

Christ Equal With The Father

John 5:10-30

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The miracle happened in John 5:1-9, but I want to go back to verse 9 to start us off. “And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath.” Jesus was in Bethesda in Jerusalem by the pools, and there was a lame man there thirty-eight years. Jesus basically said to the lame man, “Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.” The key tonight is that He did it on the Sabbath day. Many of the miracles that Jesus did, He would do on the Sabbath day. Now, He does this miracle on the Sabbath day, (and we’re going to talk about the Sabbath issue) it brings Him into conflict with the Jewish authorities, the leaders of the Jews, which ultimately will lead to His crucifixion. It’s all a part of God’s master plan, master design. Jesus comes, He will be crucified, He will be resurrected from the dead, and ascend back into heaven for the salvation of the world.

Notice in the beginning of verses 10-16, I’m going to outline these verses for you, we have the initial reaction and the hostility over His healing on the Sabbath day. “The Jews therefore said unto him,” the man who was healed, “that was cured, It is the sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed. 11 He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk.” In other words, he’s saying, “Look, anyone who can heal me, I need to obey them. If this Guy says, ‘Get up, pick up your bed, and walk,’ and He heals me, I’m going to do what He told me to do; so I picked up my bed and I walked.” “Then asked they him, What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk? 13 And he that was healed wist not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in that place.” Jesus had gotten lost, basically, in the crowd.

In verse 14, “Afterward Jesus findeth him,” the man who had been healed, “in the temple,” no doubt he went there to worship God and to thank God for the healing on his body, maybe offer a sacrifice, “and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee. 15 The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus, which had made him whole. 16 And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day.”

Whenever you find a reference (verse 1, you see it again in verse 5, you have a reference again in verse 16) to “the Jews,” this isn’t talking just generally about Jewish people. This is talking about the elite, the upper echelon, the religious leaders of the day—particularly the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the scribes. They were the religious elite, the aristocrats of the Jews. Some of them actually belonged to what was called the Sanhedrin, which was the Jewish Supreme High Court. These were the leaders of the Jews. “The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured,” by the way, that statement “was cured” is in the perfect tense of the participle. It conveys that he was completely and totally cured. It wasn’t a process healing. It was a total, instantaneous and complete healing. “It is the sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed.”

Where do we go with the Sabbath day? The subject is so vast that we have to try to narrow it down. Why were they upset about this man carrying his burden on the Sabbath day? The Sabbath day was a law in the Ten Commandments given by God to the nation of Israel. Write down, make it very clear, “given to the nation of Israel.” The Sabbath day was not given specifically to the church, I’m going to talk about that more in a moment, but was part of the Ten Commandments that we observe the seventh day to keep it holy. It was primarily a covenant with the nation of Israel. It is interesting, lest I forget, that of all the Ten Commandments, the only one that is not repeated in the New Testament is the Sabbath commandment. All of the other commandments in the Decalogue find parallels or statements in the New Testament.

We know that we are saved by grace. We’re not saved by keeping the law, so Sabbath observance is not some way to get God to love, approve of, accept me, or to get to heaven. You don’t have to worship on a particular day of the week in order to be right with God, and the Bible actually says that there are some men who consider every day alike. God doesn’t look at the calendar when you pray and say, “You know, I’m sorry, but it’s Monday. I really can’t hear your prayers right now.” There isn’t one particular day that we must worship, we should worship every day, 24/7. Amen? Every day is the Lord’s day, but I’m going to talk more about the Sabbath and the church.

The Jews had taken God’s law for resting, so God created the heavens and the earth in six days. On the seventh day, God rested and established the Sabbath law. There were annual Sabbaths and Sabbath years and so forth, so there were different Sabbath laws. What basically happened in the time of Jesus is that the Jews, the religious leaders, had added their man-made laws, rules, regulations, and stipulations onto the Sabbath so that the Sabbath became a burden. One of the laws of the Sabbath was that you could not work, and part of work was carrying a burden. What they did was they had to define what is a burden. They got very meticulous. They had about 35 ways to describe what it meant to carry a burden. It got so ridiculous that if you had an artificial leg—that was a burden on the Sabbath day—you couldn’t carry your leg or have your leg on the Sabbath day. If you had false teeth, you couldn’t carry your false teeth in your mouth because it was a burden—you were carrying a burden—and you couldn’t do that on the Sabbath day.

