7. Jesus tells us... that He will judge all men because He is the Son of Man

1. Jesus tells us...that believers will receive eternal life

John 5:24a "I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life...

- Those who believe the message of Jesus and the message of the Father who sent Him will receive eternal life. Keep in mind that Jesus and the Father are one and their message to mankind is the same.

John 10:30 I and the Father are one."

2. Jesus tells us...that unbelievers will be condemned

John 5:24b "I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned...

- **The implication is that those who do not believe will be condemned**

3. Jesus tells us...that eternal life is a present reality

John 5:24c "I tell you the truth, 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.

- Once a person accepts Jesus Christ he has received (past tense) eternal life

4. Jesus tells us...that believing Jesus and believing the Father are a single package

John 5:24a "I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life

- Believing the Father and accepting the Son's word are equivalent...The implication is that believing the Father and accepting the Son's Word are equivalent. Those who hear Jesus words and believe what He says give credence to the Father who sent Him and in whose name He speaks.

Jesus throws two seemingly different ideas together: a) hearing His word and b) believing the Father. The implication is that believing the Father and accepting the Son's Word are equivalent.

- You can't truly worship God and ignore Jesus...Jesus is making it abundantly clear that a man cannot truly worship God and ignore Jesus who is the only road to heaven.
- All roads do not lead to heaven...This is just another example of the overwhelming Biblical message that all roads do not lead to heaven. There is only one road and that is through Jesus Christ. Jesus is saying this: You can't worship God and ignore Me; you can't claim to be right before God unless you are right before Me; you can't truly be worshiping God unless you are worshiping through Me.

5. Jesus tells us...that men will be resurrected through His voice

John 5:25 I tell you the truth, 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.

John 5:28-29 "Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice ²⁹and come out--those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned.

- Do good and rise to live; do bad and rise to be condemned...As is so often the case in the Scriptures, God describes the believers and unbelievers in terms of their character.

Those who are believers are described in terms of the good works believers are expected to perform and those who are unbelievers are described in terms of the evil that characterized their lives.

This does not in any way suggest that salvation is by works. The whole message of this gospel refutes that idea. This simply describes the two camps of mankind in terms of the behavior that characterizes their relationship with God.

6. Jesus tells us...that He has inherent life

John 5:26 For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son to have life in himself.

- Jesus now tells us why He can give us life...

All human life is derived from another...Every human being is dependent upon another for his or her life. Men and women do not bring themselves into existence.

God's life is inherent...God is self-existent. He is not dependent upon another for His existence. He is not dependent upon another to bring Him into existence.

Tenny wrote, "We do not have inherent life within us. Our life is derived from others. In the physical sense, our life is given to us by our parents. However, even that transaction is shrouded in deep mystery.

Again Jesus claimed deity by saying he was not dependent on another for life just as the Father derived his life from no one. Jesus possesses inherent life, the power to create and the power to renew life that has been extinguished."

7. Jesus tells us... that He will judge all men because He is the Son of Man

John 5:27 And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man.

- Jesus tells us why He has the authority to judge...Jesus tells us that He has the authority to judge ²⁷*because He is the Son of Man*.
- The OT had prophesied the rule of the "Son of Man"...The OT had predicted that "one like a son of man" would come one day and receive from God all authority and power on earth. Such a One would be the appropriate judge of all mankind.

Daniel 7:13-14 "In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. ¹⁴He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.

Jesus Calls on Witnesses to Verify His Claims (5:31-47)

John 5:31-47 "If I testify about myself, my testimony is not valid. ³²There is another who testifies in my favor, and I know that his testimony about me is valid.

³³You have sent to John and he has testified to the truth. ³⁴Not that I accept human testimony; but I mention it that you may be saved. ³⁵John was a lamp that burned and gave light, and you chose for a time to enjoy his light.

³⁶I have testimony weightier than that of John. For the very work that the Father has given me to finish, and which I am doing, testifies that the Father has sent me. ³⁷And the Father who sent me has himself testified concerning me. You have never heard his voice nor seen his form, ³⁸nor does his word dwell in you, for you do not believe the one he sent. ³⁹You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me, ⁴⁰yet you refuse to come to me to have life...

