

# JOHN: He is the One: He is the One Who Judges

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## John 5:19-27

Hi, Doxa. My name is Jamie, and we're going to be reading scripture together today. If you have one near, please go ahead and grab a Bible. We're going to be reading from John chapter five verses 19 through 27. So please stand for the reading of God's word. So Jesus said to them truly, truly I say to you, the son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the father doing. For whatever the father does that the son does likewise. For the father loves the son and shows him all that he himself is doing. And greater works than these will he show him so that you may marvel. For as the father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the son gives life to whom he will. The father judges no one but has given all judgment to the son that all may honor the son just as they honor the father. Whoever does not honor the son does not honor the father who sent him. Truly, truly I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but passed from life to death. Truly, truly I say to you an hour is coming and is now here 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 also to have life in himself. And he has given him authority to execute judgment because he is the son of man. Do not marvel at this for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out. Those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment. This is the word of the Lord. You may be seated.

Hello, family. I'm so excited to dive back into the gospel of John with all of you. As Tim shared in his look forward message we're going to try to do a diversity of teaching throughout the year where we spend the winter in a gospel, really looking at the life and ministry of Jesus. And then in the spring, we're going to look at a New Testament letter or book where we can see the Holy spirit building, leading, or correcting the church. And then in the fall, we're going to go back into an Old Testament book where we can see how God the father and his people kind of set up the whole narrative of this story of God. And so over the time if you have been with us at Doxa, you'll get a steady and diverse diet of the whole counsel of God. That's really our desire. So let's look back at John.

Now, when we ended our time last year we were in the place where Jesus had just been accused of violating the Sabbath because he had healed a paralytic on the Sabbath, thus

working on the Sabbath, and Jesus responds to their accusation saying my father is working until now, which is even on the Sabbath he's saying, and I am working. And when they heard that the Jewish leaders heard Jesus saying that he was making himself equal with God who is always at work. God neither sleeps nor slumbers he's always working, sustaining the universe. So now Jesus is saying, that's me. Now in the next 11 weeks we're going to look at chapters 5-10, and we're going to hear how Jesus in response to their concerns begins to describe who he is. He's going to use several identity statements or teach in such a way that we will see that Jesus is clearly stating that he is God.

And at the same time, Jesus is going to make statements about his identity in such a way that we'll realize we need him. We need who he is. We need what he does. And so every statement is a true statement about his identity as son of God, God in the flesh, the true God-man. And a statement about how we desperately need him. So we've decided to title this series "He's the One" The idea is Jesus is going to keep saying, Hey, I'm the one who fulfills your needs, satisfies your desires, takes care of what you ultimately hope for. And in the text today we're going to see that he is the one who judges.

Now, I don't know about your experience but mine is this-I have experienced that most people don't want to be judged, but they do want a judge. In other words, we don't want to be judged because we either believe or we're afraid that we might be wrongly judged or that in someone's judgment we might be harshly judged. When I was 16 and first got my license I remember being given the opportunity for the first time to go out with all my friends. And we went to Pizza Hut to get pizza together. And then we went to the movie theater across the street. And when the movie was done we got out and we kind of took a shortcut to get back to our car, myself and another guy and two girls. And we walked right through this bank parking lot. And as soon as we started to walk through the parking lot we were surrounded by police cars with their lights on, police officers getting out, yelling at us to put our hands up. And as soon as we realized it in all of our shock, they had handcuffs on us behind our backs and they put each one of us in an individual police car.

What in the world is going on? We are clearly being wrongly, and I would say harshly judged. What had happened is there had been a group of bank robberies taking place in the area and someone called and said that they heard that the next one would take place in the bank we were walking through the parking lot of. And so they just assumed wrongly that we were the bank robbers. What was crazy-cause I remember sitting in the back of the police car and overhearing the CB as one of the police offices said this-hey, hey guys, we've got Francine Vailer in our car. Now that means nothing to you, but Francine's dad was the chief of police. So immediately as quickly as I heard that, we were out of the police car, uncuffed and these guys were apologizing profusely for their wrong and harsh judgment. So none of us want that. We don't want to be wrongly judged in any part of life. We certainly don't want to be harshly judged in case we might even be found to be wrong. And yet every one of us wants someone to judge what is evil. We want someone to call evil, evil. We want them to do something about it so that the evil doesn't just go unchecked, so that people who do wrong things don't just keep getting away with it.