The Sabbath day became very, very legalistic and very restrictive. It had all kinds of rules and regulations about the distance you could walk, the burdens you could carry, and you couldn’t kindle a fire. They had all these ways to circumvent the law and get around it, but it just became kind of like a gobbledygook of laws, restrictions, and regulations. You know, the whole Sabbath observance isn’t really dead. There’s a lot of people, even today, that want to make a big deal about Saturday over Sunday or other days of the week and say, “It’s the Sabbath, and you’re not supposed to work, have fun, smile, have a good time, do anything fun because it’s the Sabbath; so be miserable and just sit there all day.” We understand from the New Testament that that’s not God’s purpose or intention of the Sabbath day.

This man is healed. In verse 10, all they could say to him (and this is a free-paraphrase, the J.P. Miller translation), “Hey Dude, it’s the Sabbath day! You can’t be carrying your couch around.”

What they should've said was, "Praise God! God healed a lame man," right? They should've been praising God and rejoicing in the Lord, giving thanks to God, "Oh, isn't this wonderful? Praise be to the Lord that He's healed you!" Because they were so bigoted and so religious and so narrow-minded and so stuck on their laws, they missed the whole meaning of the Sabbath; and it became a burden. They didn't really care about the man and his healing. All they cared about was their laws had been broken.

I'll get into it more in just a moment, but Jesus never violated the divine intent of the Sabbath. I didn't get this far last Wednesday, but some came to me with questions about the Sabbath saying, "Well, how could Jesus break the Sabbath? He's the Son of God and didn't sin, yet He worked on the Sabbath day?" Jesus didn't break the Sabbath. He actually broke their concept of the Sabbath with their man-made restrictions. It wasn't God's design or intention for the Sabbath that Jesus broke. He perfectly fulfilled the law in every way but broke their concepts and their man-made regulations and added rules and restrictions on the Sabbath day. They didn't really care about the man.

A lot of people today that get religious lack love. They get so worried about all their little rules and all their little regulations that they don't have the love of God in their hearts for a lost sinner who is being saved. All they care about is their little rules are being broken. So, he takes up his bed and walks. He tells the Jews, "I don't know who it was." He, actually at this time, still was completely ignorant as to who Jesus was. All he knows is that this Guy has healed him. He goes into the temple, and Jesus found him there (verse 14), which indicates that Jesus went looking for him, so that Jesus could give him a fuller revelation of who He was so he could not only be healed but could come to faith and salvation in Jesus Christ. He was in the temple and makes this amazing statement (you need to note it in your Bible) to this man, "Behold, thou art made whole." What a wonderful thing it is when Jesus makes us whole. Then, He said, "sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee."

This is an indication that this man's ailment or affliction was a direct result of some sin. The Bible doesn't tell us what sin it was, so it would be foolish for us to speculate or to try to figure out what sin it was. It's not always true that there's a direct correlation between sickness in a person's life and sin. If you back up a little bit theologically, sickness came into the world because of man's sin. It is true that sickness comes into the world, it's part of the curse in the fallen world because of Adam and Eve's sin in the Garden of Eden, but there's not a direct correlation all the time about, "Well, you know, I have cancer, so I must be a sinner," or "I had a heart attack, so I must be a bad person," or "I have this disease. God has punished me for something I've done wrong." It can be that sometimes sin can lead to sickness. There are certain kinds of sin that lend themselves to physical diseases that are the consequences of promiscuity and a sinful lifestyle, and God wants to protect us; but it would be wrong and it would be cruel to tell anybody that's sick, "There must be sin in your life."