⁴⁵"But do not think I will accuse you before the Father. Your accuser is Moses, on whom your hopes are set. ⁴⁶If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me. ⁴⁷But since you do not believe what he wrote, how are you going to believe what I say?"

- Jesus called on witnesses to verify that His claims were true....Jesus has claimed to be God and promised to give eternal life. The question that would naturally arise in the minds of His listeners was this: How do we know that what you are telling us is true; how do we know that you are all you claim to be and that you can do all that you claim to be able to do?

Jesus anticipates their rejection of His claims and in the third section of this sermon He points to five witnesses who have verified the claims He has made for Himself:

1. The witness of...John the Baptist (5:33-35)
2. The witness of...Jesus' Miracles (5:36)
3. The witness of...The Father (5:37)
4. The witness of...The Scriptures (5:39-40)
5. The witness of...Moses (5:45-47)

- Jesus yielded to the Jewish rules of evidence....Jesus began calling on witnesses to prove that He was all He claimed to be by yielding to the Jewish rules of evidence

John 5:31-32 "If I testify about myself, my testimony is not valid. ³²There is another who testifies in my favor, and I know that his testimony about me is valid.

In this statement Jesus was recognizing the standard that the Jewish rules of evidence set in affirming the truthfulness of a matter. And that standard was this: No matter can be affirmed as being true unless there are two or more witnesses.

Deuteronomy 19:15 One witness is not enough to convict a man accused of any crime or offense he may have committed. A matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.

- Jesus was not suggesting that what He said about Himself was not valid...Jesus was not suggesting that what He said about Himself was not valid and true. To the contrary, all He said about Himself was valid. On another occasion He said...

John 8:12-14 When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

¹³The Pharisees challenged him, "Here you are, appearing as your own witness; your testimony is not valid."

¹⁴Jesus answered, "Even if I testify on my own behalf, my testimony is valid, for I know where I came from and where I am going. But you have no idea where I come from or where I am going.

- This apparent contradiction can be resolved by recognizing that in John chapter 5 Jesus was yielding to the Jewish rules of evidence and in John chapter 8 Jesus was affirming His deity in declaring that, as God, everything He said about Himself was true.

As God He did not need witnesses. The rules of evidence God had established for Israel were designed to regulate the behavior of fallen men; they were not designed to regulate the behavior of a holy God.

- Tenny wrote, The apparent contradiction can be resolved because the statement in John chapter 5 is based on legal grounds whereas that in John chapter 8 is based on personal knowledge. In consideration of Jesus' essential truthfulness, his witness concerning himself is sound, though in legal process it would not be admitted."

The Five Witnesses that would Verify Jesus Claims about Himself

1. The witness of...John the Baptist

John 5:33-35 "You have sent to John and he has testified to the truth. ³⁴Not that I accept human testimony; but I mention it that you may be saved. ³⁵John was a lamp that burned and gave light, and you chose for a time to enjoy his light.

- **John testified**...John's testimony was that Jesus was the Messiah. Even many of his own disciples recognized this and left John to follow Jesus about whom he said "He must increase, I must decrease." They could not consistently accept John's testimony and reject Jesus' testimony.

John 1:29-34 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! ³⁰This is the one I meant when I said, 'A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.' ³¹I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel."

³²Then John gave this testimony: "I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. ³³I would not have known him, except that the one who sent

me to baptize with water told me, 'The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.' **34I have seen and I testify that this is the Son of God.**"

- *34Not that I accept human testimony...* What Jesus was saying was this: I am not basing my claim to be God on John's testimony (Jesus will make it clear that He is basing His claim on the testimony of God the Father). But, because they knew that John the Baptist was a prophet sent from God and because John's testimony was important to them, Jesus brought up John's testimony for their sakes, so that they might believe and come to salvation.

2. The witness of ...Jesus' Miracles

John 5:36 "I have testimony weightier than that of John. For **the very work that the Father has given me to finish**, and which I am doing, testifies that the Father has sent me.

- **Similar comments on other occasions...**

John 10:24-26 The Jews gathered around him, saying, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly."

