

Portrait of Perfection

Jeremiah Dennis
Philippians 2:5-11
November 27, 2022

So, when I was in seminary, I realized that I was around Christians all the time. And that bothered me. I was in class all day with Christians, guys who just want to be pastors. I was a custodian at a local church, and the whole crew was Christians. And I taught at a Christian university, so all the students identified themselves as Christians. So, I became convinced I needed to be around non-Christians. And so, every Friday night for almost two years, I would go out to the Santa Monica Promenade, which is an outdoor mall, and I would just talk to non-Christians. I would tell them about Jesus. I did that every week. And so, I'd talk to many of the people who would come every week. I'd talk to many of the same people every week. And one of those people was this very vocal, very angry atheist. He was about 16 years old.

And he would mock me openly. He would mock Christ, he would mock the Bible. His three friends would come. The four of them would come all the time and do this. He'd always throw the non-existence of morality at me. Like, right and wrong, people create that. There's no God, all of that stuff. And why? Because if there's no morality, there's no sin. And if there's no sin, there's no need for a Savior, right? And so, that was his argument. He was a real piece of work. But I would talk to him, and I'd be calm and kind every Friday night that he would show up, which was a lot of them and I wasn't there to be liked. I was there to plant seeds and tell people about Jesus. So, after a while, though, because they're coming all the time, I got to know this guy better, and he calmed down and he showed me his anime drawings one night. you know, And wow, that's cool.

And I could tell that he was starting to trust me because at one point he said to me, "You know what's evil?" And I went, "Wait a minute. You don't believe in evil." "You know what's evil? Divorce. I hate divorce." And I didn't say, "Ha ha, there it is right there." But but I did say to him, "You know, you just quoted the Bible." He's like, "What?" "Yeah, you just quoted the Bible. Malachi 2:16, God said the same thing you just said, 'I hate divorce.'" I hope I planted a seed there with him. But this this made it clear that his objections to Christianity really weren't intellectual, they were moral. He loved his sin. So, for this guy and for many others, I would spend my time trying to prove that their arguments are false and that Jesus is the son of God, that their good deeds cannot get them into heaven, that Jesus did everything that we need to get to heaven, and our job is just to trust Him, to believe in Him.

Salvation is by grace. Titus 3:5, God's "saved us not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to His own mercy." This is what the gospel of John is all about, he gives us dozens of ways to prove the truth about Jesus. Now, the primary way he does this, we just read in chapter 20, is through the miracles that He shows us, seven of them, in fact, between

chapters two and chapter 11, and then there's the ultimate miracle in chapter 20, which is what? It's the resurrection of Jesus, right? And so, all of this proves that Jesus is the Old Testament Messiah because He fulfills what the Old Testament said the Messiah would do. And it also proves that He is the Son of God, that He does things only God can do because He is God.

That's what it means to be the Son of God. And if all of that is true, then that demands a response from every single one of us. We can't just look at that as a picture on the wall and go, "Oh, isn't Jesus so interesting?" No. This drives you and me, all of us, to a response, and that response we also read, which is to believe in Him. It's to give your life in faith to Him. By believing in Him, the text we just read, you'll have eternal life. You'll receive a life that will last forever, a life fit for existence in the world to come. But when you think about it, it's pretty far-fetched. A carpenter from 2000 years ago is actually the God man. He's the key that unlocks eternal life for all who believe in him. Really? Prove it. That's what the book of John is about.

He is proving that for us, and chapter five gives us more of that proof. And so, I want you to turn to chapter five now of the book of John. If you got a Bible from an usher, it's on page 986. 986. Now, to give some big picture of what's going on in the book of John, chapter five begins a new section that's going to go all the way through the end of chapter 12. And during this chunk, there's going to be five more miracles that prove who Jesus is. But also the added component to this is there's also going to be a lot of opposition to Jesus. Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4, no opposition. Chapters 5 to 12, a ton of opposition that's eventually going to lead us to the illegal trials, the merciless torture, and the eventual murder of Jesus. In fact, opposition to Jesus is going to follow Him from this moment all the way on.