In the book of Job, you talk about sickness, you talk about trials, Job had everything going wrong in his life and his friends showed up and said, "Come on, Job, you must have done something wrong. Confess your sin." Job said, "I haven't done anything wrong," and there's

that whole dialogue with Job and his “comforters.” Sure enough, they were wrong and Job was right. God was actually allowing this suffering in the life of Job to test him, to try him, and to use Job to vindicate God’s own nature and character. Satan had pointed to God and said, “You’re not worthy to be worshiped apart from the gifts that You give. You take Job’s blessings away, You afflict him physically, and Job will curse You to Your face.” God said, “Okay. I’ll allow you to afflict him, but you can’t take his life.” Sometimes God uses us to bring glory to Himself. God wants to use your affliction, sickness, or malady so that you can glorify Him in the midst of the pain, the sorrow, and the suffering.

Notice that Jesus says, “...sin no more.” He didn’t say, “Try to do your best. If you sin, it’s not too big of a deal, but just try to do your best.” No. He’s the holy Son of God and cannot approve of sin, so he tells this man, “...sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.” We’re going to get to chapter 9, one of my favorites in John’s gospel, and there’s a man that was blind from birth. Even the disciples asked Jesus the question (John 9:2-3), “Who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?” Notice they immediately equated that somebody sinned or you wouldn’t have been born blind. How interesting. How could he have sinned if he was born blind? They actually believed in prenatal sins—you could sin in the womb and then you would be born blind or have some malady. What did Jesus say in response to them (and we’ll get it in several weeks), “Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents,” so there you have it, “but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.” He wanted to bring glory to God the Father by healing this man, so He was seizing the moment in healing this blind man. It wasn’t a direct relationship of his sin, nor is it a direct result of a lack of faith. Again, that’s a very cruel thing to say, “Well, you’re sick, but if you only had enough faith. If you really believed God, you’d claim your healing and you would be healed.” That’s not true.

Eventually, if the Lord tarries, all of us will die, and we’ll die of something physical—our hearts will stop beating or something will happen. We can’t go on living forever. Our bodies are unredeemed, so they’re still subject to disease and sickness. We’re going to get new bodies that will be free from sin, free from disease, and free from sickness; but, until then, we’ll never have perfect health this side of heaven. We need to understand that there’s not always a direct correlation between sin and sickness.

Verse 15, “The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus, which had made him whole.” Now, you kind of say, “Why did he do that? He’s getting Jesus in trouble,” but Jesus knew what would happen. Jesus wasn’t shocked. Jesus wasn’t surprised. Jesus knew what would happen. “And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day.”

Write down Matthew 12. In Matthew 12, about the first eight verses, I’m going to read from verses 3-8, we get some real good insight into the Sabbath day. Jesus was walking with His disciples through a wheat field. The English Bible uses the word “corn.” They didn’t have the corn we know today, the Indian maize kind of corn we have in the Americas, but it was wheat that they had. They’re walking through the wheat field, and it was the Sabbath day. His disciples were hungry, so what they did was actually grab a stock of wheat, run your hand

across it, and you would pull the kernels off the head of the wheat. The kernels had husks on them, so they would rub their hands together and then blow. The chaff would blow off the husks, and they would basically have a handful of granola right there in their hand. They'd pop the grain into their mouth (chomping noise) and would eat, "Man, that's great," you know, fresh wheat out of the field. They'd grab some more, rub their hands, blow the chaff away, (it was like taking the skin off a peanut) and then pop the wheat in your mouth.

It was the Sabbath day, in Matthew 12, and the Pharisees and the scribes and religious leaders, the Jews...I've always wondered, What were they doing? Hiding in the wheat fields to try to bust them? This is the gestapo or the sin-sniffing, flesh-finding Pharisees? I don't know. "Aha!" They had their little binoculars out, "There they are! Check the calendar. Yes! It's the Sabbath day." They considered the rubbing in the hands, threshing; the pulling of the wheat, harvesting; so they were working on the Sabbath day, and it brought Jesus into conflict with them. Jesus then tells them this (Matthew 12:3-8), "Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungred, and they that were with him; 4 How he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shewbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests? 5 Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless?" By that it means that they do their work in the temple—they light the candles, fill the wicks, put the oil in, bring in the incense—but don't really break the law of God. According to them, they would be defaming the temple, but really they're blameless.