²⁵Jesus answered, "I did tell you, but you do not believe. **The miracles I do in my Father's name speak for me**, ²⁶but you do not believe because you are not my sheep.

John 14:11 Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least **believe on the evidence of the miracles** themselves.

- **The Messiah should be able to demonstrate supernatural power...** A man claiming to be the Messiah should be able to demonstrate supernatural power and Jesus did just that. In a sermon Peter gave on the Day of Pentecost he said...

Acts 2:22 "Men of Israel, listen to this: **Jesus of Nazareth** was a man **accredited** by God to you by **miracles, wonders and signs**, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know.

Part of the work the Father gave Jesus to do was that of performing "signs and wonders and miracles" as a way of authenticating His supernatural origins.

3. The witness of...the Father

John 5:37 "And the Father who sent Me, He has borne witness of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His form.

- **At His baptism...** God the Father made a public affirmation of the deity of Christ when He was baptized.

Matthew 3:17 And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."

- **On the Mount of Transfiguration...**

Matthew 17:1-5 After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. ²There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light. ³Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus.

⁴Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah."

⁵While he was still speaking, a bright cloud enveloped them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!"

- **Shortly before Jesus' death...** Shortly after Jesus had made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem just prior to His crucifixion, the Father spoke again.

John 12:27-34 "Now my heart is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour. ²⁸Father, glorify your name!"

Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and will glorify it again."

²⁹The crowd that was there and heard it said it had thundered; others said an angel had spoken to him.

³⁰Jesus said, "This voice was for your benefit, not mine. ³¹Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out. ³²But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself." ³³He said this to show the kind of death he was going to die.

³⁴The crowd spoke up, "We have heard from the Law that the Christ will remain forever, so how can you say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this 'Son of Man'?"

- **The Father's voice had little effect...** The voice of God the Father seemed to have little effect on many of the Jews who heard it.

John 5:37-38 And the Father who sent me has himself testified concerning me. **You have never heard his voice nor seen his form,** ³⁸nor does his word dwell in you, for **you do not believe the one he sent.**

They were deaf and blind because they did not believe in Jesus... Those who reject Jesus will not hear the Father.

Tenny wrote, "To a Jew, the voice from heaven would have meant the approval of God; yet this seems to have had little effect on the multitude. Jesus implies that his hearers had not apprehended the revelation of God because they had not believed him whom the Father had sent. Openness of belief must precede the reception of truth."

Isaiah 6:9-10 He said, "Go and tell this people: " **'Be ever hearing,** but never understanding; be **ever seeing,** but never perceiving.' ¹⁰Make the heart of this people calloused; make their ears dull and close their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed."

4. The witness of...the Scriptures

John 5:39-40 You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the **Scriptures that testify about me,** ⁴⁰yet you refuse to come to me to have life.

- **Their faith was in the study of the Scriptures, not the object of the study...** The Jews were great students of the Scriptures, but they were confused students. They came to believe that it was the study of the Scriptures that gave them eternal life, and not what the Scriptures pointed to.

Hillel wrote, "The **more study of the law the more life...** if one has **gained for himself words of the law** he has **gained for himself life** in the age to come."

Baruch 4:1 "This is the book of the commandments of God, and the law endureth for ever: **all they that hold it fast are appointed to life.**"

Bruce writes, "The tragedy was that these people, for all their painstaking exploration of the sacred writings, had never found the clue which would lead them to their goal. The goal at which they aimed was eternal life, but that life could be received only through him to whom the Scriptures bore witness. The Scriptures are able to make their readers wise as regards salvation, but they make it plain that this salvation comes only 'through faith in Christ Jesus' (2 Tim. 3:15). Time and again it is affirmed in rabbinic literature that **the study of the holy law is the way to the life of the age to come...** by refusing to come to him, the people to whom Jesus was speaking missed the life which they sought."

