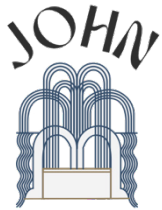


An Exposition of the
GOSPEL OF JOHN



“THE WITNESSES TO CHRIST’S IDENTITY”

John 5:30-47

Theme: Jesus Christ’s identity is confirmed by the proof He provides.

Introduction: Who is Jesus Christ? That question lies at the heart of the gospel—and the answer to it divides history, nations, and souls. In John 5, the Jewish leaders are confronting Jesus because He had not only healed on the Sabbath but had made Himself equal with God (John 5:18). Jesus does not retreat from this charge. Instead, He affirms His divine authority and then proceeds to present the testimony that validates His identity as the Son of God.

In a world filled with skepticism, false messiahs, and spiritual confusion, Jesus provides a compelling courtroom-like presentation in John 5:30–47. He does not ask us to believe blindly; He provides five credible witnesses that confirm who He truly is. These witnesses stand as eternal testimonies to His deity, His mission, and His authority. **[Read Text]** ...

This morning, we will examine these five witnesses to the identity of Christ:

1. **The Personal Witness** (vv. 30–31) – Jesus affirms that His judgment is righteous because He seeks not His own will, but the will of the Father. His own self-witness, while true, does not stand alone.
2. **The Principal Witness** (vv. 32–35) – John the Baptist, the forerunner of the Messiah, bore witness to the truth concerning Jesus with clarity and conviction.
3. **The Practical Witness** (v. 36) – The works that Jesus performed—the signs and miracles—serve as undeniable evidence of His divine commission.
4. **The Paternal Witness** (vv. 37–38) – God the Father Himself has testified of the Son, and yet the religious leaders failed to hear or recognize His voice in Jesus.
5. **The Prophetic Witness** (vv. 39–47) – The Scriptures, especially the writings of Moses, speak of Christ, yet those who prided themselves on knowing the Word tragically missed the One to whom it pointed.

As we explore this passage, may our hearts be inspired to worship the One whose identity is divinely confirmed. And may we heed the warning from the example of those who, despite being religious and knowledgeable in Scripture, refused to come to the very One in whom eternal life is found (John 5:40).

“You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me; and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life.”

Ultimately, each of us must process the evidence Jesus provides and make an informed decision about His identity – essentially, He calls on us to judge Him using the evidence He presents and pass a verdict. The theme of these verses, when boiled down, is this: **Jesus Christ’s identity is confirmed by the proof He provides.** What say you as you consider what He says?

I. The Personal Witness – 5:30-31

A. The Deposition of Christ's Testimony – v. 30

1. Jesus hereby clarifies that He is not some renegade radical who is out of control and usurping authority that does not belong to Him.
2. Instead of being able to accuse Him of acting independently of the will of God, Jesus states: *"I can do nothing on My own initiative."*
3. The standard by which Jesus assesses what is right for Him to do and what is wrong comes directly from the Father: *"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."*
4. In this statement, Jesus says to the Jews: *"Why are you uptight as though I am usurping God's authority? Responsibility does not rest on my shoulders alone, or the Father's shoulders alone, but on 'our shoulders' for We cooperate perfectly in everything that I do."*

B. The Dismissal of Christ's Testimony – v. 31

1. However, in the hardness of their hearts, the Jews dismissed this explanation and testimony of Jesus, and Jesus knew it!
2. Jesus says to them ... *"If I alone bear witness of Myself, [that is not good enough for you and so in your estimation] My testimony is not true."* – cp. John 8:13.
3. Jesus could not have been stating that His testimony concerning Himself was untrue – He claimed the opposite – cp. John 8:14.

II. The Principal Witness – 5:32-35

A. The Integrity of John's Testimony – vv. 32-33

1. Realizing that His personal testimony about His identity wouldn't convince the hard-hearted Jews, Jesus cites the Law of Second Witness – cp. Deuteronomy 17:6.
2. He states: *"There is another who bears witness of Me, and I know that the testimony which He gives about Me is true."*
3. About whom, then, is Jesus referring?
4. Immediately, the Jews listening thought about John the Baptist, but v. 36 indicates that Jesus is actually referring to the Father.
5. Nevertheless, understanding that the most likely candidate in these

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unbelieving hearts was John, Jesus responds – “*You have sent to John, and he has testified to the truth.*”

6. That is, John has agreed with the testimony that He Himself heard – that from the Father – cp. *Matthew 3:16-17.*
7. When they sent to John asking Him about the veracity of Jesus’ testimony, John confirmed it – cp. *John 3:30-36.*