In Matthew 12:6, "But I say unto you," Jesus says, "That in this place is one greater than the temple. 7 But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless." Then, He says this, "For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day." There you have it. Jesus is the Lord of the Sabbath. Now, He's going to go on to say that God, His Father, is always working, so He is also working. He didn't really defame the Sabbath, and what God is more concerned about than their petty laws, rules, and regulations on the Sabbath day, is that we show mercy. You don't think God wants to heal people on Saturday, Sunday, Monday, or Tuesday? God doesn't look at the calendar and say, "Sorry, I can't heal you today. It's the Sabbath day." God wants us, like Him, to show mercy. The Bible tells us that the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. The Sabbath day was not to be a burden. It was to be a blessing.

The whole subject, and I don't want...I probably opened up a can of worms, but let me just mention it. There are those that feel today that we, the church, need to meet on Saturday as opposed to Sunday. In the New Testament, what you find is the first Christians, the early Christians, met on the first day of the week. What was the first day of the week? It was Sunday. Why did they do that? Because that's the day Jesus rose from the dead. It even became known as the Lord's day. Now, don't take Sunday and make it a legalistic requirement. Don't take Sunday and kind of add legalism to it and say, "You can't do this," "You can't do that," "You must do this." It's not so. Now, the principle of out of seven days taking one to rest is a God divine given principle, and I think we should honor the Lord on that day. All through the New Testament, the book of Acts, they gathered on the first day of the week to worship God,

study His Word, and to pray. Some feel in the book of Revelation, when John says, “I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day,” that he was actually on the island of Patmos on Sunday, worshiping God, when he was given the Revelation that he recorded as the last book of the Bible. That’s a whole different subject, but a lot of strong evidence that we’re not bound by the Sabbath law to worship on Saturday, that we pick Sunday because it’s resurrection day when we gather to worship the Lord; but everyday is the Lord’s day, and we must worship Him in spirit and in truth.

Jesus begins His message. He’s brought now into conflict with the Jews. In this passage, I’m going to give you six ways Jesus is equal to the Father. They are deep. They are theological. They’re an ocean—you can just go swimming in them—and I’m going to do my best to keep it simple and clear. There’s no way I could exhaust it. There’s depth here that I can’t even fathom or comprehend, but let me package it for you. There are six ways that Jesus is co-equal with the Father. First, He is equal in essence (verses 17-18). If you look up the word “essence” it means essential being. What an individual is intrinsically. It basically means that Jesus is God, that He is divine every bit as much as the Father. Verse 17 says, “But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. 18 Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father,” don’t miss this, “making himself equal with God.” This is the verse that I said you ought to be ready to show a Jehovah’s Witness when they come knocking on your door. Here Jesus Christ is claiming equality with God the Father, “My Father worketh.” In the Greek, He actually said, “My own Father.” When He used that term “My Father,” it’s different than you or I would talk about God is my Father. He was saying, “My own Father, My unique Father, My special relationship to God that no one else has.” Jesus was the Son of God. He wasn’t a Son of God. He wasn’t a child of God. He was the Son of God. Literally, this is, “My own Father works up till now, and I work.”

Remember in the creation account of Genesis, God rested on the seventh day, but then what happened? Sin came into the world. Once sin came into the world because of Adam and Eve’s fall, God has not rested since. God has been busy actively seeking to save sinners. He’s been busy with sending His Son, sending the Spirit, drawing out a church for His name’s sake—God is actively working—and He answers prayer on the Sabbath day. He heals bodies on the Sabbath day. He hears our cry on the Sabbath day, so God is working. And, Jesus puts Himself on an equal par with the Father saying, “He’s My own Father. He’s working, and therefore I work.”