- **The OT Scriptures pointed to Christ in many, many ways...**

- a. **Christ in Prophecy...**

- 1) Micah 5:2-5...Predicted that He would be **born in Bethlehem**
- 2) Isaiah 7:14...Predicted that He would be **born of a virgin**
- 3) Malachi 3:1...Predicted that He would be **preceded by an Elijah- like prophet.**
- 4) Zech. 9:9...Predicted that He would make a **triumphal entry** into Jerusalem **riding on a donkey.**
- 5) Zech 11:12-13...Predicted that He would be "**valued**" at **thirty pieces of silver** and that the thirty pieces of silver would eventually go to a potter.
- 6) **Many Predictions that the Messiah would suffer...**
 - He would be despised, rejected, and mocked...Isa. 53:3
 - He would be silent before His accusers...Isa. 53:7
 - He would be crucified...Ps. 22:14-16
 - They would divide and gamble for His garments...Ps. 22:18
 - He would be forsaken by God...Ps. 22
- 7) Isa. 53:4-6,11...Predicted that He would **die for our SINS.**
- 8) Isa. 53:9 ...Predicted that He would be **buried with a rich man.**
- 9) Ps. 16:10...Predicted that He would be **resurrected from the grave.**
- 10) Ps. 110:1-2...Predicted His **ascension to the throne of the Father**
- 11) Zech. 14:4...Predicted His **second coming to the Mt. of Olives.**

- b. **Christ in Typology...**

- 1) **Typical Persons...**For example: Joseph

- Both were born by supernatural intervention
- Both were special objects of their Fathers' love
- Both were hated by their brethren
- Both were rejected as rulers over their brethren
- Both were plotted against by their brethren
- Both were robbed of their robes
- Both were sold for silver
- Both became servants

Both were condemned though innocent
 Both were raised from humiliation to exaltation supernaturally
 Both took gentile brides while in exile from their brothers
 Both restore their brethren
 Both exalt their brethren

- 2) **Typical Events....**The Exodus: The Israelites were delivered from slavery in Egypt; in Jesus Christ we are delivered from slavery to sin.
- 3) **Typical Things...**The Tabernacle: the whole tabernacle is a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ and His work. Brazen altar, the Laver, the Table of Show Bread, the Golden Candlesticks, the Altar of Incense, Ark of the Covenant, even the Roof of the Tabernacle. It all spoke of Christ.
- 4) **Typical Institutions...**The Priesthood; The Jewish priest offered sacrifices for the sinner and was his representative before God; Jesus Christ offered a sacrifice for the sinners of the world and is the Christian's representative before God.
- 5) **Typical Ceremonies...**The Passover: When the blood of the lamb was applied to the door of the house, the angel of death flew over; when the blood of Jesus is applied to the heart of a sinner the angel of the 'second death' flies over.

5. The witness of...Moses

John 5:45-47 "But do not think I will accuse you before the Father. Your accuser is Moses, on whom your hopes are set. **46If you believed Moses, you would believe me,** for he wrote about me. **47But since you do not believe what he wrote, how are you going to believe what I say?"**

- **God promised to raise up a prophet like Moses...**

Deuteronomy 18:15-19 The **LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me** from among your own brothers. You must listen to him. ¹⁶For this is what you asked of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said, "Let us not hear the voice of the LORD our God nor see this great fire anymore, or we will die."

¹⁷The LORD said to me: "What they say is good. **18I will raise up for them a prophet like you** from among their brothers; I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him. ¹⁹If anyone does not listen to my words that the prophet speaks in my name, I myself will call him to account.

- **The words of Moses were the most highly esteemed...**As mentioned earlier, the Jews believed that possessing the words of Scripture would entitle them to eternal life. And there were no Scriptures that they esteemed more highly than those written by Moses in the Pentateuch.

The irony: The chief witness against them would be Moses... The irony here is that the one in whom they placed their greatest hope for eternal life and the one they venerated more than all others would be the one who would nail them at the throne of judgment.

Jesus' words and Moses words were a package ... The words of Jesus and the words of Moses in Scripture were a package; to truly believe one meant that a man must believe the other.

**To believe Moses in the Scripture ...is to believe Jesus
To disbelieve Jesus... ...is to disbelieve Moses.**

Bruce wrote, "The testimonies of Moses and Jesus are so closely interrelated that to believe one is to believe the other; to refuse one is to refuse the other."

