

WITNESSES FOR JESUS

John 5:31-47

As the opposition begins to rise, Jesus gives the crowd a glimpse of Who they're dealing with.
4th TEACHING LESSON addressed to the crowd flows out of 3rd discourse, which is Jesus' response to the opposition which develops from the healing of the paralytic at the pool of Siloam.

3rd of 7 Signs demonstrating that Jesus is Christ and God, so that we might trust Him and receive God's gift of eternal life.

Opposition Develops 5-12

Jesus demonstrates his power over disease by healing a sick man at the pool of Bethesda 5:1-15

Rather than produce faith, the incident produces a negative reaction because the healing is performed on the Sabbath.

Healing Motivates the Jews to Persecute Jesus 16-18

Jews confront Jesus about failure to follow their traditions.

They ignore the evidence affirmed by the sign.

They persecute Him because He dares to heal on the Sabbath 16

They try to kill Him because He claims to be equal with God! 18

...not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.

How does Jesus respond to their charge?

Discourse Affirming Equality with God 5:19-47

He doesn't correct impression.

Jesus Imitates His Father 5:19-30

4th Discourse to the crowd

(Continuation developing out of 3rd –but a separate message):

WITNESSES TO HIS CLAIMS 5:31-47

Jesus' testimony concerning Himself 31

"If I testify about myself, my testimony is not valid.

This is the normal standard for evaluation: If the only evidence we can present is our own word for it, they would have reason to doubt.

No one will accept our word alone as adequate proof.

The exception:

When Pharisees challenge Him for bearing witness to Himself, Jesus responds that He's best qualified.

He knows where He comes from while they don't.

8:13-16 *The Pharisees challenged him, "Here you are, appearing as your own witness; your testimony is not valid." ¹⁴ Jesus answered, "Even if I testify on my own behalf, my testimony is valid, for I know where I came from & where I am going. But you have no idea where I come from or where I am going.*

Jesus' testimony is valid because He knows where He came from and where He's going.

By itself it's not enough to convince others, but His testimony joins the other witnesses to affirm His Divine origin.

Who knows better than He where He comes from?

No one else really has first-hand knowledge of His origin.

His witness is best because it is not based on human standards but on God's standards.

8:15-16 *You judge by human standards; I pass judgment on no one. ¹⁶But if I do judge, my decisions are right, because I am not alone. I stand with the Father, who sent me.*

God Himself confirms the witness Jesus gives to people who really want to know the truth.

[Jesus presents other witnesses who affirm His origin...]

32 *There is another who testifies in my favor, & I know that his testimony about me is valid.*

This affirmation probably refers to the final authority, the witness of the Father concerning His Son.

Jesus consistently refers to Him as the primary witness Who affirms Him for those who WANT to know the truth.

Jesus will come back to Him as final Witness, after mentioning a couple of others.

John's testimony concerning Jesus 33-35

"You have sent to John & 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 & gave light, & you chose for a time to enjoy his light.

While His authority doesn't *depend* on human testimony, & human testimony shouldn't be necessary, Jesus affirms John's integrity.

People recognize John as God's spokesman.

While people had hot dialogues about Jesus, people in general accepted John as God's spokesman.

John affirms Jesus' divine origin.

Weightier testimony:

Jesus' works give testimony concerning Jesus 36

"I have testimony weightier than that of John. For the very works [pl.] that the Father has given me to finish, and which I am doing, testify that the Father has sent me.

In **10:38**, Jesus tells the opposition, "if you don't believe me, **believe the works** [the miracles], that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father."

The works He does witness on His behalf.

The Father's testimony concerning Jesus 37-38

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.

If they knew Him, they would recognize His voice and His Word.

People who hear His voice trust the One He sent.

Jesus repeats the same testimony in **8:17-19** *"In your own Law it is written that the testimony of two men is valid. ¹⁸I am one who testifies for myself; my other witness is the Father, who sent me." Then they asked him, "Where is your father?" "You do not know me or my Father," Jesus replied. "If you knew me, you would know my Father also."*

They are so identified that to reject or ignore One is to reject the other.

People who reject the authority of Jesus, reject the authority of the Father also.

In spite of evidence, leaders are determined to stop Him.

The key to understanding the conflict is stated by Christ Himself

6:45 *"Everyone who listens to the Father & learns from Him comes to me."*

7:17 *"If anyone chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own."*

8:47 *"He who belongs to God hears what God says. The reason you do not listen is that you do not belong to God."*

People who want to obey God discover the truth concerning Him because God will reveal it to them.

Problem of their unbelief has arisen because they don't *want* to know the truth.

Scriptures' testimony concerning Jesus 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.

These men committed their lives to study of Scriptures.

They translated them; they analyzed them; they picked them apart.

But **THEY MISSED THE POINT!**

Scriptures point to Jesus!

Jesus points out **Motive for their unbelief. 41-44**

*"I do not accept praise from men, ⁴²but 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, & you do not accept me; but if someone else comes in his own name, you will accept him. ⁴⁴How can you believe if **you accept praise from one another, yet make no effort to obtain the praise that comes from the only God?**"*

He demonstrates again they don't come to Him, because they don't want to please God.

People today often use their Bible similarly.

"Family Bible" of my parents and grandparents.

It adorned the coffee table, but we never USED it!

Some people love to "study" the Bible.

Pagan scholars examine its text by the hour.

But they never seek to DO what pleases God.

We'll never get the point, until we seek to DO what pleases God.

Jesus tells us that God reveals the truth to those who want to *do* His will. Do we?

People who want to do God's will are marked by thirst for His Word.

Harry Ironside one of the greatest Bible teachers ever, was marked by thirst for God's Word. By the time he was 14, he had read the entire Bible 14 times.

During rest of his life he read it at least once each year.

He had insatiable thirst for God's Word—it showed!

He knew the truth—got the point.

He was able to pass it on!

John G. Mitchell—Bible lectures on John at DTS.

Scripture flowed from his lips.

Someone asked concerning his Bible memory plan.

"Young man, when you've invested a lifetime studying God's Word you don't need a memory plan, it will flow from your lips."

The secret isn't a study plan—it's an insatiable thirst to know God's will and DO it!

That's what they were lacking!

They claim to be followers of Moses.

Jesus addresses that claim by introducing His final witness:

Moses' testimony concerning Jesus 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?"

The ultimate witness in favor of Jesus is the very one they claim to follow.

Moses told them about His coming.

**They don't turn to Jesus,
because they don't believe Moses.**

IMPLICATIONS FOR US:

There's no lack of evidence concerning Jesus.

John emphasizes that point repeatedly throughout His book

***Abundant testimony is supplied by reliable witnesses to confirm that
Jesus is God & we should trust Him.***

There's no lack of evidence—no lack of witnesses—for those who want to know the truth about Jesus.

Those who trust Him receive eternal life. 5:24

"He who hears my Word & believes in Him who sent me has eternal life; he will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life."

**People refuse to trust Jesus because they don't *want* to acknowledge
God's authority over their life.**

People reject God's right to rule their lives.

Those who reject Jesus are condemned.

3:16-21 *"For God so loved the world that he gave his one & only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. ¹⁸Who-ever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one & only Son. ¹⁹This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. ²⁰Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. ²¹But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God."*

3:36 *Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him."*

How about YOU?

What will *you* do with Jesus?

Will you trust Him & receive God's gift of eternal life?

Will you reject Him & remain under God's wrath?