

## WE HAVE SEEN HIS GLORY

The Glory of God

TEXT: John 5:16-29 (ESV)

### INTRODUCTION

It is interesting that when Jesus healed the man at the pool of Bethesda, rather than rejoice the Pharisees took issue with the fact that the healing and the man walking with his bed occurred on the Sabbath. Now this issue is going to come up again, so I choose not to emphasize it here.

Like the first sin, the man took no responsibility for carrying his bed on the Sabbath. He said, "The man who healed me, that man said to me, 'Take up your bed, and walk.'"<sup>1</sup> When Jesus met him later in the Temple, it was only then that it was revealed to the man that it was Jesus who healed him. And it was revealed to us that his sickness was the result of his sin (v14).

So when Jesus was condemned for healing the man on the Sabbath, his answer was profound: "*My Father is working until now, and I am working.*" (John 5:17, ESV). Now you and I might not be too taken with that response, but the Jews understood it. According to the Pharisees, Jesus was making 2 blasphemous claims:

1. God was his own personal Father; and
2. He was equal to God.

Jesus was claiming God as His Father in an exclusive sense. To the Jew this constituted profanity. It made him literally the Son of God, therefore equal to God. Now Jesus is going to support his claim in 3 ways:

- #1. He can only do what he sees the Father doing.
- #2. He receives the honor that only the Father can receive.
- #3. He displays the power that only the Father can claim.

Today is Easter Sunday. My intention is to focus on the third point and just briefly draw your attention to the first two.

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<sup>1</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Jn 5:11). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

## #1. HE CAN ONLY DO WHAT HE SEES THE FATHER DOING. (v19)

*“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.” (John 5:19, ESV).*

The first argument Jesus employs is that his actions are totally in sync, totally in harmony with the Father. His defense is, “If the Father has the authority to work on the Sabbath, then I do as well.” But Jesus is not saying that he’s a Spirit-filled man only doing the will of His Father. His claim is bigger than that. Here what He says, *“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 has given all judgment to the Son,”* (John 5:21–22, ESV).

There are two characteristics that are uniquely God’s: 1.) His ability to give life; and 2.) His authority to judge. Jesus is claiming both as His also. When Jesus claims to be equal with God, He is saying, “I am God. I am Divine. I am Deity.”

## #2. HE RECEIVES THE HONOR THAT ONLY THE FATHER CAN RECEIVE. (vv22-23)

Let’s go back to the passage: *“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.”* (John 5:22–23, ESV).

Do you see what Jesus is saying? He is to receive the same honor, glory, worship and adoration that you give to the Father. Now if that’s not true it is blasphemy. Isaiah the prophet records the words of God in Isaiah 48:11 (ESV)

<sup>11</sup> For my own sake, for my own sake, I do it, for how should my name be profaned? My glory I will not give to another.

All of you know by now that worship is due only to God. Jesus is affirming that He too should receive worship. The only response must be is that He is God! God’s glory cannot be given to another – God will not give his glory or honor to someone else, yet he gives it to Jesus because Jesus is God (v23). Jesus goes further to say that if you reject the Christ as the Son of God, you reject God. We could apply this today in a profound way as we look at world religions and cults, but that’s not my emphasis. But before we leave this idea let me just make this important point.

You might be thinking, “Well I respect Jesus. I value His reality and His teaching. That’s not what Jesus is saying in this passage. He makes it clear in verse 24. The kind of value that Jesus has in mind is the kind of value that places their faith and trust in Christ as Savior. *“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 death to life.”* (John 5:24, ESV)

So, Jesus is saying, “I’m equal to the Father in that I totally harmonize with all the Father does; and I receive the same honor and glory as the Father.” There is a third that’s thematic for this Sunday.

### #3. HE DISPLAYS THE POWER THAT ONLY THE FATHER CAN CLAIM.

Let’s read it again from John 5:25–29 (ESV),

<sup>25</sup> *“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. <sup>26</sup> For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself. <sup>27</sup> And he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man. <sup>28</sup> Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice <sup>29</sup> and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.*

Verse 24 tells us that if we are disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, we have in fact experienced a “sort-of resurrection.” We have, the moment we trust Jesus been released from “judgment, but ha[ve] passed from death to life.”<sup>2</sup> Jesus is speaking of the New Birth and the New Birth according to Jesus is a type of resurrection: It’s a passage from death to life. Notice what Paul wrote in Ephesians 2:4–5 (ESV),

<sup>4</sup> *But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, <sup>5</sup> even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—*

But there’s more, for we read that “*“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.”* (John 5:25, ESV).

