

Who Gave You the Right? - Part 3

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[0 : 00] If you would turn in your Bibles to John chapter 5, it is on page 1058 of your pew Bible, and I just need to ask you all to give me a glory.

Glory. Okay, good, good, good, good. Now imagine this, the unthinkable happens. You're an adult, and you're arrested for a crime you didn't commit.

Now if you're a child in the room, just imagine this, one of your parents gets arrested for a crime that they did not commit, and that case is fast-tracked to trial.

And at that trial, the prosecutor seeks to convince a jury of your peers that you are guilty for an alleged crime.

Punishment is stiff, 20 years in jail, and as the prosecutor is making his case, you are watching the faces of the jury. You're watching them nod.

[1 : 05] You're seeing them fixated on the prosecutor like they're buying it. And you're like, oh no, this isn't going well. And then your defender, your attorney, stands up, and she, her aim is to defend your innocence.

And what she does on your behalf is to bring forward witness after witness in consecutive order, to bear witness to who you are, and that you are not guilty of the crime.

Now the question becomes, does she make the case to prove your innocence? In John chapter 5, Jesus is on trial.

Not the trial that we'll see later on in John where he is before the Jewish authorities and the Roman authorities. No, no, he is, he has been accused of blasphemy, of being, of claiming to be God, though he is a mere man.

I mean, he, in, earlier in John 5, has healed a man on the Sabbath, and then he starts claiming to be God's son, which is equating himself to be God.

[2 : 27] And so he's opened up himself to the charge of blasphemy, and the Jewish leaders, as a result, they want to kill him. So in their mind, Jesus is guilty of a capital crime.

You can't claim to be God. Last week, Jesus asserted his authority to both give life and to judge all. He is the judge of all, something that God alone does. And here, in our passage today, in verses 30 through 47, we have four witnesses.

Who take the witness stand to bear testimony about Jesus. That he was sent from God. And as the one sent from God, he's the son of man.

He's the son of God. He is totally God, totally man. He is the savior of the world. So these four witnesses are going to come in consecutive order.

[3 : 32] And what we're going to see is if Jesus makes his case. Because Jesus hasn't hired his own lawyer. He's representing himself.

So would you read with me verses 30 through 47? Hear God's word. I can do nothing on my own, says Jesus. 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.

If I alone bear witness about myself, my testimony is not true. There is another who bears witness about me. And I know that the testimony that he bears about me is true.

You sent to John and he has borne witness to the truth. Not that the testimony that I receive is from man, but I say these things so that you may be saved. He was a burning and shining lamp and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light.

But the testimony that I have is greater than that of John. 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.

[4 : 39] And the father who sent me has himself borne witness about me. His voice you have never heard, his form you have never seen, and you do not have his word abiding in you for you do not

believe the one whom he has sent, speaking of himself.

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. I do not receive glory from people, but I know that you do not have the love of God within you. 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. How can you believe when you receive glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the only God? Do not think that I will accuse you to the father.

There is one who accuses you, Moses, on whom you have set your hope. For if you believed Moses, you would have believed me, for he wrote of me.

[5 : 49] But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words? May God bless the reading and hearing of his word. So four witnesses.

Let's look at the four. First witness. The first witness is in verses 30 through 32, Jesus himself. The first person Jesus calls to the stand to give defense that he is God incarnate.

He is not blaspheming. He has authority to judge. He references himself. 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.

If I alone bear witness about myself, my testimony is not true. What Jesus is doing in verse 30 is just simply reiterating something that he's already said. And that is that he has the authority to judge all because he is the son who's been sent by the father.

What he's doing is he's saying, I share the same essence with my father. I'm God the son. He is God the father.

[6 : 58] We're talking about the Trinity. Again, last week I told you here are the three statements to hold together, to be orthodox. God has eternally existed as three distinct persons. Each person is fully God.

There is one God. God the father ordains salvation. God the son accomplishes salvation. And God the spirit applies the finished work of Christ to those who believe.

