

He Is Worthy

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[0 : 00] Greetings to all of you who are watching or listening today. We are still in the midst of this pandemic, but I hope and I've been praying that God has been working for your good through all of this.

I know many of you are eager for us to be able to come together as a church and fellowship and worship in person, but the day for that has not come yet.

We are currently awaiting, at least here in Saskatchewan, for Phase 3 to start in about a week's time. And we're also waiting on the government to give some additional guidance and instruction specifically for places of worship.

And I hope you know that I and the elders will be listening closely to those things that they say and prayerfully looking at how we can resume in some measure, when, how, and we'll do our best to communicate that to you.

And we do look forward to the day when we can be together again in person. Until that day comes, I just want to encourage you to be patient and to continue to fix your eyes on Jesus.

[1 : 28] He's the one who will continue to lead us through all of this one day at a time. Well, we want to do that today as we open our Bibles again and listen to what God has said about His Son, Jesus.

We've been working our way as a church through the Gospel of John. And we are in the middle of Jesus giving a bit of an answer.

It's kind of a long answer to the religious leaders. We're in John chapter 5. If you have a Bible with you, please open it up to John chapter 5 and follow along.

So Jesus is in Jerusalem and He has healed the man who has been unable to walk for 38 years at the pool of Bethesda. He did that on the Sabbath and the religious leaders, the Jewish leaders, came after Him.

They are trying to have Him killed. This is part of the larger story of what's going on between Jesus and the religious leaders, which John and the other Gospel writers tell us about.

[2 : 38] And things get even more intense when Jesus says a certain thing to Him, which we looked at a couple weeks back, basically referring to God as His own Father.

And the focus on Sabbath breaking kind of goes away. And in its place comes this focus on Jesus and His relationship with God.

And Jesus gives an answer to them to explain just what His relationship is with God, His Father.

And so we saw a little bit of that last Sunday about how Jesus is one with His Father.

And they work together in unison, two distinct persons and one God working in any given moment with these miracles and these things that Jesus is doing.

Well, today we want to see a little more of what Jesus has to say about this relationship that He has with His Father. And we pick up the story and we'll start it in verse 19, but we'll be looking at the verses which follow.

[3 : 51] John chapter 5, verse 19. Jesus gave them this answer. Yes, and He will show Him even greater works than these, so that you will be amazed.

For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom He is pleased to give it. Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted 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. So there's a lot in here about this relationship between Jesus and His Father.

And the first thing that we see, at least in the section we're looking at today, comes in verse 20. For the Father loves the Son. We've already heard John say this very thing back in John 3, verse 35.

The Father loves the Son. Now, John didn't say this in his gospel, but we know from the other gospels, these words have been used before about Jesus as well.

[5 : 37] At Jesus' baptism, as Jesus was coming up out of the water, we saw or we heard there that a voice came from heaven. God spoke from heaven and said, this is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.

And we will see the Father speak basically the same words at a later time as Jesus is transfigured in the presence of a few of His disciples.

This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased. The Father loves the Son. We see from all these places and these moments that the Father loves the Son.

Theirs is a relationship that's not just characterized by unity and oneness. It's a relationship that is also characterized by love.

One for the other. And in this case, the Father loves the Son. And here in verse 20, we see a little bit of what the Father's love for the Son leads Him to do.

[6 : 51] Or we might say the result of the Father's love. In verse 20, for the Father loves the Son and shows Him all He does.

The Father loves the Son and shows Him all He does. And the emphasis in this statement is on the word all in the original language.

Like everything. He loves Him and shows Him all. Everything that He does. That He is doing. Now I have to admit, this is not what I expected to read as I came to this point.

For the Father loves the Son and shows Him all He does or all He is doing. What does that mean? I was expecting perhaps something more familiar.

The Father loves the Son and tells Him that every day. Or the Father loves the Son and watches over Him and protects Him from all threats.

[8 : 04] Or the Father loves the Son and gives Him amazing gifts, power, authority. Something like that. This is a little unexpected, at least to me.

The Father loves the Son and shows Him all He does. What does that mean? Shows Him all He does or all He is doing.