And so, as you read chapters five through 12, notice the opposition and notice the miracles. Today, what I'm going to do is we're going to go through all of chapter five in one message under these two headings if you're taking notes. And then, in the coming months or so, we'll go verse by verse through chapter five to make sure we get everything we can out of this text, okay? So, chapter five gives us the third miracle in the book of John. And so, let's call this The Witness of a Miracle. Verses one to 18, The Witness of a Miracle. As we get into our text in verse one, let's start with letter **A) The Man. The Man.** It says, "After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem." Now we don't know how much time has passed between the period at the end of chapter four and the first word in chapter five, but the words after this could be months or could be as much as almost a year of time has passed between that period and the first word.

Now, look at verse two. "Now there was in..." Sorry. "Now, there is in Jerusalem by the sheep gate, a pool in Aramaic called Bethesda, which has five roofed colonnades." Notice it says, "There is. I misspoke, but it forced you to look it again. Notice it says, "is," which suggests that John may have written this book before the temple was destroyed in 70 AD. That word Bethesda means house of grace. And did you know archeologists know exactly where this is? You could go to this place and see it with your own eyes. My wife and I did that a few years ago. And you know what they found when they dug all of this up? Five colonnades, just like it says right there

in verse three. A colonnade would be like a raised area where there's pillars and you've got roofs over the pillars, and it would create this squared structure. And then, the fifth column was right in the middle and you'd have two pools on either side. You picture that in your head? And I want you to picture this. Verse three, "In these colonnades lay a multitude of invalids, blind, lame, and paralyzed." Some suggest there would be as many as 300 here at any time except for the Jewish holidays, where this could swell to 10 times the amount. So, if you're there on that day, you would see suffering everywhere. Your ears would be filled with the sounds of pain and agony. Your nose would be overwhelmed as this is probably much like the scene in a third world hospital.

Now, look at verse four. Gotcha. There is no verse four, huh? You still looking for it? It's not there. Unless you have a King James or a new king James, which says in verse four, really at the end of verse three, it says, "In these colonnades lay a great multitude of sick people, blind, lame, and paralyzed." And then it adds, "Waiting for the moving of the water." Verse four, "For an angel went down at a certain time into the pool and stirred up the water. Then, whoever stepped in first after the stirring of the water was made well of whatever disease he had." Now, why is it that modern translations don't have the end of verse three and all of verse four? You're looking in your Bibles, "Where is that?" You maybe have a footnote that says something. Well, the reason it's not there is that the best copies of John five that we have, the best copies mean the ones that are closest to when John actually put pen to paper, the best copies we have don't have verse four, which means that this is a superstition that was likely added later. And then, that later edition got copied in a bunch of other copies, which is why King James and New King James have it, and the modern translations do not.

And if you think about what I just read in verse four, think about that for a second. An angel showing up and stirring up the waters and whoever gets in first is healed. Well, there's no cross reference in anywhere else in the Bible that says God does that kind of thing. There's no example anywhere in the Bible where God does that thing. And think about it for a second. God sends an angel to heal people at the pool, but only if you're the first to step in? Seriously? After that, sucks for you, right? Better luck next time. I know you can't walk and get in there fast, but that guy could. So, he got it, and you didn't. Maybe tomorrow. That's just not the God of the Bible, right? So, it's just some superstition that got put in there.

But I think what we have in the ESV is the way it should read. It shouldn't be in there at all. Now, what John does in this moment, in verse five is he takes us off the hundreds that would've been there, and he focuses us, verse five, on one man. "One man was there who had been in invalid for 38 years." 38 years. That's since 1984. There. Sitting there hoping that one day he would get better, hoping that one day he would stand up, hoping one day he would walk out of there healed. 38 years of waiting. Well, his day had come.