So this whole salvation plan is a triune plan. And so what Jesus is saying in verse 30 is, hey, I'm here to do the will of my father, the one who sent me. I'm in lockstep with him.

In verses 22 and 27, earlier on we say that Jesus has been given full authority to judge. He's in lockstep with his father.

He gives life to whom he pleases. Jesus, in verse 27 in particular, we see that God the father has sent Jesus, the son of man.

[8 : 02] This is an enormous claim. It's referring back to Daniel chapter 7. And this son of man comes to the ancient of days. God the father in the ancient of days gives him a dominion, an everlasting dominion.

And those people who will be brought into his everlasting kingdom will come from every nation and every tribe around the world. It's a claim of being the Messiah, the Christ, the one sent by God.

And what Jesus is doing here is simply saying, I'm that guy. I've got full authority. And so we're being reminded in verse 30 that Jesus, what he's claimed of himself, that he is authority that God has given him to judge all.

In verse 31, he says something kind of interesting. He says, if I alone bear witness about myself, my testimony is not true. He's saying, but don't just take my word for it.

There are other witnesses. You see, what he's setting up here is that if he alone were bearing witness to himself, it wouldn't stand in Jewish court.

[9 : 15] In Jewish kind of legal proceedings, you needed two to three witnesses to establish a charge against someone. It had to be kind of corroboratory, what is it?

Thank you. Testimony that something has happened. And so what Jesus is saying, hey, if I'm just trying to convince you based upon my own testimony, it's not enough.

So in verse 32, he says, there is another who bears witness about me. And I know that the testimony he bears about me is true. Here's what I want you to do.

In light of this first witness of Jesus himself, I want to give you, give me a glory. Let's try that again. I'll just say it. I'll say, give me a glory. And you give me a glory. Yeah. You know, we've come. The first witness is Jesus Christ. Give me a glory. Okay.

[10:18] Who's the second witness? The second witness is in verses 33 through 35. JTB, John the Baptist.

And so in verse 33, we read this. There's this another testimony. You sent to John and he has borne witness to the truth.

The John that he's talking about is John the Baptist. And when you read that you sent to John, you're kind of like, is that English? That doesn't make any sense to me. What is he saying? And what Jesus is saying to his Jewish opponents is this.

Hey, you guys sent a delegation to check John the Baptist out. Do you remember what he told you? If you flip to John chapter one in verse 19, Jesus in John five is talking to the Jewish authorities in Jerusalem and in John chapter one, verse 19, we read this.

And this is the testimony of John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, who are you? He confessed and did not deny, but confessed, I'm not the Christ.

[11:33] And they asked him, what then? Are you Elijah? He said, I am not. Are you the prophet? And he said, no. So they said to him, who are you? We need to give an answer to those who sent to us.

What do you say about yourself? He said, I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness. Make straight the way of the Lord. As the prophet Isaiah said, Isaiah 40, verse 30.

No, I'm not the Christ, John the Baptist says. But I have been sent to make the way for the Lord. And that word Lord is the word Yahweh, God.

I am going before him to prepare, make straight his way. I'm not the Christ. No.

But he's the lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Verse 29. And so what John the Baptist is bearing witness to, what Jesus is doing is, remember John the Baptist's testimony?

[12:38] He bore witness about me, the truth of who I am. That I am the Lord. And so what Jesus is implying in all this is that he is God.

John the Baptist is very clear in saying in chapter one, he's not the Christ, he's not the Lord, but he's come before the Lord. And in this sense, in the words of Jesus, he is born witness to the truth. To the truth of God's plan for the fullness of time. Of God sending his son. It's interesting that John the Baptist in other places implies that Jesus is the Christ.

He implies that Jesus is the Lord. He calls him the lamb of God. He says it's Jesus who does not baptize with water, but baptizes with the Holy Spirit.

And that is just another way of saying he's the one who is bringing with him the new covenant promised in Jeremiah and Ezekiel. John also says, this is repeated early in the book of John.