I think to really get the sense of that we have to go back to kind of the counterpart to this which we saw last Sunday in verse 19. There Jesus told us that the Son can do nothing of Himself unless, He said, it is something He sees the Father doing.

And what we took from that is that in some sense that we just don't understand as mere human beings, Jesus, the Divine Son of God is continuously watching His Father.

He is continuously seeing what His Father is doing. And the counterpart to that that we see here is that the Father is continuously showing the Son all that He is doing.

[9 : 32] The Son sees what the Father is doing and the Father shows the Son what He is doing. There's kind of both. The Son sees, the Father shows.

The Father shows, the Son sees. We get this sense of that there's a communion, there's a relationship going on here, there's an intimacy happening here.

And what's so interesting to me in all of this is that the showing of the Father is the Father shows the Son all He does that seems to sprout out of His love for the Son.

How is that? Why is that? I think we see here a little bit of a principle if we're looking closely that we can draw out about what love is and what love does.

We might say it like this. God's kind of love or true love opens up to others. It shows oneself to others and allows them to see what's really going on with you, what you are up to, what you are doing.

[10 : 51] There's an intimacy here. He allows the Son to see, He shows the Son and the Son sees and knows just what the Father is up to.

We get a little bit of confirmation of this principle of love from Jesus' words to His disciples on the night of His betrayal.

John 15, verse 13. Jesus is speaking to His disciples. He says, Greater love has no one than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

And then a couple verses down in verse 15, He says, I no longer call you servants because a servant does not know his master's business.

instead, I have called you friends for everything that I heard from my Father, I have made known to you.

[11 : 57] And so Jesus is talking about love and relationship again to His disciples, saying, you are my friends, I love you, and I'm about to show you just how much I love you, but laying down my life for you, the greatest demonstration of love possible.

My relationship with you is not like that of a master with his servants. It's like that of a person with his friend.

A master, he doesn't make his business, what he is doing, what he is up to known to his servants. They don't need to know, he makes his business, what he's up to known to his friends, whom he loves.

The evidence that you are friends, that I have called you friends and not just servants, is that I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my father.

So again, we see here kind of this principle that in a loving relationship, there is intimacy, there is a making known to the other, rather than keeping things from the other and hiding things from them and keeping secrets.

[13 : 19] And this is what we see in Jesus' relationship with his father, the father's relationship with the son. He shows him all he does, everything.

There's an intimacy there. And I think we can draw a bit of a principle here for human level relationships as well.

I mean, this is about Jesus and his father, but I think the same applies to human relationships too. We are to imitate God's love toward one another, toward other people.

And so to do that, we must open ourselves up to them. We must let them see what is really going on with us, what we are up to.

Now, of course, as we apply this to human relationships, there are appropriate boundaries here. It would not be right to show all things to someone who is not your husband or your wife.

[14 : 26] It would not be wise to show all things to a stranger or to an enemy. Showing all things to someone, that's something that you do in only the deepest of relationships, that you show everything.

And I think that's precisely the point Jesus is making here. This is the kind of relationship I have with God the Father. He shows all things that he is doing to me.

There's no secrets. Nothing is being hidden. I think we can reflect on our various relationships with this principle that love opens up to the other and lets them in.

We might reflect on marriage relationships. A marriage in which one or both partners are holding each other at arm's length and keeping secrets and hiding things from each other and not opening up to each other is a marriage that is failing, that is spiraling downward.

The intimacy is not there and growing. When your spouse asks you that question with longing and sincerity, how are you doing?

[15 : 53] how is your day? Don't hold up the arm and say, oh, I'm good.

Make the effort. Open yourself up. Let them see what's really going on with you, what you are up to. This is the kind of love that makes for intimate relationships, not just with husband and wife relationship, but with parent and child relationship.

I'm aware of this, especially as a father of three young children. My kids are always asking me the question, why? Why?

Why? Sometimes, I'll be honest, it feels like a little much. I get kind of weary of hearing that question, but as I've been reflecting on this, many times underneath that is just a simple longing to know you, mom, or to know you, dad, to understand what makes you tick, why you say the things you do, why you make the decisions you do, why you responded that way to that friend that you were talking to.

