

2025-02-16 - Believing His Testimony - John 4:43-5:47

Pastor Matt Johnson

Good morning, everyone. If you've got your Bibles. I want to invite you to open to John, Chapter 4, verse 43. This morning, as we move forward in our series "That You May Believe," we are coming to a point in the Gospel of John where we are going to see Jesus declare his authority, speak with his testimony, and offer judgment on those who will believe and those who will not believe.

Will you believe in the absolute authority of Jesus?

Our goal today as we keep moving forward in the Gospel of John is to answer the question: **Will you believe in the absolute authority of Jesus?** When you read these words, "absolute authority," I, as a millennial, think there's no such thing as absolutes, and authority is something you buck against. I don't know about you, but I think many of us really don't like absolutes unless they're the absolutes that we've chosen to be absolute. And none of us like authority unless we are the ones in control of that authority.

In the garden, the first rebellion was that we wanted to be like God; we wanted the authority that God has. Even though everything in our grasp, he has given us rule over, we don't like authority, and we do not like absolute authority. But will you believe that Jesus is the absolute authority, and it's good that he is? When absolute authority is good, it is a wonderful thing. So today, my question for you is: **Will you believe in the absolute authority of Jesus?**

To that end, I'm going to pray, and then we will jump into our passage.

Father in heaven, we thank you that you sent your Son. We thank you that you so loved the world that you gave your one and only Son, that for all who believe in him, we will not perish, but we will have eternal life. We thank you that through the work of your Son, we, all of humanity who were dead in our sin, for those who believe, you have made alive in Christ, and we have passed from death to life.

Father, I pray right now as we dig into your word today, I pray you would give us eyes to see and ears to hear what your word has to say. I pray you would open our eyes, that it would be abundantly clear above everything else, the absolute authority of your Son, the authority that you have given him because you love him. I pray, Lord, that your Spirit would work in our hearts and open our eyes that we would love him the same way. That is a work that we can only do if you have brought us to life. So, Lord, I pray you would bring to life anyone here who does not know you. I pray for myself, Lord; I pray you would speak to me and speak through me. I pray as we dig into this passage today, Lord, that it would be your words that come out, not mine. We thank you for your word, Lord. We thank you for your Son, and we thank you that you sent him. It is in his holy and precious name we pray. Amen.

Will you believe in the absolute authority of Jesus? That is the question we're going to answer today. I have to tell you something: I'm a little nervous about how fast I'm going to

stomp because we're going to cover a lot of ground today, and my goal is not to speak too fast.

As we read John 4:43-5:47, always keep in mind:

- Authority
- Testimony
- Judgement

As we go, I want to tell you the reason we're going to cover all this ground from John 4:43 through 5:47 is that in the Gospel of John, when you get to about Chapter 4, the stories start to get a lot longer. Next week, poor Pastor Matt Yamada has to do all of John Chapter 6, and then I have to do Chapters 7 and 8 because John starts to do these big units. What he's doing in them is showing the miracles of Jesus and Jesus interacting with people, and it always ends with a big teaching of Jesus. We need to understand this as we jump in because if we don't, it can seem like a bunch of disconnected things.

As we read today, we need to think about:

- Authority
- Testimony
- Judgment.

If you picked up a bulletin, you won't miss those words; they are in there three or four times: Authority, Testimony, and Judgment. If we have those words in mind, we will read this passage well. So with that, let's jump in.

After two days he left there for Galilee. (Jesus himself had testified that **a prophet has no honor in his own country.**) When they entered Galilee, **the Galileans welcomed him because they had seen everything he did in Jerusalem during the festival. For they also had gone to the festival.**

John 4:43-45 CSB

After two days, he left there for Galilee. Now Jesus himself had testified that a prophet has no honor in his own country. When they entered Galilee, the Galileans welcomed him because they had seen everything he did in Jerusalem during the festival, for they also had gone to the festival.