[13:49] John the Baptist says of Jesus that he was born, the one who was born after me ranks higher than me because he was before me. We just sang it. You have no birthday.

You have always been. It's the nature of the second person of the Trinity to be from everlasting to everlasting. You know, this is the last time that we're going to see John the Baptist in the Gospel of John.

And Jesus references him as the second witness that he has been sent by the Father. That he is the Savior of the world. God in the flesh.

God in the flesh. So John the Baptist steps down from the witness stand, so to speak. Give me a glory. Glory.

Okay, who's next? Witness number one is Jesus. Witness number two is John the Baptist. Now things start to get really interesting. Witness number three, starting in verse 36.

[14:56] It's the works of Jesus. Jesus calls in another witness.

It's the works that God the Father has given him, God the Son, to do. And notice in verse 36, he says that there are greater, there are greater witnesses than that of John the Baptist.

This is God the Father witnessing through God the Son through the works that he does. Think about it like this.

Jesus at this point says, okay, I'm going to call up my third witness. It's the works that I've done, and I've got multiple exhibits to show you of the works that I have done.

What are those works that he has done? Exhibit A. Exhibit B. Turning water into wine. John chapter 2.

[15:57] Who does that? Exhibit B. Cleansing the temple. Who has the authority to do that? Exhibit C.

Healing of the official's son in Cana. He was 22 miles away, and the official came, says, my son is dying. And Jesus said, go. He's healed.

Exhibit D. Healing of the paralytic at the pool of Bethesda on the Sabbath. This is what is set in motion this whole chapter 5 issue with the authority of Jesus.

Jesus, on the Sabbath, Jesus heals this paralytic. He brings peace to him for all to see. Exhibit E. You'll hear this one next week. Les is going to preach on the feeding of the 5,000. Exhibit F. The healing of a blind man in chapter 9. And that sets in motion its own stuff.

[17 : 02] And then there's exhibit G of the works of Jesus in the Gospel of John. The raising of Lazarus from the dead. It's chapter 11.

Seven exhibits of this third witness. The works God the Father has given God the Son to demonstrate that he's been sent by God.

That he's God in the flesh. That he is the Savior of the world. In fact, if you flip in your Gospel of John, back to John chapter 20. We have the purpose statement of the book that I just want to remind you of.

John chapter 20 verses 30 and 31. These exhibits that Jesus presents throughout the Gospel of John have a purpose.

They're signs. Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples. Which are not written in this book. But these exhibits are written, are recorded.

[18 : 15] So that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ. The Son of Man who's been sent from God the Father. The Son of God. And that by believing you may have life in his name.

So these seven exhibits. These works that God the Father has given God the Son to do. They speak a word about who Jesus is. And that he was sent from God.

But these seven exhibits in the Gospel of John aren't the only exhibits in the New Testament. There are a number of other exhibits in the New Testament.

Okay, I'm going to do a call out to my Carthage friends just to prepare them. The last time I did this, they were frozen. They didn't know what to do. They were shocked. Maybe even upset.

All right, shout out to my Carthage people. Yeah. Yeah. We've been going through the Gospel of Mark on Fridays now.

[19 : 24] And a couple Fridays ago, we were in Mark 4 and 5 and talk about exhibits. We saw four demonstrations of the authority of Jesus where Jesus first calms the deeps, the Sea of Galilee.

And then Jesus casts out a legion of demons. How's that for authority? And then following that, Jesus cures a woman who had a disease of bleeding for 12 years.

There was no other human being that could heal her. And then finally, the piece de la resistance was his raising of a 12-year-old girl from the dead. Your Gospels are packed full of exhibits like that. He's demonstrating who Jesus is. That he's got all authority because he's God Almighty. He's the Savior of all and the Judge of all.

Now, one final exhibit that all four Gospels bear witness to is the greatest work God the Father sent his Son to do.

