

John 5 (2)

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Date: 20 October 2019

Preacher: Fr. Caleb Evans

[0:00] Amen. Amen.

So, I'm going to have to ask you to bear with me this morning. I've been sick this past week and have been on antibiotics long enough to not be contagious, but I'm still dragging, my throat's still tender, and as a result, my sermon is going to be on the shorter side this morning.

I'm sure that you are probably distraught to hear that, or not, but I trust you'll recover.

Our sermon series in John continues. Last week, Deacon Mark preached a sermon that talked about what was a dramatic healing that was, in many ways, kind of unappreciated.

A man was healed, and strangely enough, some of the people reacted negatively to that. And this week, we're going to be looking at the aftermath.

[1:36] In the verses we read this morning, Jesus is responding to critics, people who are angry with him because not only did he heal on the Sabbath, apparently you're not supposed to do that, but he also made himself equal with God, as John puts it.

In this morning's text, we see what Jesus has to say in the face of all of that criticism. We see the Father's testimony about Jesus.

We see that Jesus is the key to understanding the whole of Scripture. And we see that we are only in right relationship with God if we come to Jesus in faith.

Start this morning with talking about the Father's testimony about Jesus. Jesus begins in verse 30, acknowledging that everything he does is in union with the Father and in accordance with his Father's will.

He always obeys the Father's will, and he says, 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.

[2:56] The Father bears witness about Jesus. That's our first point this morning. Jesus is the only Son of the Father.

Jesus is the one in whom he is well pleased. And the Father says, listen to my only Son. You know, Jesus talks about the witness of John the Baptist in this passage, important as that is.

He still notes, 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.

Of course, part of the Father's testimony about Jesus is found in Jesus doing the works the Father has given him to do.

Like the signs that he has performed, for example. We saw one of those. Looked at that just last week. But not only that. What other work did the Father give Jesus to do?

[4:15] How about living a perfect and sinless life? On behalf of sinners, so that he could die in the place of sinners as their substitute. And then rise again on the third day to conquer death for all who put their trust in him.

Bears witness to who Jesus is. Of course, part of the Father's testimony about Jesus is found in the Scriptures. And it's found throughout the whole of Scripture.

An important point to note. Which brings me to this morning's next poem. Jesus says in verses 39 through 40, 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.

There's a bit of a caveat in order here, isn't there?

Because we do believe that the Scriptures are life-giving. This is not Jesus giving us a pass on Bible reading, in case you were wondering.

[5 : 30] Jesus is talking to people, first of all, who likely believed that God would accept them if they studied the Torah hard enough, right?

And would accept them because of that. But reading the Scriptures and missing the point does not bring anyone to eternal life. I think that we have all known people who have read the entirety of the Bible, some of them more than once, and yet still they don't have faith in Jesus.

And Jesus drives the point home, started in verse 45. 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 believe me, for he wrote of me.

But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words? If we read the Scriptures, and we do not find Christ, we have missed the point.

[6 : 43] Keep in mind, too, that Jesus is talking to his critics about the Old Testament. We don't merely look for Christ in the New Testament. We look for Christ in the Old Testament as well.

Well, how so? Well, we look at all of the history of God's dealings with his people in the Old Testament.

We look in Genesis at the promise that the seed of woman would crush the serpent's head, given right after the fall. We look at the calling of Abraham, the Passover and the Exodus.

We look at God's covenant with Israel. All of it finds its fulfillment in Jesus. We look at God's promise through the prophets that he would gather and save his people.

That he would send a Savior, a suffering servant to bear his people's sins. And that finds its fulfillment in Jesus Christ. These critics of Jesus, they knew the Old Testament.

[7 : 48] They knew the story. They knew the law. They knew the prophets. And they missed the point precisely because they missed Jesus. Preacher Charles Spurgeon once said, I have never yet found a text that had not God erode to Christ in it.

And if I ever do find one that has not erode to Christ in it, I will make one. I will go over hedge and ditch, but I would get it my master.

For the sermon cannot do any good unless there is a savor of Christ in it. Amen. When we read the Bible, we read it with the understanding that we are to find Christ there.

Because the Bible serves this purpose in our lives, that we may come to Christ, that we may have life. Jesus is the key to understanding the whole of the Scriptures.

Anytime we read a passage of the Bible, we should have this question in our minds. What does this say about Jesus? It's a very important question because Jesus is the way and the only way to eternal life.

[9 : 11] Which brings me to my third point this morning. The only way to be in right relationship with God is to come to Jesus in faith and trust.

Jesus says of his Father to his critics, 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.

Jesus is saying, I can tell that you don't know and you don't believe God because you haven't believed in me. Well, that's a direct statement, isn't it?

Jesus goes on, I know that you do not have the love of God within you. I have come in my Father's name and you do not receive me.

Again, Jesus is being very direct, saying, I know that you do not know the love of God because you haven't believed in me. Wow.

[10 : 35] Here's one of the hard truths. Of our faith, brothers and sisters, Jesus is absolutely clear. If we do not acknowledge Jesus as God's only Son, as our Savior, as the Word of God, who was with God and who was God from all eternity, then we do not know God and we are hopelessly lost.

There is only one path to God. There is only one way to eternal life.

And that is through faith in God's only Son, Jesus Christ. But the invitation to come to faith in Jesus extends to all of us.

The positive side of all of this is that we can know that we have the love of God within us. We can know that we have really heard God's voice.

We can know that we have His Word abiding in us. We can know that we have eternal life. We can know that we are in a right relationship with God.

[11:51] And we can know that our sins are forgiven. It's not a guessing game. We can know that we have eternal life. We can know that we have eternal life. We can know that we have eternal life. We can know all of these things for sure if we put our trust in God's only Son, Jesus Christ, whom He has sent.

Jesus said to His critics, if another comes in His own name, you will receive him. Through the centuries in Judaism, after Jesus said this to His critics, there have been a series of men falsely claiming to be the Messiah.

It's likely the most immediate context of this statement. But this critique that Jesus offers doesn't just apply to a Jewish context. Human beings, that's all of us, are prone to trusting in false gods and false saviors that cannot save us.

Sometimes that takes the form of false religion, but it always takes the form of worshipping something that cannot save. Make no mistake, every human being worships something. It might be money, it might be status, it might be the specific type of sin that each one of us finds most attractive, but it's certainly something.

[13:31] At the end of the day, it takes the form of whatever it is we're living for, whatever stands at the center of our lives, what we dream most about having.

And if that something is not Jesus, we will be disappointed.

That something, whatever it is, will rust and decay. That something, whatever it is, will be lost when thieves break in and steal it.

And we will be left with nothing. But if we receive Jesus, if he is our savior, we will not be disappointed.

no matter the challenges that we face in this life, we will have a treasure that we cannot lose, that will last forever, that will not rust and decay, that thieves will not break in and steal.

[14:57] We will have treasure that lasts forever, the treasure of knowing Jesus and of having life in his name. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.