I mean this last year, how many times did you want a judge to judge justly? Whether it was in how we treat somebody who is being arrested but we treat them with dignity or respect, or how we think about the unborn and how they're not honored and they aren't given dignity. Maybe it's in even how we've treated one another in terms of our political harshness. None of us wants to be judged and judged harshly, but we all want someone to do something right about what's wrong. I mean, how many of you felt it in your gut, just the sense of angst and anger over what happened at the U S Capitol. I mean, I hope you are outraged. I hope that you are wanting justice to be done. You want someone to say that is absolutely evil and someone should stand up and bring justice to that situation. So we all want a judge. We all want someone to call evil, evil. We all want someone to do something about it. And the reason why is because you and I were made in the image of a just and righteous God, a God who will not let evil go unpunished. Here's how it works, a judge serves as both the expert of the law, as well as an interpreter of the law. And then the judge is meant to stand in the place of observing a behavior and ask if it lives up to the standard of the law, if it's in line with the interpretation of the law. And where it's not, the judge's responsibility is to bring justice through a judgment as they condemn evil that doesn't live up to the standard of the law. That's what a judge does. But here's the deal, for you and I our willingness to submit to a judge and the judge's judgment will always be connected and proportionately directed by our confidence in the judge's qualifications in terms of how well they know the law, how well they can uphold the law, but also in their character-how they will apply the law to our own personal lives. Nobody wants to submit to a judge who doesn't uphold the law in an unbiased way. In fact I would say most of us are fearful to submit to a judge that's biased and also lacks mercy and compassion.

I don't know if you saw the movie or read the book Just Mercy, but it recounts the story of black men and women who have been wrongly, or at least been judged biasedly around their crime, maybe that they committed or didn't commit and how they were incarcerated and in most cases either they were not guilty or at least they did not deserve the level of severity of the punishment that they were given. And Bryan Stevenson, who is a real life character as a lawyer starts an organization to begin to stand up and fight for these people who've been wrongly condemned. And the movie tells a story of one particular man who was not guilty and was charged and like many other black men who were charged with a crime, was charged not only with a judgment but one that was incredibly severe- a lifetime sentence. Some cases, if you you've read and you know about what's happened, some of these people who are innocent had been given a sentence of a death penalty that they didn't deserve. And as I watched this movie I had this angst, this anger growing inside of me, like somebody should be a just judge. What is wrong with the racially biased judgments these men and women have given to these other black men and Women.

We want a just judge who's unbiased but also has mercy and compassion. And the good news is that is Jesus. That's what we're going to see in this passage that he comes as the true judge of the world who will judge rightly, who knows the law perfectly, who interprets it properly, and not only fulfills it on our behalf, but gives compassion and mercy for all those who don't. What's

crazy is that the religious leaders, they think they're the judge. They stand on the other side of Jesus and they say we're the experts in the law. We know how to apply it perfectly. And we're going to judge you Jesus, because we believe you have not upheld it. What they're going to find in this passage is Jesus turns the table and he says, you're wrong. I am the just judge. I am the true judge. And I am the one who would judge rightly. And we'll find what happens if you choose to submit to him as judge. First, he is the true judge. Verse 21: For, as the father raises the dead and gives them life so also the son gives life to whom he will. For the father judges no one, but he's given all judgment to the son that all may honor the son just as they honor the father. Whoever does not honor the son, does not honor the father who sent him. Now all monotheistic faiths from Judaism to Islam to Christianity believe not only in one God, but that one God is both the giver of life in the beginning as well as the sustainer of life, but also the one who will bring about judgment in the end. So they believe about the one true God-that that God is the only one who gives life, and that God is the only one who gets to judge in the end whether or not we live the life we were created to live. And Jesus right now is claiming in this text that he is the son who gives life and he is the one whom God has given the right to bring judgment. In case they miss it he says it this way...Truly, truly I say to you an hour is coming and is now here when the dead will hear the voice of the son of God and those who hear it will live. For as the father has life in himself so he has granted the son also to have life in himself. There's the giver of life piece. And he's given him authority to execute judgment because he is the son of God. There's the judgment piece. And the son of man statement in verse 27 is a prophetic word that Daniel spoke of this one son of man who would come to bring judgment to the earth. And Jesus is now saying, I am the one who gives life and I am the one who gets to judge whether or not you lived the life you were created to live. In doing so he is claiming to be equal with God. Why? Why did God give him this authority?