[20 : 35] And that greatest work is when Jesus died on the cross and then was raised from the dead three days later. The death and resurrection of God incarnate was the greatest work that God the Father had given his Son to do.

Because it's in that work that the Son accomplished our salvation. He made a way for you and me not just to be forgiven, but to be able to stand in God's presence without fear.

And so it's that death and resurrection of God incarnate that accomplished our salvation. And all these other exhibits, they have a way of pointing to that.

And he's continuing that work today. He's continuing the work of bringing people from out of the domain of darkness and transferring them into his kingdom of light.

I like to call him the great repo man. He's reposing those people who have been claimed by sin, death, and the devil.

[21 : 44] And he rescues them. He repos them to himself. And it frees them from sin. Frees them from the devil. Frees them from the fear of death. And now we live for him.

We experience eternal life. This is the third witness to who Jesus is that God has sent him.

Give me glory. Glory. There's one more witness. And this one is quite extraordinary.

The final witness, witness number four, is the Father himself through the scriptures. We see this in verses 37 through 40.

Let me read that. And the Father who sent me has himself borne witness about me. How? His voice you have never heard.

[22 : 50] His form you have never seen. Which is interesting because Jesus is God's incarnate voice. And Jesus himself is the incarnate form of God.

Interesting statement. You've never, his form you've never seen. And you do not have his word abiding in you. His voice, his word.

What is he talking about? For you do not believe the one whom he has sent. He's talking to himself. You don't believe me. You don't believe the Father's word. And then he says in verse 39, you search the scriptures.

The voice of God. The word of God. 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 live.

It is they that bear witness about me. That's extraordinary. Do you feel the weight of that claim?

[23 : 53] Because if I were to ask you, who's the Bible about? I'm guessing you would say, it's about God. What Jesus is saying, a little bit more specific.

It's about me. Jesus is claiming to be the focal point of all the scriptures. This is absolutely an audacious claim.

God the Father, he is saying, is bearing witness to him through the scriptures that he has inspired. Now just move forward. Look to verses 45 and 46. Jesus says, again, remember, he's talking to his opponents, the people who want to kill him. He says, do not think that I will accuse you, my opponents, to the Father.

There is one who accuses you, Moses, on whom you have set your hope. In other words, you're putting your trust in Moses for deliverance. For if you believed Moses, you would believe me.

[24 : 53] For he, Moses, wrote of me. Extraordinary. It's extraordinary in the claim itself, and it's extraordinary in the courage by which he's saying it to who he's saying it to.

So the question becomes, how does Moses write about the Son of God?

What does that look like? Is that just kind of a general statement without substance? Moses, he composed the first five books of the Bible, the Pentateuch.

The law, the law of Moses. John 3.15, no, Genesis 3.15, remember, God is speaking curse on the serpent, and he says to the serpent that there's going to be an offspring of Eve that will crush his head.

Bearing witness to me. That's Jesus claiming Genesis 3.15 as regarding himself.

[26 : 03] Genesis 12, God promises to Abraham that from him an offspring, through an offspring of Abraham, all the nations of the earth will be blessed.

Salvation will be brought to the nations. And Galatians, do you know who Paul claims to be the offspring? Jesus. Jesus. Leviticus 16, the day of atonement.

Not just the day of atonement. Let's just see the whole sacrificial system of the Jews. Everything. It was so bloody. Because in order for sin to be atoned for, there had to be the shedding of blood.

And it all is pointing, the whole institution of the sacrificial system is anticipating one great, one and done, final sacrifice.

This is Hebrews chapter 10. Jesus. Jesus. The institution of priesthood. A mediator between God and man.

[27 : 10] Jesus is the greatest, highest priest. Deuteronomy 18. God would raise up a prophet like Moses. Jesus is the ultimate prophet.

He's the final word. Amen. I've just given you some examples from the law of Moses that bear witness to Jesus.

I mean, you could even talk about in terms of the Ten Commandments and how the Ten Commandments expose our sinfulness and our need for a Savior. And how Jesus fulfilled each one of them.