And it's kind of a sweet and beautiful and innocent thing. a young child just longs to know, to receive wisdom about how to navigate the world from you as a parent.

[17 : 29] And so, I'm talking to myself, I'm confessing my own sins here. When you hold up the hand and kind of keep them at arm's length and give answers like, because I said so, because you don't need to know, love opens up to the other.

You could apply this to your relationships with your co-workers, with your neighbors, of course, in appropriate ways. On the flip side of things, some of you may be just anxious to open yourself up to someone, to share what's going on in your life with someone, but maybe they're not asking how you're doing.

That can be a difficult place to be. But we can only go so far in answering questions that are not being asked of us. So what can we do in those situations?

Well, I would encourage you just to instead focus on, not so much on getting the opportunity to share what's going on with you, with them, but focus on asking them what's going on in their life. Give them the opportunity to open up to you. Ask them questions that draw them out and go beneath the surface a little bit. Sometimes people just want to know that you care before they exchange details and information about what's really going on in their life at that level.

[19 : 08] Finally, if there's one thing on this topic of love and intimacy that really is a barrier to intimacy that really keeps us from opening up to others, it's sin in our lives.

It's sinful attitudes, sinful behaviors. I know in my own life, when I am wrestling with a sinful attitude or behavior of some kind or have done something that I know is wrong, the last thing I want to do is be close to people.

I kind of want to keep my arm up and keep a distance. I don't want you to see my sin up close. I found from my own personal experience that what I need to do most in that situation is not to go straight to other people and just fling wide the doors open and let them see, but it's to go to the Lord and acknowledge my sin and confess it to him, ask for his forgiveness, repent, and come to that place again where I see just how deeply he loves me, the broken sinner that I am, and how he has forgiven me and made me righteous in his sight through Jesus.

It's there at the cross that I find strength and courage to open up to people and to let them see what's really going on with me.

me. So those are some of the things that we can maybe pull as a bit of a principle for our human level relationships with one another from this that we see between father and son.

[20 : 50] But just think for a moment what a wonderful relationship this must be between Jesus and his father. There's no sin, there's no barriers, there's no guilt, there's no shame, there's no reason to hide one from the other.

There's is a beautiful, complete, total intimacy, constant seeing, constant showing. Well, Jesus goes on from there in verse 20.

He says this, the father loves the son and shows him all he does. Yes. And he will show him even greater works than these so that you will be amazed.

I love these words. It's almost as if Jesus is saying, you think that the miracles that I've done up to this point are amazing?

Like all these countless healings and, and casting out demons and other signs and miracles that I've done. You think those are amazing? You haven't seen anything yet.

[21 : 56] the father will show me. And as I see what he shows me and together do we do works, you will see greater things than those.

And, and I love this expression things that when you see you will be amazed. Now that word amazed may seem a little flat to us.

Amazed. I mean, we use that very ordinarily like that basketball shot that we saw someone make on their Facebook page. Oh, that was amazing. That's not what Jesus means here.

When he says amazed the original word there, so that you will be amazed means so that you will be extraordinarily impressed impressed so that you will be astonished that so that you will marvel be, be filled with awe.

So what kind of greater things or greater works is Jesus talking about? Well, what, what do you expect? How do you feel about some of the miracles that, you know, Jesus has done or will do in, in this story?

[23 : 12] I think of some of the, some of the things like Jesus walking on water, Jesus calming the storm, Jesus multiplying a couple loaves of bread and fish to feed thousands.

Those things, if I'm honest, astonish me. They amaze me. But what I think is, is truly wonderful is that these, I mean, these might be kinds of things might be included in what Jesus says, but they're not the things that he gives.

They're not the example that he gives of greater things. What, what kinds of things is Jesus talking about? Verse 21. For just as the father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it.

God, that is one of the greater works that the father will show the son and the son will do and we will be amazed.

Only God can give life. And we're not talking give life like, you know, my mother gave me life, like give birth or reproduce. No, we're talking resurrection.

[24 : 33] We're talking life from the dead for just as the father raises the dead and gives them life or makes them alive.