Let's look next at The Messiah. The Messiah, verse six. This man, as we're going to see, doesn't know who Jesus is, but Jesus knows who he is. Verse six. "When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had already been there a long time," let's stop there. We don't know how Jesus

knows that, but he knows exactly what would help him. Verse six again, "He said to him, 'Do you want to be healed?'" The question seems kind of like a duh question, right? "I've been here for 38 years hoping to get healed. Like yeah, I would love to." But what Jesus is doing with this question is He's pressing on him that, "You are hopeless. Unless something happens to you, you'll be here another 38 years." He's shocking him out of his hopelessness. But I want you to notice the man's answer. He doesn't say, "Yes, can you heal me? Oh, I've heard about you. Yes, please heal me." No, he just starts to say to him, verse seven, "Sir, I have no one to put me in the pool." So the healing is there in that pool. "I have no one to put me in the pool when the water's stirred up. And while I'm going, another steps in before me."

He believed the superstition, it looks like. Wow. He has no expectation of a miracle. Just a lot of, "Woe is me. I'm not fast enough to get in there," until verse eight. Jesus said to him, "Get up, take up your bed, and walk." Let's call this letter **C) The Miracle. The Miracle.** A place that is called the house of grace becomes that for this one man out of hundreds. He is healed, and notice, purely by the spoken word. Just like God speaks and all of creation comes into existence, so Jesus speaks, and this man who's with atrophied muscles for 38 years sitting on a bed near this pool, suddenly everything is put back together. Jesus commands the man to do what he's been waiting and hoping and praying to do for almost four decades. He commands and gives the ability to obey. The malady leaves him, his muscles grow all over his body. He is free. And notice it didn't take a while for it to happen. It wasn't like, "Well, believe in Me, and eventually you'll get saved." It didn't depend on his faith at all. There's no evidence of faith in this guy. This healing is instantaneous, and it was obvious. Look at verse nine. "And at once," that means immediately in that moment, "the man was healed and he took up his bed and walked." Notice he didn't thank Jesus. He didn't say Praise the Lord. He didn't want to know anything about the guy that just healed him. Notice, he just got up, peaced out.

It brings us the letter **D) The Misdeed. The Misdeed.** If this guy was well known in the area 38 years, he likely was, you'd think everyone would be just blown away. This guy's walking now, walking down the street. There's no way he could live. He can't do a job. So, people had to give him money for 38 years just to exist. And here he is walking down the street carrying his bed that he's been on for 38 years. Yeah, you'd think people would be astounded, but not the Jews. Not the Jews. They don't even see the man. They don't even see the healing. They see the bed he's carrying. Look at verse nine. "Now that day was the Sabbath." That sets the tone for everything else. "So, the Jews said to the man who had been healed," notice that, who had been healed, "'It is the Sabbath, and it is not lawful for you to take up your bed.'"

It's like the hall monitors. The Jews had actually created about 40 different rules about what you could and couldn't carry on the Sabbath because you would be working. The Sabbath command just said don't work. Don't do your job. But it became a whole system of manmade rules that were enforced as if they were divine commands. In fact, some scholars I read said that this violation by this man was punishable by death. So, think about that. 38 years an invalid to be stoned to death on the same day. This went from the greatest day ever to the worst day ever in the span of no time at all. Right? This guy doesn't want that though, 38 years, I don't want that.

So, he replies, verse 11, "The man who healed me," there's that emphasis again, "healed me. That man said to me, 'Take up your bed and walk.'" It's not my fault. It's this guy's fault, wherever he is. Let's call this letter **E) The Mystery. The Mystery.** He doesn't know who healed him. So again, he's not trusting in Jesus for the miracle. This is a pure act of grace to a guy who was not looking to get healed. He was hoping he'd be healed one day, but wasn't looking to Jesus to heal him at all. And I want you to listen carefully to the question the religious leaders ask him in verse 12. I want you to notice what's missing. Verse 12, "They asked him, 'Who is the man who said to you, 'Take up your bed and walk?'" What's missing?