B. The Impact of John’s Testimony – vv. 34-35

1. Why settle for the testimony of mere men when there is a greater witness available to hear? – The Father!
2. In essence, Jesus calls for the people not to settle for a mortal’s testimony as the focus of their faith – look to God: “*But the testimony which I receive is not from man, but I say these things so that you may be saved.*”
3. It is in believing the testimony and veracity of Jesus Christ that we can gain eternal life – seeing Christ as independent from the Father renders one unable to fully trust His Word – cp. *John 5:24.*
4. However, they were willing to accept John’s testimony – but not that of Jesus or of the Father – “*He was the lamp that was burning and was shining and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light.*”
5. Sometimes, people are willing to accept a portion of the Gospel – for a while – but never truly embrace it as being from God Himself – cp. *1 Thessalonians 2:13.*

III. The Practical Witness – 5:36

A. The Worth of His Works

1. Having Jesus confirms in this verse that He is not speaking about John’s testimony, but that of the Father – “*But the testimony which I have is greater than the testimony of John.*”
2. In that Jesus identifies John as the “greatest prophet” that ever lived, this “*greater testimony than the testimony of John*” must have been something – cp. *Matthew 11:11.*
3. Essentially, the only testimony that can be greater than the “greatest prophet” is the testimony of God.

B. The Witness of His Works

1. Essentially, the testimony of the Father was performed through the enabling of Christ Jesus to do the miraculous deeds that had precipitated this controversy.
2. He states: *“... 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.”*
3. This was the very message gleaned by Nicodemus – cp. [John 3:2](#).

IV. The Paternal Witness – 5:37-38

A. The Announcement of the Father’s Testimony – v. 37a

1. Here Jesus references in an explicit way, the verbal expression of approval on the Son – cp. [Mark 1:9-11](#).
2. He states: *“And the Father who sent Me, He has borne witness of Me.”*
3. He then repeats this message of approval through the miraculous things He enabled Jesus Christ to perform.
4. The problem is that the Jews refuse to acknowledge God in Christ Jesus.

B. The Analysis of the Father’s Testimony – vv. 37b-38

1. Jesus says: *“You have neither heard His voice at any time nor seen His form”*
2. This *“voice”* and *“form”* was none other than the Person of Christ Jesus Himself.
3. Jesus then proceeds to indict these sinful people for rejecting Him – *“You do not have His word abiding in you, for you do not believe Him whom He sent.”*
4. Thus, to reject Christ is to deny the testimony of the Father, which is to call God a liar – cp. [1 John 5:9-12](#).

V. The Prophetic Witness – 5:39-47

A. The Stubborn Evaluation of the Scriptural Witness – vv. 39-44

1. Jesus, anticipating their objection concerning the absence of the word of God, states: *“You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is in these that bear witness of Me;”*
2. However, they refuse to acknowledge Christ being presented to them in

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the Word – *“and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life.”*

3. Hence, often sinners are simply stubborn – when all the evidence is presented to them to accept the truth about Christ, directly from the Father, they still remain blind.
4. Jesus states: *“I do not receive glory from men”* – meaning that he was not interested in attempting to fit their mold of what a “Messiah” ought to be – He would remain true to God’s design.
5. He then further indicts the Jews by saying: *“but I know you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves”* – because if they had, they would have received Him.
6. This is demonstrated repeatedly as they grasped at straws for a Messiah – *“I have come in My Father’s name [as the legitimate Messiah] and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, you will receive him.”*
7. They are ready to accept the testimony of men, but balk at the testimony provided by God: *“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?”*
8. Hence, it is not a lack of evidence, but a lack of love for God that causes them to reject Him.

B. The Surprising Explanation of the Scriptural Witness – vv. 45-47

1. Because of their hard hearts, Jesus indicates that He would not need to accuse them – He will be sitting as Judge.
2. Rather, He would allow Moses [the one they revered as the “Law-giver”] to judge them according to the perfect standard provided in the Law that Moses delivered: *“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.”*
3. This must have shocked these folks, but then He follows up with an even more shocking statement – *“For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me, for he wrote about Me.”*
4. This strikes at the core of their religion – that which they were so smugly “keeping.”
5. In reality, everywhere they turned in God’s Word, they were running into the person of Christ Jesus.

6. This section closes with a statement by Christ concerning His incredulity at their unbelief – *“But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?”*.

So What?

1. How am I improving in submitting my desires and actions to God as I deepen my relationship with Christ?
2. How does my life function as a “burning and shining lamp” to those around me, and what can I do to help that light shine brighter?
3. What hinders me from hearing and receiving the voice of the Father through His Word?
4. What steps can I take to protect my heart from learning from His Word in a way that leads to pride rather than humble faith in Christ?

Theme: Jesus Christ’s identity is confirmed by the proof He provides.