What we see going on here is Jesus rebuking his opponents for the way they're reading their Bibles.

You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life. You think by the kind of the accumulation of Bible verses in your brain.

[28 : 16] Or how well you obey the commands that there's eternal life in that. There's no life in that. The life is in whom the Scriptures point to.

It is they that bear witness of me. So they are refusing the witness of Scripture. God himself, the Father, bearing witness to the Son.

John isn't the only gospel to record Jesus making this kind of claim. Matthew 5, 17.

Jesus is talking about the law. I came not to abolish the law but to fulfill the law. There's Luke 24. Jesus has been raised from the dead.

There's these two kind of episodes in Luke 24. Luke 24, 25 through 27. Jesus joins two of his disciples as they're walking to Emmaus.

[29 : 21] Jesus doesn't reveal himself to them. And Jesus is kind of playing dumb. He's like, hey, what are you guys so upset about? And he's like, you haven't heard? And he starts asking them questions. And it becomes apparent that they are unaware of who's in their midst.

And picking up in verse 25, And Jesus said to them, O foolish ones and slow of heart, to believe all that the prophets have spoken. Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?

And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. It is they that bear witness of me.

This is huge. It changes the way that you read your Bible. Later in Luke 24, Jesus shows up in a room with his disciples.

He says, don't freak out. Peace be with you. And they're like, do you want some broiled fish? He's like, sure. Eat some broiled fish. And then he says in verse 44, These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the law of Moses and the prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.

[30 : 38] Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures. And he said to them, Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead. Not only is the Old Testament in various ways pointing to the Messiah, it's very specifically pointing to a Messiah who would die and be raised from the dead.

Give me a glory. Glory. Your Bible is one big book authored by the living God that is aimed at helping you see Jesus because he is the controlling center of God's plan for the fullness of time. Salvation is in him alone. It's a big deal. It's a big deal. And the tragedy is his opponents who were supposed to be experts in the law were blind to who their Bibles were all about.

What I want to make sure you're hearing is that the gospel of Jesus Christ is not a plan B in God's economy of things.

The gospel of Jesus Christ was established from before the foundation of the world and God anticipated it throughout the Old Testament Scriptures in a variety of different ways and textures because God's plan is a Christocentric plan to save men and women, boys and girls from around the world.

[32 : 19] So what Jesus is saying here must change the way we read both the Old and New Testaments but particularly reading the Old Testament. And not just that, it changes the way you preach it.

It changes the way you preach Jonah. It changes the way that you preach Habakkuk. It changes the way you preach Amos and Isaiah. Listen to what Spurgeon had to say about this in his book, The Soul Winner.

You remember the story of an old minister who heard a sermon by a young minister and when the old preacher was asked by the young preacher what he, the old guy, thought of his sermon, the old guy was slow to answer but at last he said, I must tell you, I did not like it at all.

There was no Christ in your sermon. No, answered the young preacher. Of course not. Because I did not see that Christ was in the text. Duh. Oh, said the old preacher.

But do you not know that from every little town and village and in tiny hamlet in England there is a road leading to London? Whenever I get hold of a text, I say to myself, there is a road from here to Jesus Christ and I mean to keep on his track till I get to him.

[33 : 44] Give me a glory. Glory. Come on. Spurgeon understood what Jesus is saying here clearly. He believed that all of the scriptures, both Old Testament and New Testament, bear witness to Jesus, not in the same way, in various beautiful ways.

And because the Jews who Jesus was addressing did not believe what Jesus Christ was saying here, they wouldn't come to him.

Jesus was telling them this, that they'd be saved, but they wouldn't come to him. They were denying him in the eternal life that he is offering.

That's why Jesus is at the center of the whole Bible. So here's the fourth witness. All the scriptures bear witness to Jesus. Jesus, give me a glory.

Glory. Yes. In this passage, at the end of John 5, Jesus representing himself has brought four witnesses bearing testimony that he is the one that God has sent, that he's got all authority because he's God Almighty.