Jesus says the reason why the son has the authority and power to give life and bring judgment in the end is because God the father wants everyone to honor Jesus the son in the same way they honor God the father. In other words, what Jesus is saying very clearly is God the father wants you to worship me just like you worship God the father. I'm not lesser than- I'm equal to. Jesus makes it even clearer in case we missed it, through the negative statement. He says, whoever does not honor the son does not honor the father who sent him. So let's be really clear. What Jesus is saying is if you refuse to honor and worship Jesus as God, you also refuse to honor God the Father as God. You might ask, well how do we know this to be true? Should we just take Jesus at his word. No, actually we shouldn't. Not his word alone. Jesus in fact doesn't tell us to just take his word as a stand-a-lone witness and be satisfied with that. In fact he says it this way, I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge. And my judgment is just, because I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me. Okay, here Jesus again is affirming his subordination and dependency on God the father. But then he continues, if I alone bear witness about myself, my testimony is not true. So what is Jesus saying? He's saying in accordance with Jewish law, in order to have any case made the person who's bringing the case can't just bring their own witness. They must have two or three other witnesses in order to bring credibility to what they're saying, Jesus himself is submitting to that same standard of the law saying, you know what? Don't believe me alone. Listen to the witnesses that speak about me. So let's consider the witnesses to Jesus who also affirm him as the true and rightful judge

of the world. Witness number one, verse 32, there's another who bears witness about me. And I know that the testimony that he bears about me is true. Now who is the "another"? Jesus later in John 14 through 16 is going to tell us that God's going to send...God the father is going to send "another". And that "another" is the Holy spirit. And in those three chapters, 14, 15 and 16 of John, Jesus describes who the spirit is, what the spirit does, and at the end that the spirit has been sent to bear witness to the son (verse 27 in chapter 15). And then he says this...He also comes to bear witness through us that if we have the spirit in us we will join the crowd of witnesses who bear witness to Jesus. So witness number one is the spirit, but Jesus also pointing forward to the many thousands, millions of people who'll also bear witness to Jesus. Second, verse 33: You sent to John and he's born witness to the truth. Not that the testimony I receive is from man. Jesus is clear, but I say these things that you might be saved. He, John was with you. He was a burning and shining lamp and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light. Now, if you know the narrative and what we've already taught through, John the Baptist came as a fore-runner to prepare the way for Jesus. He said, Jesus is the one we've been expecting. He is greater. I am lesser. I'm not even worthy to untie his sandals. I want to bow down and worship him. So John affirms him as the Messiah the one sent by God, the son of God, to judge the world. And these men, many of these religious leaders had been agreeing with John for some time. And Jesus is careful to say, you know what? I'm not giving John the Baptist as the primary witness because I know humans. I know that ultimately all of you are going to be, you know, wrong at some time. You fall short of God's glory, you sin, your judgment isn't always perfect. And this includes John the Baptist. But what I love about Jesus is he still includes a human testimony. Even says this... I want you to point...I want you to see John. I want you to listen to John so that you might even be saved. And what is... What is Jesus saying? He's saying, I know you aren't giving credibility to me, but you have given credit to John as fallible and broken as he is, and if you might listen to him, you might actually have one witness that you give credibility to that might lead you to me. And what I love about this is what Jesus is saying. He's saying broken humans can still be a credible witness as long as they point to the credible, just judge. This is really good news for you and me.