Notice, now, they have two things that have aroused their hatred of Jesus. He broke their concept of the Sabbath, and He also said that God was His own unique Father. They understood that was Him claiming to be equal with God. Notice that. The question that some might say, “Well, how do we know that Jesus really claimed to be equal with God? Maybe their assumption is not right?” Here’s a good point: Jesus never refuted their statement. They were going to kill Him, that’s blaspheming. Now, you could be stoned under Jewish law for breaking the Sabbath. You could also be stoned—put to death—for blaspheming, so they have a double case against Jesus now. But Jesus didn’t say, “Hey, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, wait a minute, wait a minute. I’m not claiming that I’m God, I’m not claiming that I’m equal with God.

When I say, 'God's My own Father,' you guys got it all wrong!" Never, ever, ever, ever, does Jesus do that. What we have here, it's very clear, Jesus claiming to be equal with God the Father in His essence. He is divine.

There are a lot of people today that foolishly say, "Well, Jesus never claimed to be God. Jesus was just a religious leader. He was just an ascended Master. He was just a Rabbi. He wasn't really God. He wasn't really the Son of God, and He never really claimed to be God," so I want you to note very clearly here—it's very important—that He did claim to be God. I love what C.S. Lewis does in his book, *Mere Christianity*, where he talks about Jesus' claim to be God. You have two options: Either it is true or it is false, right? What other options do you have? Either Jesus is God or He's not God. Now, let's follow those two options. So, maybe Jesus isn't really God. Maybe His claim isn't true, so what options do we have under that heading? Well, we have a couple of options. First, He knew they were false, and He's a liar. Jesus knew He wasn't God but claimed to be God, so Jesus is a liar. Now, a lot of people say, "Well, Jesus was just a good Man. He's a good religious leader, and we should follow Him." If Jesus wasn't God, Jesus was a liar. So, the category of just Jesus being a good Man, does not exist. He was a liar.

The other option you say, "Well, you know, He didn't really know that He wasn't God, He just claimed to be God." Well, then the other option is that He was deluded and, as Lewis points out in his book, then He was a lunatic. So, Jesus' claims were false. He was either a liar or a lunatic, like the man that thinks that he's God and he's taken away in a white coat to a place where they lock him up. Jesus was either a liar or a lunatic. Now, very few people want to put Jesus Christ the Son of God in that category, right? Very few people, "I think He was a liar. I think He was a lunatic." Okay, well, what's the next option?

The other option is that it is true. His claim is true. If His claim is true, then Jesus is God; and if Jesus is God, then He did die on the cross for my sins. He died on the cross for my sins and rose again from the dead, He is ascended up into heaven, He is the Son of God, and He is the Savior of the world. You either call Him a liar, a lunatic, or Lord. Amen? I believe that Jesus Christ is the Lord, that He is equal with God the Father. Write down Philippians 2:5-6 where Paul says, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God," not something to hold onto. He was equal with God. He was in the form, morphe, the essence of God. Here's a clear affirmation of His deity.

The second way Jesus is equal with the Father is that He's equal in works (verses 19-20). "Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily," now in this section we covered tonight and next week, we get a bunch of "Verily, verily's," and the "Verily, verily's" in John's gospels are "Truly, truly," or literally He actually said, "Amen, amen," so be it, so be it. He does it for emphasis that it's a very important point. He said, "I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. 20 For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel." The miracles and the

works that Jesus did equal to that of God the Father—God the Father is working, God the Son is working—indicate that Jesus Christ is divine.

Notice He says in verse 19, “The Son can do nothing of himself.” Now, don’t misinterpret or misunderstand that statement. It doesn’t mean that Jesus is helpless or impotent and can’t do miracles or work. What it means is that He doesn’t do any miracles independently of the Father. He does all His miracles—all His mighty works, all His divine works—in relationship and in harmony with the Father. He has equality with the Father, but He’s not independent from the Father; so He’s equal to the Father, but He’s not independent from the Father. He only does those miracles that the Father leads, guides, and directs Him to do. He works in concert and in harmony with the Father, and He does the same miracles that the Father does. Now, that’s quite a claim for Jesus to say, “I’m doing what God’s doing.” Any mere man that said, “I’m doing the works of God,” or “I’m doing what God does,” is, again, blaspheming; but Jesus is putting Himself on an equal par with the Father.