Who is the man that healed you of a disease that you've had for 38 years? Totally missed that. Don't even see that. They don't even care about that. Just a minor thing that there's a miracle from heaven that happened to this guy. So they're going to enforce the law even in the face of a miracle. And the text explains why the guy doesn't know him. Verse 13, "Now the man who had been healed did not know who it was for Jesus had withdrawn as there was a crowd in the place." Jesus is still ministering in obscurity. However, later that day, verse 14, "Afterwards Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, 'See? You are well. Sin no more that nothing worse may happen to you.'" Now, Jesus isn't saying you were an invalid for 38 years because of some sin you committed. That's not what He's saying.

I want you to think about it. What would be worse than being an invalid for 38 years, having 38 years of your life stolen from you by a handicap? What would be worse than that? Answer, an eternity in hell. To be saying to this guy, "Hey, hey, sin no more. Hey, hey who are you devoted to? What is it that you're all about in your life?" And then, notice verse 15, this guy leaves, and rats out Jesus. He's like, he's trying to save his skin. It's like a pre-Judas betrayal moment here. Verse 15, "The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who healed him." He says, "He did it," which brings us finally to letter **F) to The Maltreatment. The Maltreatment.** Maltreatment means cruel or violent treatment. And that's what we're going to see from here on out in the book of John. Jesus being treated poorly, even persecuted. Why? Look at verse 16, "And this is why the Jews were persecuting Jesus." Persecuting means ongoing action. This is what they were continually doing to Him. Persecuting Him. Why? Because He was doing these things on the Sabbath. Think about it. That guy had been there for 38 years. Jesus could have come the day before the Sabbath. Jesus could have come the day after the Sabbath. But Jesus heals him on the Sabbath. Now, why would Jesus do that? Because Jesus is going after the religious leaders. He wants to get their attention, number one. And number two, He's challenging their 40 manmade Sabbath rules. Think about it, these rabbis saying, "You can't do this, you can't do that. 40 different rules, or you could get stoned to death if you do," communicates to the people, "What about God? God is a God of misery. He is a God of burdens." And Jesus is going, "Not on My watch.

That is not the God that I am. I'm a God of joy and freedom who wanted to give you rest from your work. And these manmade rules stole that from the people." Jesus' response to them is brilliant. Verse 17, "But Jesus answered them, 'My Father is working until now and I am working.'" Translation, "If God is still working on the Sabbath, guess what? I'm going to do that,

too." God's at work right now. God's God's been at work. He's like, "So am I." He's still working. He's still sustaining the universe He created. He's causing the sun to rise, even on the Sabbath. He's causing the crops to grow and the rain to fall, even on the Sabbath. He gives life, He brings judgment, He does all of that on the Sabbath. He does all this good on the Sabbath. So, Jesus is like, "And I'm going to, also." And notice Jesus didn't say our Father.

He said what? He said, "My Father." Now, we miss what that really means, but the religious leaders don't let us miss it. Verse 18, "This was why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him." There is a plot already in place, and they're just continually seeking to kill Him because not only was He breaking the Sabbath, He was breaking their manmade rules. But He was even calling God his own Father, making Himself equal with God. He kept calling God His own Father. I mean, so much for people who say that Jesus never claimed to be God, right? Right here, Jesus makes Himself equal with God by calling God His Father. So listen, if you want to know what God is like, read the New Testament and see Jesus. He is God showing us this is what God is like. What He's saying here by calling God His Father is that just as you are what your parents are, namely human, so I am what God is, namely divine.

And this would be the height of blasphemy. Their their religious ears would be on fire by saying that. Who does He think He is? God has no equals. They'd see this as an attack on the very core of their belief system, which is that there's only one God. Now, the rest of the chapter, starting in verse 19, is Jesus responding to this maltreatment, their persecution, their plot to kill Him. So, let's call this point number two, The Message of the Miracle. The Message of the Miracle. This is what the religious leaders should have taken from the miracle. This is Jesus explaining the significance of the miracle and explaining that God is His Father. In fact, they want to they want to kill Him for calling God His own Father, and He doubles down. Look at the text starting in verse 19. Just look at the paragraph. Notice how many times Jesus says, "Father," in this paragraph. It's actually 15 times in this little sermon He gives these guys. 15 times, which again, why do they want to kill Jesus? Oh, that's right. Because He's calling God His Father. And then He just doubles down again and again and again and again. He is not afraid of controversy. He jumps right into it, and emphasizes it because the issue is truth. I mean, if anyone said these things, we'd think he's a liar or he's just insane. But Jesus is God, and He's going to show this. Let's call the first point under this letter **A) Like Father, Like Jesus. Like Father, Like Jesus.** Being equal with God means that Jesus does the things the Father does. What the Father does, Jesus does. And what the Father deserves, Jesus deserves, too.

