

04/05/20 Sermon Notes

Part of Just Getting Started A series on the Gospel of John

April 3, 2020

Message: The Fifth Witness

Series: Just Getting Started

Recap: We're in the 12th week of this series on the Gospel of John. Written by one of many Johns in Scripture, this was the disciple who Jesus loved. Matthew, Mark, and Luke are synoptic gospels (they are similar in structure and content) but John is different. He wrote his gospel to the world, to you. John tells the story of Jesus' life, ministry, death, resurrection, and it tells the story that through Jesus, you're Just Getting Started!

We have a lot of 'crossover' experiences in life, our lives are full of them (crossover from student to employee, from single to married, from no kids to parenting). Some are more significant than others. Some are more life changing than others. Some crossovers are good and some are bad. Today's message is about the ultimate crossover!

An important question: Are you ready to die? Are you ready for the crossing?

Recap from Last Week

Jesus had traveled from Galilee to Jerusalem (Judea) and He was walking by the pool of Bethesda and saw a man who had been sick for almost 40 years, and he couldn't walk. Jesus healed the man! He then told the man to get up and walk (and take the mat he was laying on with him).

The Jewish leaders hated Jesus because of all the attention He drew and because He was telling people He was the Son of God... equal to God. They called Him a liar and persecuted Him (language used indicated they persistently persecuted Him). They didn't just want to hurt Jesus, they wanted Him killed.

Through their eyes, Jesus was mocking their beliefs (their God). He healed this man on the Sabbath! He told the man to work (by carrying his mat) on the Sabbath! Two sins against God because they happened on the Sabbath! He must be punished for His sins!

Jesus started “preaching” to them (with love that only comes from the Father).

[Note: Read John 5:17-30 to catch up if you missed last week’s message]

- He’s being persecuted, but He LOVES them anyway

Terms Used in a Trial

Today we’re talking about two theological terms that are used frequently when dealing with court cases, and specifically a court trial.

- A WITNESS is someone who tells what they have seen or personally experienced
- TESTIMONY is a written or spoken statement sharing evidence of the existence or appearance of something

You hear believers say, “I got to witness to someone today” but what they’re actually doing is being a witness. When you are being a witness, you are sharing your testimony of what God has done in your life.

—Pastor Chad

Jesus is trying to teach the religious leaders (his enemies) that He really is, who He says He is! He really is God incarnate (God in the flesh).

John 5:31 (NLT)

“If I were to testify on my own behalf, my testimony would not be valid.”

I can tell my wife all day long that I’m the best husband in the world. But if I’m testifying on my own behalf, my testimony would not be valid. When someone wants to take you down, standing on your own word lacks credibility.

Jesus was basically saying, “It doesn’t matter what I say, they won’t believe me!”

Four Distinct Witnesses

John 5:32-35 (NLT)

32 But someone else is also testifying about me, and I assure you that everything he says about me is true.

33 In fact, you sent investigators to listen to John the Baptist, and his testimony about me was true.

34 Of course, I have no need of human witnesses, but I say these things so you might be saved.

35 John was like a burning and shining lamp, and you were excited for a while about his message.

Jesus will point out four distinct witnesses - we’ll identify them one by one.

- JOHN THE BAPTIST is a witness for Jesus

The Greek grammar implies he was the Jews’ own witness, a prophet highly regarded by those who now challenged Jesus’ authority. Read John 1:29 where he called Jesus the Lamb of God.

(Personal application: Are you like this witness? Do you point people to Jesus? People on earth who don’t believe have no reason to believe the Bible, no reason to believe in prayer, but when you share what Jesus has done in your life - it makes you a credible witness.)

John 5:36 (NLT)

But I have a greater witness than John—my teachings and my miracles. The Father gave me these works to accomplish, and they prove that he sent me.

- HIS WORKS are a witness for Jesus

Jesus was saying - don’t listen to what I say, you have no reason to trust my words, but believe what you see!

(Personal application: Our works don’t bring about salvation, but our

works reflect our salvation. When you follow Jesus, you want to serve, you want to give, you want to be more like Him.)

John 5:37-38 (NLT)

37 And the Father who sent me has testified about me himself. You have never heard his voice or seen him face to face,

38 and you do not have his message in your hearts, because you do not believe me—the one he sent to you.

- HIS FATHER is a witness for Jesus

Jesus was telling the religious leaders - you will never hear God's voice, you will never see God's face - because you are so focused on rules, laws, and tradition that you're following a script that leads nowhere - instead of following Jesus who'll lead you to heaven.

(Personal application: Without God, we don't know how to act, what to do, how to feel. Truth is, left up to us, we couldn't find our way out of a paper bag filled with sin. That's where God the Father comes in. The moment you believe in Jesus and turn your life over to Him, in an instant, you are connected to the Father!)

John 5:39-40 (NLT)

39 "You search the Scriptures because you think they give you eternal life. But the Scriptures point to me!

40 Yet you refuse to come to me to receive this life.

- THE BIBLE is a witness for Jesus

The religious leaders studied the Bible, religiously! It was the Torah (books of law)/Pentateuch (first five books), written by Moses - but they were "in" God's Word.

Truthfully, the Bible points people to Jesus!

They were so busy waiting on a Savior to come, they missed the fact He was standing right in front of them! And not only that, He was the one they were persecuting, and they kept on doing it!

—Pastor Chad

(Personal application: If you want to know God better... dig into the

Bible, study the Scriptures. Hey'll talk to you through His Word. You'll get to know Him better through His Word. He will reveal things to you through His Word.)

The Verdict and Sentencing

If you could imagine it being a courtroom with witnesses and testimony... and now it's time for the verdict and sentencing.

John 5:41-47 (NLT)

41 "Your approval means nothing to me,
42 because I know you don't have God's love within you.
43 For I have come to you in my Father's name, and you have rejected me. Yet if others come in their own name, you gladly welcome them.
44 No wonder you can't believe! For you gladly honor each other, but you don't care about the honor that comes from the one who alone is God.
45 "Yet it isn't I who will accuse you before the Father. Moses will accuse you! Yes, Moses, in whom you put your hopes.
46 If you really believed Moses, you would believe me, because he wrote about me.
47 But since you don't believe what he wrote, how will you believe what I say?"

The question today: Who will give evidence of who Jesus is?
John the Baptist does. Jesus' actions... His works does.
God the Father does. The Bible does.

Who will give evidence of who Jesus is?

The answer: YOU SHOULD

The only reason why you wouldn't be a witness for Jesus. The only reason why you wouldn't share your testimony about Jesus...

John 5:42 – if you don't have God's love within you

John 5:43 – if you have rejected Jesus

John 5:44 – you don't care about God's honor

John 5:45 – you put your hope in earthly things/people

Be the Fifth Witness for Jesus!