Even so the son makes alive or gives life to whom he is pleased to give it. That, that unique signature work of God's power, giving life to the dead.

You're going to see me do that too. And you'll be amazed. You'll be astonished, says Jesus. We're going to talk a little bit more about that because Jesus has more to say.

We'll talk about that more next Sunday. But let's move on. What's another example of a greater work or greater thing that Jesus will do?

Something that will astonish them. verse 22. Moreover, the father judges no one, says Jesus, but has entrusted all judgment to the son.

[25 : 44] What a statement. What a thing to say. I mean, think about this. The Lord God, Yahweh, we know from the Old Testament is the judge.

He is the judge of all the earth. He's the one who sees that all receive what they are due, whether good or bad, reward or punishment.

That's his domain. That's his sole responsibility as creator and God over everything in the universe. Jesus is saying. That responsibility, and I think he's mainly pointing to the future, final judgment, that responsibility.

The father has passed off to me. He has delegated to me. I will do it for all people on his behalf. I mean, can you imagine, let's bring into focus for a moment the religious leaders.

[26 : 51] Can you imagine what they're thinking as they hear this? You're claiming that you, we will see you give life to the dead, and that we will see you judging all the world.

You can only imagine the reaction that they had. They were already bent on killing him for calling God his own father.

Now he's very clearly claiming to do the very things that are God's alone to do. How dare you? They might be thinking.

Notice in verse 23, why the father has entrusted all judgment to the son. Verse 23, the father has entrusted all judgment to the son that all may honor the son just as they honor the father.

So the father desires the son to be honored, to be esteemed, to be glorified, just as he himself is honored and esteemed and glorified.

[28 : 10] Again, the religious leaders are probably thinking, how dare you say such a thing? Have you not read what Isaiah the prophet said?

Isaiah 42, 8, I am the Lord. That is my name. I will not yield my glory to another. How dare you claim that God desires to see you receive the glory that he himself receives.

the religious leaders. And Jesus will explain this. We heard this last Sunday. He will explain how this works.

He's not claiming to be another God or a second God, a rival God. in Jesus' own words, John 14, 10, I am in the father and the father is in me.

John 10, verse 30, I and the father are one. There is only one God and within his being, there is father, there is son, there is Holy Spirit and there is love between the persons of this one God.

[29 : 27] There is honoring and glorifying of each other going on in there. There's relationship. The religious leaders refuse to believe that.

The final statement that Jesus makes in this section comes in verse 23. Whoever does not honor the son does not honor the father who sent him.

And again, in these words, we see this, this connection between the father and the son. We see, we see this oneness. The way that you treat the son reflects on your treatment of the father himself.

Whoever does not honor me does not honor the father who sent me. if you spit in my face, it's as though you are spitting in the face of God himself.

He has sent me. We see both oneness and we see this idea that the son represents the father. He has come from the father on his behalf and probably the best illustration, the place that we see this most clearly is in the parable of the tenants, which Jesus tells.

[30 : 51] This is found in Mark chapter 12. Jesus tells a story of a man who built a vineyard and then rented it out to some farmers and then went off to a distant land.

And at harvest time, he sent servants to collect some of the fruit that was produced in the vineyard. And the tenants treated the servants shamefully.

they beat some of them and others they killed. Finally, it comes down to that there are no more servants left to send. And the last thing I'll do, I'll send my son.

Perhaps they will respect him. And so he sends his son and they see him coming from afar and they plot to kill him. Now there's lots that we could take from that parable, but we don't have time for that today.

The main point that we're looking at is just to see how their treatment of the son is, if they treat the son shamefully, they treat the father who sent him shamefully.

[32 : 00] To spit in the face of the son is to spit in the face of the father. Because of the close relationship between father and son, whatever they do to the son, to harm him, to shame him, to insult him, the father takes personally.

For he has sent the son to collect. It's the same in this case with Jesus and his father.

Whoever does not honor the son does not honor the father who sent him. If we dishonor Jesus, we dishonor God the father.

This is the relationship that we see between father and son. Well, there's a lot of wonderful truth that we see in all of this about Jesus' relationship with his father.