Look at this. Jesus explains this with His works. Look at verse 19. "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.'" You see the repetition of words. What He's emphasizing is the actions. What He's saying here is, "I don't set my own agenda. What I'm doing, I'm doing simply because I'm seeing the Father do it already." And that's because verse 20, "The Father loves the Son and shows Him all that He Himself is doing." In fact, something greater than healing an invalid is coming. Verse 21, "For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom He will." So Jesus, in other

words, is merely doing what the Father is doing. He's merely doing what the Father wants Him to do.

Second, like Father like Jesus in judgment. This talk of resurrection, verse 21, after raising this guy from 38 years of misery, points to what happens in the future when people will stand in judgment. Verse 22, "For the Father judges no one but has given all judgment to the Son." By the way, if you claim to be the judge of all the earth guess what you are also claiming? To be God. So, calling God His own Father, that's getting Him in trouble. And He just doubles down and says, "Oh, and by the way, I'm also the judge of all the earth." Blasphemy. Third, like Father like Jesus in honor. Notice since He does what the Father does and since He has the role of the judge of all the earth given to Him by the Father. Since that's the case, verse 22, "The Father judges no one but is giving all judgment to the Son that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father."

What? It's one thing to say let's honor God together, but you should honor Me the way that you honor God. That's so offensive to these people. I mean, you can see them like picking up rocks in this moment as He's saying these things. And He doubles down. Look at the rest of verse 23, "Whoever does not honor the Son," translation, like all you jokers. "Whoever does not honor the Son, does not honor the Father who sent Him. Think about that. All who say I love God, I obey God, I live for God, but reject Jesus. The God they think they're serving is not the one true and living God according to Jesus. Next letter **B**) **let's call this Jesus, the Lord and Life-giver.** Jesus the Lord and Life-giver. This specifically refers to Jesus' role as judge and the activity of giving people life, both spiritual life in salvation and physical life in the resurrection.

First, we'll see spiritual life that Jesus gives. He returns to the theme of resurrection, but then He uses it in the in the context of giving people salvation. Verse 24, "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 has passed from spiritual death to spiritual life." In fact, Jesus can give life to the dead because the Father gave Him the ability to do so. Look at verse 25, "Truly, truly I say to you, an hour is coming and is now here." And notice those words, "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." Those words, "and is now here," doesn't speak to the future resurrection. It speaks to the spiritual resurrection that happens when people hear Jesus and his preaching, and they go from spiritual death to spiritual life when they believe in Him.

And not only does He give life, but again He returns to this idea that He's the judge. Verse 27, "And He has given him authority to execute judgment because He is the Son of Man." So, not only is Jesus claiming to raise the dead spiritually, but He is saying, "I am the future King of the earth," by calling Himself the Son of Man. You can see this in Daniel chapter three. So, from spiritual life, Jesus says, "Oh, I also give people physical life in the resurrection in the future." Look at verse 28, "Do you not marvel at this?" I mean, you would think, "No, they are totally marveling right now. Their minds are blown. There's steam coming out of their ears hearing all

of this." "Don't marvel at this." It's a joke almost. "For an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear His voice." Whose voice? His voice. "And come out those who have done good to the resurrection of life."

Do you call yourself the One who will raise the dead in the resurrection? You are calling yourself God. So, this is even triple blasphemy right now. And not only does He initiate physical life in the resurrection, but He also initiates physical death in the resurrection. He says, "For those who do good, who believe in the Son, that's eternal life. For those who do not, who persist in their rebellion and do evil," verse 29. "And those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment." Listen, every single one of us is going to live in a body for all of eternity. You're not going to be Casper the Friendly Ghost just floating around forever. If you want to know more about that, Christian, that's that's first Corinthians 15. That chapter's going to tell you this is what it's going to be like for you.