[35 : 00] He's the Savior of all and the judge of all. Did you see the bearing witness to him? Verse 31, Jesus says to bear witness about himself.

Verse 33, regarding John the Baptist, he bore witness to the truth about him. Verse 37, the works of Jesus, bear witness about me. Verse 39, it is they that bear witness about me.

Why all the bearing witness to Jesus? What's the big deal? Well, in one sense, he's repudiating the charge of blasphemy but in another sense, he's positively saying, I am God incarnate, the Savior of the world, all authority given to me to give life and to judge people and when Jesus says, claims that God is his Father, it is not a claim of blasphemy because he is God.

Here's what's at stake. Whether you believe this or not, here's what's at stake. Glory. As in who you live for.

As in who matters most to you. As in who do you worship. As in who is the controlling center of your solar system.

[36 : 21] That's what's at stake if you don't believe that these four witnesses are testifying to the glory of God in Jesus. Do you know what Jesus says?

It is because you seek the glory that comes from man. Verses 41 through 44. You're seeking man glory.

Not God glory. Look at verse 44. How can you believe when you receive glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the only God?

This is a matter of glory. What you believe about Jesus, what you believe about the Bible, it's a matter of glory. Jesus gives us two options, man glory and God glory.

Man glory is from man. It's pleasing man. It's winning the approval of man. It's gaining the praise of man.

[37 : 28] It's trusting in man. It's having your thinking and your living shaped by the ways of man. Man. One of my all-time favorite passages in the Bible is Jeremiah 17, 5, 5 through 8.

And Jeremiah 17, 5 says, cursed is the man who trusts in man, whose heart turns away from the living God.

And then he depicts their life as a wasteland. There's no life in man glory. You might get a little perk temporarily, but there's no life in the pursuit of glory for man.

But God glory, seeking the glory that comes from God, this is pleasing God. This is seeking to honor God. This is seeking to trust God, to delight in God because you see that his plan for the fullness of time isn't this kind of like back alley shady deal.

It's actually proclaimed throughout the whole Bible. And you delight in it. in the words of Luke 24, your hearts burn within you when you have your mind to open up to the scriptures.

[39 : 09] Or you go the route of John 1, 14, and the word became flesh and dwelt among us and we have seen his glory, glory as the one and only, the only son from the father full of grace and truth.

You see the glory of it. You see he is God's plan of salvation, testified throughout the scriptures. Put forward because he is the only one that can give you eternal life.

Jeremiah 7, 17, 7 says, blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, who trusts, whose trust is the Lord.

And then it's a picture of utter life. Here's the point. Believe these four witnesses and live because they point to the all authoritative, almighty, incarnate God, Jesus Christ, who has all authority to give life and to judge.

Put your trust in him and live. You know what? I'm glad I put this note in. Conclusion, I almost forgot one more witness.

[40 : 32] Do you know who it is? You and me. We get to bear witness to Jesus. We, in the 21st century, in our little section of the world, we get to declare who Jesus is and what he's done.

You don't need to be embarrassed by him. The scriptures are not embarrassed by him. God is not embarrassed by him. But we joyfully testify to him and what he has done.

So Jesus himself bore witness to himself. John the Baptist bore witness to the truth of Jesus. The words, the works of Jesus bear witness to him. The scriptures bear witness to him.

Glory, glory. And we bear witness to him. He has all authority because he's the almighty. The savior and judge of the world in whom is life.

There's one word that I want you to say right now. Give me a glory. Glory. Let's pray. Lord Jesus, would you help us to live bold and bright like John the Baptist?

[41 : 57] Bold and bright, hot and shining for you. That this would be jet fuel for our souls. That we are so enamored with you, Lord Jesus.

We become an unstoppable force empowered by the Holy Spirit for the glory of your name. Lord Jesus, we take great courage in knowing that you are building your church and not even the gates of Hades can stand against her.

God, give us strength in Jesus' name. Amen.