Now, in these starting verses, a lot of things happen. First off, when it says "after two days he left there," this refers to where we ended last week, in Samaria, in the town of Sychar. He was with the Samaritans, who are not his own people. He's not in his hometown. And what did they do? They received him and called him the savior of the world. Now he goes back among the Jews in Galilee, and it starts by telling us **a prophet has no honor in his own country.** But then immediately, it says when they entered Galilee, **the Galileans welcomed him.** You may think, "Well, it sure seems like they gave him honor," but they don't, and we're going to see that as we keep reading because the biggest tension

happening in John 4:43 through the end of Chapter 5 is that **people are willing to believe some of what Jesus says or some of what he does, but they don't believe the whole picture.**

The Galileans welcomed him because in John Chapter 2, when he was at the Passover feast, when he drove everyone out of the outer temple court, when he was teaching there and doing signs there, we're told everyone believed. But even when you read that in John Chapter 2, you see that Jesus did not entrust himself to those people because he knew what was in their hearts. Here, those same people have the same heart issue. They don't believe him on the terms they need to have life. They want to see the power and the signs, but they're missing the whole picture.

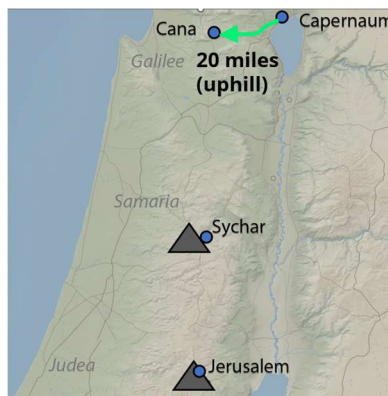
The Galileans believe what they have seen, not what Jesus has testified about himself. There is no true **honor** bestowed here.

The Galileans believe what they have seen, not what Jesus has testified about himself. There is no true honor bestowed here, as we will see.

He went again to Cana of Galilee, where he had turned water into wine. There was a certain royal official whose son was ill at Capernaum.

John 4:46-48 CSB

He went again to Cana of Galilee, where he had turned water into wine. There was a certain royal official whose son was ill at Capernaum. When it says "royal official," this is probably a Gentile. If it's a Jew, it's a Jew that the Jews all thought was basically a Gentile—someone working in the Roman ruling class. It wasn't a Roman ruler, but someone working under one of the Roman rulers in the area. This royal official had a sick son in Capernaum.



Now, if you look at a map, Capernaum is about 20 miles away from Cana, and it's uphill the whole way. Like how your grandparents used to go to school, it is uphill in every way, shape, and form. You've all heard that one, but I joke about this because it would have been an incredibly intense trip. As we read this, the fact that he went from Capernaum all the way to Cana right away should give us a picture of the desperation of this man. He's a royal official who takes this trip. As we keep reading, we find out he sees Jesus around 1:00 PM, probably because he found out Jesus was in Cana and the same day, at that same moment of desperation, knowing his son was going to die, he got up and left. He probably traveled

through the night, desperate to find Jesus because he had heard of the signs Jesus had done and he wants Jesus to heal his son.

If you're a parent, my kids have been really sick. You know that feeling of powerlessness, and you're willing to do whatever it takes just to know that they will get better. I am confident this man was desperate in his travel.

Before we go further, I want to say one other thing. There's this book called "The One O'Clock Miracle." By Alison Mitchell. I'm bringing this up because as I preach this story this week, (this is one of my children's favorite books, and if you're a parent or grandparent, this is one of my favorite book series about the Bible. If you're a parent trying to figure out what books to read with your kids, this is a wonderful book.) As I studied this passage this week, I kept thinking, "Wow, the visuals really tell the story, and the words match what's happening in the passage." It's simple enough for my 5-year-old daughter to understand. I just want to mention that as we go forward because this is one of those moments where it's an easy time to mention this series. Parents, grandparents, it's part of a series called "Tales That Tell the Truth." There are a bunch of them, and we love them. They really focus on how high up the hill he had to climb. It's wonderful.

He went again to Cana of Galilee, where he had turned the water into wine. There was a certain royal official whose son was ill at Capernaum. When this man heard that Jesus had come from Judea into Galilee, he went to him and pleaded with him to **come down** and heal his son, since he was about to die. Jesus told him, "Unless **you people** see signs and wonders, you will not **believe**."