But for those who refuse to come to Jesus for the forgiveness of their sins, you will also be raised but it'll be this, the resurrection of judgment, where you will suffer physical torment for all eternity in the lake of fire. That's one of the main reasons we exist as a church. This is the main reason why you and I are still breathing, to make sure everyone we know is given the chance not to go there by turning from their sins, by turning from trust in their good works or trust in some organization or trust in some other person, and putting all their hope, all their trust, in Christ and Christ alone. Well, if you think about it, you take a step back, these are lofty claims, right? I'm One with the Father. I give life spiritually. I'm going to raise people from the dead. I'm the judge of all the earth, coming out of the mouth of a guy that, if we all looked at Him, we'd be like, "Well, He is just like me. He's just a guy. There's no halo behind Him. There's no fire coming from his eyes. He's not floating around. He's just a normal looking guy."

So, the rest of this chapter is Jesus now proving. Everything I'm saying, He's like, "I need to give you some witnesses. Here's the evidence." That's letter C) **Witnesses to Jesus. Witnesses to Jesus.** Deuteronomy 17 and 19 says that somebody needs two or three witnesses in a court of law to be convicted or to be found innocent of a crime. He needs two to three witnesses. So, if Jesus is going to be convicted of blasphemy, they need to have two or three witnesses. And if He's innocent, He needs to have two or three witnesses.

So, instead of using Himself as a witness, Jesus puts three witnesses on the witness stand to everything that He has just said about Himself. The first is John the Baptist, who would be the the hero of the day for most of the people alive at that time. Verse 32, "There is another who bears witness about Me, who defends Me in court. He bears witness, and I know that the testimony that he bears about Me is true. You sent to John," you sent people to John, that's chapter one, "and he has born witness to the truth." Well, if we were to go back to chapter one and look at what John the Baptist says about Jesus, what would we learn about his witness, his testimony about Jesus? We would actually learn six things. John the Baptist, in chapter one, calls Jesus Yahweh, the God of the Bible, says that He's the promised Messiah, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, says that He is eternal. He never had a beginning. He gives the

Holy Spirit to people, which only God can do, and He is the Son of God. Six things in the span of about 10 verses in John chapter one. That is quite a witness. So, He's going, "The famous guy out there baptizing people, thousands are going to. That guy says I'm the Son of God."

Second witness He puts on the witness stand that clearly shows who He is Jesus' works. Look at verse 36, "But the testimony that I have is greater than that of John. I've got something better than John the Baptist." What are they? "For the works that the Father has given Me to accomplish, the very works that I am doing bear witness about Me that the Father has sent Me." Again, what is the work? In particular, in the context is healing this man after 38 years. He says, "That proves I'm the son of God." Why? "Because I'm doing something only God can do." And that's really the whole book of John. The works that Jesus does, particularly the miracles, particularly His death and resurrection, prove that He is the Messiah and the Son of God. Again, His miracles prove He's the Messiah because the miracles He does are predicted hundreds of years before He showed up saying these are the miracles the Messiah would do when He's here, and He exactly does them. And they prove that He's the Son of God because these miracles are things that only God can do.

Well, the third witness on the witness stand that shows clearly who Jesus is is the Father's Word. Notice verse 37. "And the Father who sent Me has Himself born witness about Me. His voice you've never heard, His form you've never seen, and you do not have His Word abiding in you for you do not believe the one whom He has sent." "You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life. It is they that bear witness about Me." So, He's saying God's Word, His Father's Word, the Scriptures, which by the way these guys were experts in, makes it clear that Jesus is the Messiah, makes it clear that He's the Son of God. Over and over again, the Scriptures are clear on this, and yet Jesus declares about these men verse 40, "Yet you refuse to come to Me that you may have life."