Notice in verse 20, “For the Father loveth the Son.” It’s interesting. The word “loveth” there is not the word agape but the word phileo, so it speaks of an affectionate love that God the Father has for God the Son. What we also have in the background of these verses we’re covering tonight is that God is triune: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. The focus is on God the Father and God the Son, but there’s three Persons within the one Godhead.

Not only is Jesus equal in essence (verses 17-18), equal in His works (verses 19-20), but thirdly, He is equal in power and sovereignty to the Father. Verse 21, “For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.” Jesus is now talking about the source of life. Spiritual quickening and physical life comes from God the Father, and He’s given that also to God the Son.

You know, it’s an interesting thing to think about where life comes from. Scientists, evolutionists, and all their theories and their hypotheses, cannot understand where life comes from. We have a theory that comes from the moon or it comes from oceans and billions and billions of years, but they can go back in time and have The Big Bang and all of those things, but we don’t know the ultimate origin of all things apart from God’s revelation in His Word, and we don’t know where life comes from. Life can’t just generate itself from non-life. You can’t have non-life producing life. There has to be at least a scientific set up where they put life into it or all the elements that will create life. It doesn’t just happen, generate on its own naturally. Where does the whole concept of life come from? Life has its origin in God. God is the source of life. God is the source of light. Jesus is saying, “Just as the Father has power to quicken,” which means to give life, “even so the Son quickens or gives life to whom He will.” The fact He says, “to whom he will,” indicates that He is sovereign in His distribution of life. Life comes from God the Father and God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. He’s the life-giving Spirit.

Fourthly, notice that Jesus is equal with the Father in judgment. This is alluded to here and stated in verse 22. “For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.” Later on, He’ll mention the judgment once again, but here’s a clear statement in the Bible

(I mentioned it a couple of weeks ago when I concluded my series on the Olivet Discourse) that in Matthew 25 Jesus comes back in His Second Coming and will judge the sheep and the goats. He'll also be the judge on the great white throne judgment. Notice that Jesus, here, is the One that judges, "For the Father...hath committed all judgement unto the Son." Later on He'll call Him the Son of Man, and because of His humanity, He's perfectly suited to be the One who judges.

Fifthly, notice Jesus is equal with the Father in honor. I love it! Verse 23, "That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father." Jesus is speaking here and says, "They should honor the Son as they honor the Father." Honor means to worship, to venerate Him, to give Him glory as they honor the Father. "He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him." I've preached it a thousand times, but I'll mention it again: If you're wrong about Jesus, you're wrong about God. If you don't have Jesus, you don't have God. If you don't have Jesus Christ, you don't have God the Father. Read the first epistle of John, the doctrine of Christ. If you don't abide in the doctrine of Christ, you don't understand His deity, His incarnation, His humanity, then you don't have the doctrine of God. Without God the Son, you cannot have God the Father. If you reject the Son, then you are without the Father.

There are people that say, "Well, we just worship God. We don't worship Jesus. Why are you so into Jesus Christ? We're into God the Father or God." The truth is, Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." You can't get to the Father without the Son. There's "one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." It's so important to understand that. I believe that today the Mormons, the Jehovah's Witness', and a myriad of other false religions do not have God because they have rejected the Bible Jesus Christ. Without Jesus, you don't have God the Father. If you have a religious system that believes in God but rejects Jesus Christ, they don't have God. They are lost and they will perish. It's that simple. Jesus, again, said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." There is nothing more important than to be correct on your doctrine of Christ. You better make sure that you understand who Jesus is and that you have a relationship with Him as your Lord and Savior.