OK, in verse 24, Jesus clearly says that the moment you believe you pass from death to life. Then He says there a time coming when all the dead will live. So, what does Jesus mean “an hour is coming, and is now here”? This phrase reveals a tension that exists in the Bible regarding Christ’s work in redemption. For example:

- a. You could say, “We are saved. But we are being saved and will be saved.”
- b. You could say, “We are holy. But are being made holy and someday will be holy.”
- c. You could say, “We are healed. But are being healed and someday will be healed.”
- d. You could say, “The Kingdom of God is here. But it is coming and someday it will be fully consummated.”
- e. Likewise, you could say, “I have been resurrected and someday I will be resurrected.”

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<sup>2</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Jn 5:24). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

I agree with Dr. John MacArthur who writes, “Those who are born again are already “spiritually” resurrected (“now is”; Eph. 2:1; Col. 2:13), and yet a future physical resurrection still awaits them (“hour is coming”; 1 Cor. 15:35–54; Phil. 3:20, 21).”<sup>3</sup> So Jesus is establishing this next argument, “*For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself.*” (John 5:26, ESV). This is a simple syllogism:

Proposition A: Only God can give life.

Proposition B: Jesus can give life.

Conclusion: Jesus is God.

It is at this point; Jesus concludes His defense. Not only is He given power over life but His is given authority to judge. And here is the clincher: “because he is the Son of Man.”<sup>4</sup> This deserves more time, but please note that with that title comes the very clear reality that from God the Father, the Ancient of Days, Jesus receives the rights of Deity. From God the Father, Jesus receives a kingdom, making Him, King.

The description “Son of Man” was a Messianic title. The Jews of that era would have been intimately familiar with the phrase and to whom it referred. Jesus was proclaiming Himself as the Messiah.

## SUMMARY

Let me make sure we understand the point of this passage. By healing this man at Bethesda on the Sabbath, Jesus was claiming to be God. That the short of it. He could do only what God could do; He could receive glory that only God could receive; and He could express the power that only God could express. He is God. This affirmation is what got Him killed.

## APPLICATION

I want to take my application from the application that I see in this text. It’s found in the little phrase: “Do not marvel at this.”<sup>5</sup> That’s an imperative; a command. The NIV translates μή έκθαυμάζω “do not be amazed”. Why should you not be amazed to anticipate that at the voice of the Savior, all who are dead will be resurrected to life? Why should that not shock you with astonishment?

The answer from that passage is that this is exactly what happens when a person is born from above. Here’s the point: **If “the voice of the Son is powerful enough to generate spiritual life now; it will be powerful enough to call forth the dead then.”**<sup>6</sup> Your resurrection from the dead in the future is actually a confirmation and endorsement of the new life Christ has given you now. Let me say it

<sup>3</sup> MacArthur, J., Jr. (Ed.). (1997). [The MacArthur Study Bible](#) (electronic ed., p. 1588). Nashville, TN: Word Pub.

<sup>4</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Jn 5:27). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

<sup>5</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Jn 5:28–29). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

<sup>6</sup> Carson, D. A. (1991). [The Gospel according to John](#) (p. 258). Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans.

differently and clearly: **If you've been born again, you will be resurrected to eternal life. You can't have one without the other.**

The opposite is also true. If you have not experienced the New Birth now, you will not experience the resurrection to eternal life in the future. Your resurrection will be for judgment and eternal condemnation (v29b). But if you've been paying attention, you will want to push back at me and say, "Look Pastor Jim, the passage says clearly that *"those who have done good [will be raised] to the resurrection of life."*<sup>7</sup> "I'm basically a good person." "I will go to Heaven because I'm good."

I will ask, "Are you?" This is one reason why it is so important not to simply pull a few individual verses from the Bible and build a doctrine on it. Back in Chapter 3 John dealt with this issue. Here's what Jesus said, *"But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God."* (John 3:21, ESV). No one does good except those who come to the Light; come to Christ; and live by faith in God. James made the same point. Good works are the result of faith.

If your good works are not done in faith ("For whatever does not proceed from faith is sin."<sup>8</sup>) they are sin.

The Good News in the Gospel is that believers are given faith as a gift, this is the faith that saves, this is the faith that perseveres in holiness, this is the faith that produces good works. This is the faith that will bring you home to eternal life.

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<sup>7</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Jn 5:29). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

<sup>8</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Ro 14:23). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.