If you are a follower of Jesus, if you belong to him, it means God isn't dependent on your perfect life or your perfect testimony in order to be a helpful witness that could lead people to the only one who can save them from their sins. When I was a teenager I was living a dual life. Many of you know that you've heard my story. When I was a part of the church, I would do all the things that church did. I looked like the perfect kind of youth group, you know, student. I was vice-president of youth group. I did all the stuff that they were involved in. And yet I had this other life where I was involved in partying and just treating women in ways that are really debauched and broken. And so I was a broken man and I would even say I was...I'm not even sure that I was fully submitted to Jesus in any way. But with all that said, I found myself with a group of adults knocking on doors, asking if they wanted to hear about Jesus, sitting at their dinner table, sharing the good news of the gospel and seeing people's lives be transformed. It's crazy. I mean, I look back and think how in the world did God use me, work through me and the mess that I was. And the good news is, Jesus is even saying here is, that though I won't entrust myself to man being my ultimate witness, man and women can still be, as broken as they are, a witness to Jesus in this world.

Witness number three...But the testimony that I have is even greater than that of John. For the works that the father has sent me are given me accomplish, the very works that I'm doing, bear witness that the father has sent me. Now Jesus pointing to the very works he's doing and the works he will do. And he wants them to see that the love of the father, the power of God, the presence of God, the servant heart of God is being seen in the very works Jesus is doing of healing, the sick, raising the dead, giving sight to the blind, lifting up the paralytic, feeding thousands miraculously, walking on water, on calming the storm. Jesus says, just look at all that's going on. That's enough for you to believe that the father sent me cause the very works I do could only be done by the power of God. It's interesting later Jesus is going to speak to his disciples in John chapter 13 and say, this is how people are going to know that you belong to me. This is how they're going to know you're my disciples by your love for one another, by the way you serve people, by the lives that demonstrate that you have the same power and love from the father that I had. And I wonder Church, I wonder for you, if you'd be able to just ask people around you in your neighborhood, in your workplace, people that are connected to you through family...I wonder if they would say, yeah, man, looking at your life, the way you love people, the way you serve people, the kind of power you seem to have to live a life that I yet don't know about...I wonder if they'd say that's enough of a witness to tell me that Jesus is alive and present and a working through your life.

Lastly, witness number four, verse 37. This is the best witness of them all. And the father who sent me has himself born witness about me. God, the father is saying, this is the one I'm telling you to follow, listen to, submit to, and trust for judgment about what is true, what is wrong, what is broken, what is evil and the only way in which you can be saved from all that. And notice that he uses this word the verb "born" witness. So I'm going to take you back to English grammar. I know some of you are going, oh please don't, I hated grammar. But born witnesses in the perfect tense, which means it happened in the past, but it continues in the present. So what John...what Jesus is saying about the father's witness, he's saying he witnessed about me a long time ago and he's continuing to witness about me today. In other words, you have the scriptures, speaking to the really religious leaders. They have been telling you about me all the way back from to Moses. He testified about me. The prophets testified about me and now the father, even in my own baptism said, this is my beloved son with whom I'm well-pleased. Four witnesses, the Spirit, John the Baptist, and many of us, Jesus' works themselves, and God the Father. And yet they still don't believe. They still remain spiritually blind. Jesus says this to them, his voice you've never heard. His form you've never seen. In other words what Jesus is saying is, he's saying I'm right in front of you and you can't see me. I'm speaking truth to you and you can't hear me. God has sent me to be for you the savior of the world who came to judge, but will not judge if you received me as savior and you refuse to accept me Four witnesses, but they weren't enough. I wonder for you how Let many witnesses God has put into your life? How many testimonies have you heard? How many evidences do you need to see to believe that Jesus came, lived died, was buried, rose again for you. me ask...do you want to see? Do you want the judge of the world to tell you the truth about you, what you need, to tell you what is right and good and help you understand where you've fallen short. And then listen to what Jesus says to those who