We see how the father loves the son. We see how he shows him everything he does. we see how he will show him even greater works than the ones he's already done.

[33 : 16] How it has been given to him to judge all people in the final count. And that because the father loves the son and desires to see him glorified and honored.

well, what should our response to all of this wonderful truth be? Aside from awe and reverence and wonder at this special relationship between God the father and the divine son of God, if we're listening carefully to Jesus, the only fitting response comes in verse 23, that we honor the son, the one who has been sent from the father, that we honor him.

That's what this is all about. Do we honor the one he has sent? Now, what does it mean to honor the son, to honor Jesus?

Well, I hesitate to just give an answer to that. I think this is something that we all should really think deeply about.

What does it mean? What does it look like for me to honor Jesus, the son of God? It means more than to just give him lip service.

[34 : 52] It means more than to give him token worship, token obedience. obedience. It means more than to like his metaphorical Facebook page and say, I'm for Jesus.

I agree with him. It means more than just kind of liking him. At a very minimum, it means that we acknowledge just who he is.

at the very minimum, it means that we welcome him with open arms. To honor him means that we take the words that he says very seriously.

That we obey the commands which he has given for he speaks the words and gives the commands of God the father. that's the bare minimum of what honoring the son means.

It means that we believe him. We accept him. We obey him. But I want us to think way beyond that.

[36 : 06] When it comes to honoring someone, one of the questions I think that we should ask is just who is this person? And what are they worthy of?

What kind of honor are they due? We could think of this from a human relationships perspective. I mean, if it's just Joe from down the street coming over for the fourth time this week, a co-op pizza, a big slab, is good enough.

But if it's a dear friend who we haven't seen in a long time who is traveling all the way, halfway across Canada just to be with us, we honor that person by killing the fattened calf and throwing a feast that costs us a great deal.

If we're thinking of honoring someone very special, someone who we would like to spend the rest of our life with, it could be very costly.

We won't just give them a little trinket to demonstrate our commitment and love to them. No, we will spend months of our savings to give them a symbol of our love, an engagement ring that communicates the honor that we have for them, the love that we have for them.

[37 : 49] I know of a mother and daughter back in Edmonton in the church I used to go to. That young gal honored her mother whose, I think it was kidney, both kidneys had failed.

She honored her mother with the costly gift of giving her mother one of her own. that's how dear and precious she was. And so this question of just who is it that we are honoring and how worthy are they?

What are they worthy of? Is so important. Now think of that, not with human level relationships, but with Jesus, the divine son of God. We've already seen so many wonderful things about who he is. He's the lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. He's the Messiah, God's appointed king. He's the one whom God has entrusted all judgment to.

He himself is one with the father. Through him all things were created that have been made. He is God. How worthy is he?

[39 : 00] He is worthy of all blessing, all honor, all glory that we could possibly give. all of everything that we have.

All of us, all of our love, all of our attention, all of our devotion, all of our strength and effort. He's worthy not just of those things this next week or this next month, but of those things for the rest of our lives forever.

forever. That's who Jesus the son is. We barely scratched the tip of the surface of who he is in our time in John here.

How will you honor Jesus, the son of God, not just with this week, not just with today, but with your life, with what God has given you to honor him with.

I think is the question that we all need to ask. In fact, God himself tells us just how worthy his son is.

[40 : 16] We get a glimpse of the end of the story in Revelation. These are the kinds of words that the angels say and that someday all creatures and especially those who belong to Jesus will join in proclaiming and in saying.

Revelation 5 verse 12 worthy is the lamb who was slain to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise.

And there are many exclamations like this in Revelation which have some other things added in and these things not just for a period of time but forever. that's how worthy he is.

How will you honor the son with your life with what God has given you to honor him with? Let's pray. Father in heaven thank you that you have sent your one and only precious beloved son into our world and that is a gift of grace and mercy he has laid down his life for us that we might be saved from what we truly deserve for the wrongs that we have done against you.

[41 : 48] That in itself is the greatest gift of all. we love your son. We worship him. We give him glory and honor and praise and we ask that you would lead us in doing that for the rest of our lives from now on until forever in his name.

Amen.