Jesus is also equal with the Father in resurrection life and power. So, equal in essence, equal in His works, equal in His power and sovereignty to give life (His life-giving power), equal in that He is the Judge (the Father has commissioned Him to be the Judge), and equal in honor (verse 23). Now (verses 24-30) we see that Jesus is equal in resurrection life and in power. "Verily, verily," again, truly, truly, "I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me," which is the Father, "hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. 25 Verily, verily I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. 26 For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; 27 And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. 28 Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, 29 And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. 30 I can of mine own self do nothing," again, that

doesn't mean that Jesus is not omnipotent. It means that Jesus doesn't work independently of the Father, that He always does what is the Father's will. So he says, "as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me." Jesus is equal with the Father in resurrecting the dead and giving them life.

Verse 24 is packed with some important doctrine. I want you to look at it. There are five pillars that I believe explains salvation and give us the doctrine of assurance. The first is we hear His Word. When you come to salvation in Christ, you hear the Word of God, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." The gospel is preached, the Word about Christ. The Word of God is involved. You hear the Word, and our salvation is based on the truth of God's revealed Word. Then it says, "and believeth on him that sent me," again, this is a reference to the Father; but in believing on the Father, notice what you believe about the Father: He sent the Son. You believe the Father, but you believe that God the Father sent God the Son. Now, this isn't just an intellectual belief, this is a commitment, a faith, or trust. Biblical faith is trusting in God. It's not just believing with your head. So, you hear the Word of God, you believe the Word of God, faith is involved, and then notice the result, "hath everlasting life."

One of the themes of John's gospel is light and life. Here's everlasting life. Now, this everlasting life is not just quantity, it's quality. It is a new dimension of life. It's spiritual life. You hear the Word, you respond by believing in faith Father sent the Son, and then you have everlasting life. You're born again, John 3. You have the life of God in your soul. "...and shall not come into condemnation," which would be the fourth pillar in our assurance, you will not come into condemnation. Jesus took our punishment. He died on the cross in our place. Romans 8:1 says, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus," period. That's where that verse stops. If you're in Christ, there's no condemnation. There can't be.

Last, but not least, notice at the end of verse 24, you "...passed from death unto life." Good news, amen? The moment you hear the Word, believe God the Father sent God the Son, you have everlasting life, you are born of the Spirit, you have the life of God in your soul, you are not going to be condemned, but you have "passed from death unto life." That word "passed" in the Greek is actually once and for all. The word that's used there indicates that you, once and for all, have passed from death into life, from darkness into light, from the kingdom of darkness into the Kingdom of God's dear Son. How marvelous that is!

In verse 25, Jesus says, "Verily, verily," truly, truly, or amen, amen, "I say unto you, The hour is coming," now, the first resurrection that Jesus describes here in verses 25-26 (you need to get this clear) is spiritual resurrection. It's the quickening and giving life to those who are spiritually dead. Jesus has the power of resurrection that is giving life to those who are dead in trespasses and sins. Notice what He says in verse 25, "The hour is coming, and now is," so the period of time is coming, but it's right now. It's talking about His present ministry. "...when the dead," and I believe here that it's a reference to dead spiritually, "shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." In Ephesians 2 it says, "Even when we were dead in sins," before you became a Christian, you were dead; and the Spirit of God convicted you of your sin,

you believed in Jesus Christ, you were regenerated. All that happened instantaneously, and you were quickened or resurrected or made alive spiritually. It says, "and they that hear shall live." Remember Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life.

In verse 26, "For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself," Jesus is the origin and the source of life even as God the Father. Then, He mentions judgment again (verse 27), "And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man," speaking of His humanity, He is suited now, who died on the cross, to judge mankind. So, "Marvel not at this." Now, in verse 28, He begins to speak about a physical resurrection. He's actually first described a spiritual quickening, that He gives life to those who are dead spiritually. Now, He's actually saying that on a future date, the hour is going to be coming in the future when I have been given authority and power to actually resurrect the dead. So (verse 28), "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice," this is talking not about the grave of sin but about the actual graves. Remember when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead? He said, "Lazarus, come forth." Did Lazarus hear Jesus? Yes. He came out, right? The fact that Lazarus came out of the grave indicates that he heard His voice. That's a picture of what the future holds when Jesus raises the righteous and even the unrighteous from their graves, so the hour is coming.