Pink wrote, "If there is one thing those Jews thought they believed, it was Moses and his writings. They contended earnestly for the law: they venerated the name of Moses above almost all of their national heroes. They would have been ready to die for what Moses taught. And yet here is the Son of God solemnly declaring that these Jews did not believe Moses, and furnishing proof by showing that if they had really believed Moses' writings they would have believed in Christ, of whom Moses wrote. How terribly deceptive is the human heart!"

- **This a strong statement on the inspiration of the Scriptures**
 - a. To believe the words of Moses (that is...the **first five books of the Bible**)
...is to believe God
 - b. To disbelieve the words of Moses (that is...the **first five books of the Bible**)
...is to disbelieve God
 - c. **Keep this in mind** when you reject the accounts of the creation and the fall of man and the universal flood that were the "words of Moses."
- **Jesus' words & the Father's words & Moses' words...** It is interesting that in much the same way as Jesus and the Father are a single package, Jesus and the writings of Moses are a single package. To reject one is to reject the other.

John 5:23b ...He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him.

Jesus Explains Why the Jews Rejected Him (5:41-44)

John 5:41-44 "I do not accept praise from men,⁴² but I know you. I know that you do not have the love of God in your hearts. ⁴³I have come in my Father's name, and you do not accept me; but if someone else comes in his own name, you will accept him.⁴⁴ How can you believe if you accept praise from one another, yet make no effort to obtain the praise that comes from the only God?

- **Jesus gave three reasons for the Jews rejecting Him...** In spite of the many witnesses testifying that Jesus was the Messiah, the Jews rejected Him.

There are many reasons for men rejecting Jesus, but in this particular passage Jesus gives three of the most important reasons why the Jews rejected Him. These three reasons are not the exclusive property of the Jews; they are shared by all of mankind.

- **The three reasons Jesus gave for why the Jews rejected Him...**
 1. Jesus did not seek to win the praise of men
 2. The Jews did seek to win the praise of men
 3. There was no love for God in their hearts

- **The results of their rejection...**

They rejected the true Messiah and accepted false Messiahs

Three reasons why the Jews rejected Jesus

1. **Jesus did not seek to win the praise of men...** The first reason Jesus gave for the Jew rejecting Him was because He did not come to seek the praise of men.

John 5:41 "I do not accept praise from men,

- **Jesus did not mean that He does not want men's praise...** Jesus did not mean by this statement that He would not accept or want the praise of men, because, as God, He wants men to worship Him and glorify Him. So, in the larger sense, Jesus does want men's praise; but only for the right reasons.

Psalm 9:1-2 I will praise you, O LORD, with all my heart; I will tell of all your wonders. ² I will be glad and rejoice in you; I will sing praise to your name, O Most High.

Psalm 107:31-32 Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for men. ³² Let them exalt him in the assembly of the people and praise him in the council of the elders.

- **Jesus did not come to cater to men's desires in an effort to win their praise**.. What Jesus meant by this statement was that when He came to earth and entered His ministry, He did not come to cater to men's desires in an effort to win their approval and praise. He sought only to win the approval of the Father. His ministry was designed to do only those things that would please the Father and win His praise.

Bruce wrote, "Had Jesus conformed to their ideas of what the Messiah would be and do, they would readily have honored him. But why should he seek such honor as they could give, when by doing the Father's will he could have the glory which God bestows..."[Jn. 1:14]

2. The **Jews did seek to win the praise of men**...The second reason Jesus gave for the Jews rejecting Him was because they were **in love with the praise of men and not God**.

John 5:44 **How can you believe if you accept praise from one another, yet make no effort to obtain the praise that comes from the only God?**

- **The ability to believe depends upon whose praises a man wants**...If a man desires **praise from God**, he is a candidate for faith; if a man desires **praise from men**, he is not a candidate for faith. And he is not a candidate for faith if he wants praise from men because **most men do not praise those who embrace Jesus as Lord** because they think that those who embrace Jesus as Lord are foolish.