Then, Jesus flips the whole trial around and says, "Oh, there's a part of the Bible that's also going to judge you." Verse 45, "Do you not think that I will accuse you to the Father? I don't need to." "There is one who accuses you, Moses, on whom you've set your hope. For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me, for he wrote of Me." Do you have a favorite part of the Bible? These guys did. If you were to take the Bible and say, "What's your favorite part?" They would say, "The first five books, the ones that Moses wrote." And Jesus goes, "Yeah, that part that you like the most? Even that guy talked about me." Where did he do that? Genesis three, Genesis 22, Genesis 49, Numbers 24, Deuteronomy 18, just to name a few. And then, there's not just the specific verses, but there's also the imagery of the Passover and the manna and the split rock with the water coming out and the sacrifices and the priesthood. All of that speak to Him. They all knew all of that, and they all missed all of that.

So then, the indictment of the judge of all the earth ends the sermon with verse 47. "But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?" Think about it. Jesus ends the sermon saying to these religious leaders, "You can either have Me as Savior, or you can have Me as judge. Which one is it going to be?"

That's chapter five in a nutshell. So, what I want to do now is just what are the responses that we should have as a result of this chapter? If Jesus is all of these things, how should we respond? Look back at verse 22. "For 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." In other words, there's no room for ignoring, dismissing, or renouncing Jesus. He is to be treated as God is treated. He's to be honored as God because He is God. Well, how do we honor Jesus? Look at verse 24. "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 is passed from death to life." If you want to avoid God's judgment for all of your sins against Him, honor the Son by believing in Him, by trusting in Him and Him alone to be your Savior. Drop down to verse 38 for the second response. Verse 38, "You do not have His Word abiding in you for you do not believe the One He has sent. You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life, and it is they that bear witness about Me. Yet you refuse to come to Me that you may have life."

If Jesus is the Messiah, if He is the Son of God, then you must stop running from Him. You must stop keeping Him out of your life. Instead, verse 40, "You must come to Him." Come to Him is another way of saying believe in Him. It's the idea of trusting in Him. It's the idea of bringing Him close, of embracing Him as your only hope on judgment day. And drop down to verse 43 for the third response. Verse 43, "I've come in my Father's name, and you do not receive Me. If another comes in his own name, you will receive him." A lot of false Jesus' is out there. A lot of people follow those false Jesus. He's looking at these guys saying, "A false Jesus, a false messiah is going to come, and you're going to follow him. That could be the ultimate anti-Christ." It could be other false messiahs that came throughout history. But verse 44, "How can you believe? You don't even have the ability? How can you believe when you receive glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the only God?" Jesus gets at the heart of much unbelief out there. And that's this, "What would so and so think if they found out I was a follower of Jesus? What would my grandmother think? What would my friend at work think? What would my cousin think? What would my kids think?"

It's the fear of man. It's being so dominated by people's opinions that you would rather have them think good things about you than have your sins forgiven, than being adopted into God's family, than being declared innocent of all your sins, than having a life that could never die. See, if you have Jesus on one side and the opinions of other on the other side, is their opinion really worth missing out on eternal life for? Is their opinion really worth missing out on sins forgiven for? For these guys, it was. It's amazing how a 2000-year-old book can be so relevant, right? How we can just slice into very thoughts and motivations. But you know why that is, don't you? Because this is the Living Word of the One True and Living God. It exposes the lies, the excuses, the justifications we have for keeping Jesus at arm's distance, just like Jesus was doing with these guys in John chapter five. So, if you were to die today, I'll leave you with His conclusion for these guys. If you were to die today, would Jesus be your Savior? Or would he be your judge? Let's pray.

Jesus, thank you for these truths. My prayer at the beginning was that we would know you better. Because of our time in Your Word, we learned a lot of truth from Your lips about you. So, after this time, we do know You better. Like I said earlier, admiration must move to trust and must move to giving You our lives, believing in You. And so, for some, I pray that would be the response. For the rest of us, may we marvel, may we stand in awe of just how wonderful You are. For the glory of Your name. Amen.