In verse 25, the hour is now. Now (verse 28), it's a future tense, "...for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, 29 And shall come forth; they that have done good," this is a very important verse, "unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." What is the resurrection of life, and what is the resurrection of damnation? The resurrection of life is the physical, bodily resurrection of all the saved or righteous dead. The resurrection of damnation is the physical, bodily resurrection of all those who are unsaved and lost and on their way to hell. You have two categories of people resurrected: those who are resurrected to life and those who are resurrected unto damnation. Now, don't misinterpret this passage and conclude that they are resurrected to life because they did good deeds. The good deeds are evidence of their salvation. They're not resurrected and righteous because they lived good lives, they lived good lives because they were righteous and had the life of God in their soul. The ones who are resurrected to damnation, they don't go to hell because they did evil deeds, they did evil deeds because they were unsaved or unregenerated. It's not the root, it's the fruit. It's the evidence of their salvation because the Bible is clear we're saved by grace through faith.

I want to say a couple of things more about these resurrections without getting too sidetracked. The resurrection of life has three phases to it. There isn't just one grand resurrection at the end of time of all the wicked dead. We preached on the rapture a week ago from Sunday, and we talked about the dead in Christ shall rise first. Here's what's called the first resurrection. If you're taking notes, you can make two columns: one on the left, the first resurrection, and one on the right, the second resurrection. The first resurrection are the saved resurrected to life. The second resurrection are the damned resurrected to damnation and judgment. The first part of the first resurrection is Jesus Christ. Jesus rose from the dead. Amen? So, He's the first fruits of those who sleep, Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15. That's the first phase of the first

resurrection. What's the second phase? The rapture. "...and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up," harpazo, "together...to meet the Lord in the air." The rapture involves translation of living saints, but first the resurrection of dead saints.

There's one more, third phase, to the first resurrection. Do you know what it is? It's the resurrection of the Old Testament saints and the tribulation saints. Do you know when it happens? At the end of the tribulation, so that they will have glorified bodies and enter into the Kingdom Age or the millennium. At the end of the tribulation, I believe, the Old Testament saints will live and reign with Christ for a thousand years. John says this is the first resurrection. The first resurrection is only the saved. It started with Christ, the rapture of the church, and then the dead saints from the Old Testament and the tribulation at the end of the tribulation.

Now, the second resurrection, only the wicked dead, is really easy to get because it only has one phase and only happens once. Do you know when that happens? At the end of the thousand-year millennial reign of Christ, and Revelation 20 describes it. It's called the great white throne judgment when Jesus sits upon the throne and the dead are resurrected, the books were opened, and their names are not found written in the books. They are cast into what's called the lake of fire, burning with fire and brimstone, which is also called the second death. They are resurrected out of the graves (some have the translation of hades or sheol), they are judged, and then they are thrown into what we know to be eternal hell. Don't let anyone tell you that there is no judgment, that the wicked will not be resurrected and stand in judgment. They will, and guess Who they're going to stand in judgement before? Jesus Christ. God has given all judgment unto the Son.

He closes in verse 30, "I can of mine own self do nothing," what it means is, "I don't do my own thing. I work in harmony and in unity with the Father. I do the Father's will." The same thing should be true of us. Find what God is doing, and let God use you to do His work. Don't try to create your own ministries. He says, "as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just," I highlighted that in my Bible, by the way, that God's judgment is just and righteous and perfect. "...because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me." We're going to stop right there. We still have more dialogue in the conclusion of this chapter where Jesus calls witnesses in to His deity and equality with God the Father.

In closing, I would say, like Jesus, that our will should be to do the will of the Father. Amen? We shouldn't want to work independently of Him, but we should want to work in harmony with Him.