In this passage Jesus is saying that the **ability to believe is preceded by the desire to obtain God's approval and praise**. He further suggests that **those who are devoted to the approval and the praise of men** will not pursue the approval and praise of God and will therefore be **unable to believe**... "*how can you [such a one] believe?*"

- **The Jews loved the praise of men**...

John 12:42-43 Yet at the same time many even among the leaders **believed in him**. But because of the Pharisees they would not confess their faith for fear they would be put out of the synagogue; ⁴³**for they loved praise from men more than praise from God**.

Bruce wrote, "To admit the claims of Jesus would have won them 'the praise that comes from the only God'; but at the same time they would lose the esteem of their peers, which meant so much to them, as it means so much to most people."

- **Why does the world think that those who embrace Christ are foolish?**

Answer: Because the world is in darkness and hates the light...Because the world is in darkness and hates the light it naturally follows that a man who seeks the approval of the world will be at odds with God. A man who seeks the world's approval will, of necessity, be forced to embrace the darkness that the world holds so dear and reject the

light that the world hates. If he embraces the light, he will be embracing that which the world hates and will therefore be rejected by the world.

Barclay writes, "The scribes and Pharisees desired the praise of men. They dressed in such a way that everyone would recognize them. They prayed in such a way that everyone would see. They loved the deferential greetings of men on the street. And just because of that they could not hear the voice of God. Why? So long as a man measures himself against his fellow men he will be well content. But the point is not: 'Am I as good as my neighbor?' The point is: 'Am I as good as God?' What do I look like to him?' So long as we judge ourselves by human comparisons there is plenty of room for self-satisfaction, and that kills faith, for faith is born of the sense of need. But when we compare ourselves with Jesus Christ, we are humbled to the dust, and then faith is born, for there is nothing left to do but trust to the mercy of God."

- **Whose approval do you seek: God's or Man's?**

James 4:4 You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.

3. There was no love for God in their hearts...The third reason Jesus gave for the Jews rejecting Him was because they had no love for God in their hearts.

John 5:42 "...but I know you. I know that you do not have the love of God in your hearts.

- Jesus knew that the Jewish leaders did not love God...Jesus had penetrating insight into what was in the heart of all men.

John 2:25 He did not need man's testimony about man, for he knew what was in a man.

- You reject Me because you have no love for God...*"Love of God"* can be interpreted *"Love from God"* or *"Love for God."* Most scholars believe that in this verse the best interpretation is "love for God."

Had they loved God they would have accepted Christ...It was because of their failure to love God that they failed to accept Jesus and the five witnesses that had testified to His authenticity.

a. To love God is to obey His commands

1 John 5:3 This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome,

b. He has commanded us to accept his Son... To love God is to obey His commands and He has commanded us to accept His Son. Therefore, to love God means that one must accept His Son, Jesus Christ.

1 John 3:23 And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us.

The results of their rejection...

- They rejected the true Messiah and accepted false Messiahs

John 5:43 I have come in my Father's name, and you do not accept me; but if someone else comes in his own name, you will accept him.

- The Father's name and words and agenda were rejected... Jesus is different from so many of the other "saviors" who have come with their own agenda and their own plans for winning the approval and therefore the support of the people. Most would-be leaders do and say those things that will win for them approval and support.

But Jesus was different. His only concern was the approval of the Father. It was in the Father's name and with Father's words and agenda that Jesus came. His obligation was to do only those things that pleased the Father. And the Father's agenda was to lead the world into salvation and light.

- Another's name and words and agenda will be accepted... Men will accept those who come, not as representatives of God the Father, but representing themselves and their own ambitions and their own selfish desires for glory and power.

Examples: Bar Kochba and the Antichrist

Bruce writes, "An outstanding fulfillment of this prediction came about in AD 132, when one Simeon ben Kosegah [**Bar Kochba**] claimed to be the Messiah of David's line, and led a revolt against Rome. His claim was supported by Akiba, the most eminent rabbi of the day, who hailed Simeon as the 'star out of Jacob' foretold by Balaam in Num. 24:17. But Simeon's messianic pretensions involved himself, his supporters and the people of Judaea came to the most fearful ruin."

The world will accept the Antichrist...