

## Home Group Leader's Notes on the "John" series

Week of April 18, 2021

John 5:31-47

### LOOKING BACK

Have you ever been a witness in a trial or been on a jury? What was your experience? What is important about a witness?

**Some may be willing to share their stories. Keep in mind that some will NOT want to share because their experience was difficult or painful.**

### LEARN FROM GOD'S WORD

Each week, we include questions to help us see and understand what is written in the Bible. We believe that these Scriptures came about as God's servant were moved by the Holy Spirit (God) to pen the words of God. These words, applied in our lives, will transform us to be like Jesus in thought, action, and character. This is important to understand as we listen to this week's passage.

First, reread John 5:16-30 to remember the first part of Jesus' response to "the Jews" who were accusing and persecuting Him. (These people were religious authorities of the day.)

Read through John 5:31-47

What is the focus of this part of Jesus' response?

**The previous portion of Jesus' response to "the Jews" focused on His identity. This portion focuses on the witnesses to Him and how they have ignored or missed the witnesses.**



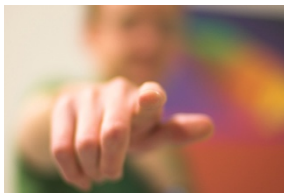
According to Deuteronomy 19:15, "A matter must be established by the **testimony** of two or three witness." Jesus did not need to provide testimony because He is God (see John 5:16-30). But because He is helping His disciples understand who He is, and because He loves all people, He is providing witnesses. What witnesses does Jesus provide?

**John the baptizer (we have seen his role)**

**God the Father**

**The Scriptures**

**His works (including things that only God can do)**



Jesus' response and challenge changes in verse 37 from "me" to "you." What does Jesus say about His accuser's attitudes or actions, causes or results? (37-47)

- **They never heard his voice nor saw His form. IMPLIED. Jesus has done both**
- **His word does not dwell in you. Why? Because you do not believe me.**
- **You study the Scriptures to possess eternal life. These Scriptures testify about me. But you do not come to me and, therefore, you do not have eternal life.**

- You do not have the love of God in your hearts.
- Though you do not accept me as come from God, you will make effort to obtain praise from others. You make no effort to obtain praise from God.
- You claim to follow Moses. And yet Moses will be your accuser when you stand before the Father in judgment. Meaning, Moses testified about me and you rejected me.

You have never heard his voice nor seen his form,<sup>38</sup> nor does his word dwell in you, for you do not believe the one he sent.<sup>39</sup> You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me,<sup>40</sup> yet you refuse to come to me to have life.<sup>41</sup> "I do not accept praise from men,<sup>42</sup> but I know you. I know that you do not have the love of God in your hearts.<sup>43</sup> I have come in my Father's name, and you do not accept me; but if someone else comes in his own name, you will accept him.<sup>44</sup> How can you believe if you accept praise from one another, yet make no effort to obtain the praise that comes from the only God?<sup>45</sup> "But do not think I will accuse you before the Father. Your accuser is Moses, on whom your hopes are set.<sup>46</sup> If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me.<sup>47</sup> But since you do not believe what he wrote, how are you going to believe what I say?"

In these statements (37-47), what does Jesus include about Himself and His role? (37-47)

- Jesus has been with the Father
- The Scriptures testify to Jesus
- I love God and it is He who sent me to represent Him
- Moses wrote about me
- I am seeking to please the Father and not people

You



Point

What key points have "the Jews" missed? What would be the result if nothing changes?

- They missed the focus of Scriptures
- They have missed the coming of the Messiah, the who sent from God
- They have missed the signs that Jesus has performed that should lead to belief
- They missed the purpose and message of John the Baptizer
- They are prideful about their knowledge / study of the Scriptures rather than letting the Scriptures being them to humility and belief, trust in and find salvation in God
- They are going to miss out on eternal life and the glory of the Messiah

What is Jesus' intention and motivation for this conversation? What does He want for them? (34, 36, 39, 40, 41, 42, 45)

**All that Jesus is and does is from a heart of love, grace and truth, and desire that people might have eternal life with Him. Notice this is each of the verses about.**

#### DISCUSS TOGETHER

What are some of the opportunities (options) that we have to know about or read God's Word? What does Luke 12:47-48 imply about the purpose or outcome of studying God's Word? (See also our "core value" (on our website) that begins with "The Bible is God's story.") \*

**Our opportunities to know of, read, learn from the Bible are far away the most in history. This is through books, preaching, media, internet, etc.. The purpose is to transform us, to help us know, love, and follow Jesus. Revelation should lead to transformation as we obey the work of the Spirit of God. We are in danger of being the most informed under applied generation.**

Woven throughout His interaction with hostile people we see Jesus' desire that they might have eternal life and know the love of God (39, 42). My natural tendency would be to 'win' the argument or 'write off' the people as disinterested (or worse). What might help us have Jesus' intention and motivation?



**For me, I need to examine my heart, check my motives, and believe that God is working even when I can't see. So many followers of Jesus had a period of doubt and distrust of God. And Jesus knew that some wouldn't believe, but He still loved them to the end.**

In this passage, Jesus said that He doesn't seek or pursue praise from people. How do we see this in ourselves and our world? How is this dangerous? (See also Galatians 1:10 and Matthew 25:21)

**Living to please people leads to us seeking the praise of people instead of God. This comes from pride and insecurity. These always lead us away from instead of towards God. Instead of living for an audience of one, we live for the voice of the crowd. The crowd crucified Jesus.**

\*Pastor Todd mentioned Bill Bunnell's recent work, *Pleasing God by Knowing and Doing His Will*. This is now on sale at Amazon. (Dr. Bunnell is a member of Trinity Church.)

**Grace to you as you love and shepherd your family,  
Steve**