will listen, who will receive, who will say you are the judge. He says this, truly, truly. I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but he's passed from death to life. What Jesus is saying is if you will believe the witnesses that say Jesus is the true judge of the world, if you will receive that judge, then you will then be acquitted, and given eternal life. You won't be condemned. If you receive the judge who says the judgment is this-you've sinned, you've fallen short, you deserve death for your rebellion against God. If you will receive that judge and his judgment, then you will not be judged. You'll be acquitted. However, on the other side of that, if you reject the judge, you will be judged. See, here's all that's required. Jesus is saying, if you will hear me, in other words, listen to me, submit to me, believe what I'm saying, and if you will believe that the father sent me not only as the judge of the world, but we'll find out also as the savior of the world, then you will not stand condemned. You will be acquitted for everything you've done. Every sin will be forgiven, every way in which you fell short will be made up by Jesus. This isn't based upon how well you lived, any good works you've done or religious rules you followed. This is based only on faith in Jesus as the just judge who also becomes for you the perfect savior. And it's given to you. It's free. It's a gift received only by faith. Here's the good news. Jesus is the true and just judge who declares the truth about the world and about you. He's clear, you and I have fallen short. We have rebelled against God. We have sinned. We have not done what we were created to do perfectly. And in his true and righteous judgment he tells us that our sin, our rebellion against God is deserving of death. And yet Jesus, the true and just judge who is full of loving compassion and mercy for you and for me was willing to take the judgment on himself at the cross. And instead of you and I being punished for our sin, he was willing to satisfy the wrath of God, the justice of God, by going to the cross and taking on your sin and my sin. And then Jesus, the true, just compassionate merciful judge, who is also the savior of the world brings all of our condemnation for all the ways that we've lived unjustly and rebelliously and sinfully, to the grave. And he brings it there so he might bury any condemnation that would come against you. So when we stand on that final day, there will not be a word of accusation or condemnation coming against all those whose faith is in Jesus' death and burial. And then he rises again and he rises again to overcome our sentence of death. And he does it so that he now might bear witness for us, that we are now justified before God through his death, through his burial, through his resurrection so that we can pass from death to life and not ever have to sit under judgment again. Jesus continues. He says, Truly, truly, I say to you an hour is coming and it's now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the son of God and those who hear it will live. That hour is now. For some of you listening right now, that hour is right now. You've been spiritually dead, and God is speaking to you. He wants to wake you up and raise you up from the dead and give you new life.

Do you hear his voice? Do you hear Jesus saying to you, come to me, the true and just judge of the world who also has mercy and compassion on you so you can receive forgiveness and be justified by my works on your behalf before God. Do you hear him? And if so, how will we respond? Today is the day of salvation. Today is the day when the judge of the world becomes your Savior. Some of you have yet to hear his voice, or maybe you've found that lately his voice has become dull or silent. And Jesus gives some reasons why that might be the case for you. In fact he speaks to the religious leaders and he says this, basically, you love your Bibles more

than you love Jesus. You trust in your Bible more than you trust in Jesus. You trust and believe in what the Bible will give you instead of what Jesus has done for you. And that sounds crazy, I know, as people even here at Doxa who absolutely love God's word and love to preach it, but here's the deal. You can study and memorize God's word and never meet Jesus. Jesus says this, you don't have the word abiding in you. It's one thing to hear the word and apply the word and think the word, it's another thing to have the word Jesus abide in you. He says you don't even believe the one he sent. You search the scriptures thinking that by them you're going to have eternal life. And yet it's those very scriptures that bear witness about me. And yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life. I mean, Jesus is speaking to the Bible scholars of the day, the Bible Study Fellowship teachers, the seminary professors. He's saying you are the best students of the Bible. You love your Bible. You believe your Bible. You actually are the most truly soulless scriptural of people in the world. And that's your problem. You love your Bible more than the one whom the Bible points to. And you've missed the very point of it. It's all about me. You love your Bible so much you can't see Jesus. But everything in the Bible points you to Jesus. And I wonder how many of us are still doing that today? We have our Bible studies and we talk about application and we get more knowledge of God and go man, I just want to get deeper. I want to find that secret nugget. Just give me a little more. I want to come hear someone preach so I can find out one more truth that I didn't know before. And yet every time you leave a Bible study or a gathering together, you walk away and you're more impressed with you or the Bible, but not Jesus. Is that you? And you wonder why don't I hear from God? Maybe you love your Bible more than him. Maybe you look to your Bible more than Jesus. Maybe you treasure your Bible more than you treasure the one in whom it's pointing to. Or maybe the reason you don't hear Jesus and see him in God's word is because ultimately like these men, you are seeking the glory of man. Jesus says this, I don't receive glory from people, but I know that you don't have the love of God within you. I've come in my father's name and you don't receive me. But if another comes in his own name, you'll receive him. How can you believe when you receive glory from one another, but you do not seek the glory that comes from the only God. I can imagine Jesus pointing to himself while he's saying it. A group of millennials were asked, what is your dream in life? What would you hope to accomplish? You know what the majority of them said? I want to be famous. Bruner in his commentary says this receiving glory from one another is humanity's real God, the most ubiquitous idol of all. But here Jesus invites us. He challenges us counter culturally to seek the glory that comes from the only God-Jesus Christ. This requires a massive overhaul of the human psyche since we're so programmed to seek glory from one another. Yes, we are created to be honored, but everything depends on where we seek this honor.

Here's the real truth. Whoever's glory you seek is the judge you submit to. In other words, whoever's glory you give authority to judge what they believe is right, what they believe is best, what the standard that you must measure up is to. That's the one you ultimately give the position of judge in your life. Bruner states in his commentary, receiving glory from one another is humanity's real God. The most ubiquitous idol of all. But Jesus invites us, he challenges us to counter culturally to seek the glory that comes from the only God that's Jesus. So he's referring to the one that showed up and gave us the picture of what God's like. He says, this requires a



massive overhaul of the human psyche since we're so programmed to seek glory from others. Yeah, we were created to be honored, but everything depends on where we seek this honor. Here's the real truth. Whoever's glory you seek is the judge you submit to in your life. I'll say that again. Whoever's glory you seek is the judge you submit to in your life. Whenever you seek glory from another, you're giving that person, the authority to say, what is the standard that I will be measured by? You want business professionals to be impressed with you. They'll be your judge. You want coworkers or employees to think well of you. You want your political party to affirm you or your Twitter friends to like you, your Instagram followers to love you. You want the world to esteem you. Well, they in turn will be the ones that you grant the right and the authority to judge what is good, right, and pleasing. They will set for you the standards. Problem is they will also tell you when you mess up. And the problem is they're all really bad judges. Not only are they wrong about what is right, good and perfect. They don't always get it right, but they're also really harsh. See, they don't just...they don't just lack the judgment of the true judge of the world. They also lack the compassionate mercy of Jesus, the true savior of the world. And so not only will they wrongly judge you, but when they harshly judge you and you don't live up to their standard, they will crucify you and reject you. But Jesus not only has the truest judgment about you-he knows you're a sinner. He knows you have fallen short. He knows that. And he will tell you that. But he also is the most merciful, compassionate judge there ever was. And instead of putting you in the place of judgment, puts you in the seat of mercy. What does that mean for us? First of all, admit that the judge is right. You've sinned. You've fallen short. You've probably looked elsewhere for glory and therefore submitted to another judge. Admit it and then invite him, receive him to be not only your true judge who gets to tell you the truth about yourself, but also the true savior of the world who gets to forgive you because of his own life, given in your place. If you receive the judge, you won't be judged. If you reject the judge, you'll be condemned forever. Today receive the one who judges justly and saves you with compassionate mercy. Let's pray. Father, we agree with the witnesses, the Spirit, John the Baptist, Jesus' work, but mostly you. You declared Jesus to not only be the giver of life, the one through whom all things have been created, but also the ultimate judge of the world. And we submit to him. What he says is true. What he's done is enough and we accept not only his judgment, but also his saving work on the cross for our sins. We pray this in his name. Amen