John 4:46-48 CSB

Now, let's jump back to the passage. **When the man heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went to him and pleaded with him to come down and heal his son.** "Come with me. Come the 20-mile journey down and heal my son. **He is about to die.**" Jesus, in his response, says something curious: "**Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will not believe.**" He's talking to this royal official, but when he says "you people," this is second-person plural language. He's talking to all the people in Galilee. Remember, these people believe in him just because of his signs, but they don't believe on his word. When Jesus says this, he's speaking to the problem: **a prophet has no honor in his hometown.** They accept the signs but not the one delivering them.

"Sir," the official said to him, "**come down** before my boy dies." "Go," Jesus told him, "your son will live."

John 4:49 CSB

"Sir," the official said to him, "**come down** before my boy dies." He's saying, "I believe; please help me." Jesus says, "**Go, your son will live.**" "**Go, your son will live.**" He doesn't say, "I'll come with you." He just says, "Go, your son will live." This man, it's 1:00 PM. He's been traveling, hoping Jesus will say "OK" and they'll start the long journey back. Jesus says, "I'm not coming with you. Go, your boy will live."

“Sir,” the official said to him, “**come down** before my boy dies.” “Go,” Jesus told him, “your son will live.” The man **believed** what Jesus said to him and departed.

John 4:49-50 CSB

The man believed what Jesus said to him and departed. He believed Jesus at that word.

While he was still going down, his servants met him saying that his boy was alive. He asked them at what time he got better. “Yesterday at one in the afternoon the fever left him,” they answered. The father realized this was the very hour at which Jesus had told him, “Your son will live.” So he himself **believed**, along with his whole household. Now this was also the second sign Jesus performed after he came from Judea to Galilee.

John 4:51-54 CSB

While he was still going down, his servants met him, saying that his boy was alive. He asked them at what time he got better. "Yesterday at 1:00 in the afternoon, the fever left," they answered. The father realized that was the very hour at which Jesus had told him, "Your son will live." Jesus told him his son would live and at that moment he lives. Jesus has the authority to heal from 20 miles away. He is God. He has all power, he is everywhere. He has all of that and he displays it. **The man who believed Jesus at his word himself believed, along with his whole household. This was also the second sign Jesus performed after he came from Judea to Galilee.**

The Royal Official and Jesus (John 4:43-54)

Authority – Jesus showed his power to heal even from a distance

Testimony – Jesus said “Go, your boy will live.”

Judgment – The man and his whole household **believe** and have life in Jesus

Here we see Authority, Testimony, and Judgment. The royal official comes to Jesus.

1. Jesus displays his authority. He says he can heal even from a distance—there's nothing stopping his power.
2. His testimony is simple words: "Go, your boy will live." We see the man and his whole household believe and have life in Jesus.
3. The judgment is good for them because they believe—the keyword of John, "**believe**"—and they have life.

This is our first example of Authority, Testimony and Judgment.

After this, a Jewish festival took place, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. By the Sheep Gate in Jerusalem there is a pool, called Bethesda in Aramaic, which has five colonnades. Within these lay a large number of the disabled—blind, lame, and paralyzed.

John 5:1-3 CSB

So, we know a prophet has no honor in his hometown. Let's head down to his hometown.

After this, a Jewish festival took place, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. By the Sheep Gate in

Jerusalem, there's a pool called Bethesda in Aramaic, which has five colonnades. Within these lay a large number of the disabled, blind, lame, and paralyzed.

One man was there who had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had already been there a long time, he said to him, "Do you want to be healed?" The sick man answered him, "Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, and while I am going another steps down before me."

John 5:5-7 CSB

One man was there who had been an invalid for 38 years. When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had already been there a long time, he said to him, "Do you want to be healed?" When Jesus saw him, he already knew everything about him. We've seen this with Nathaniel, seen this with the woman at the well. Jesus knows the heart of every person before he even meets them. He knows your heart and what you need. His question to this man, **"Do you want to be healed?" The sick man answers him, "Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up. While I am going, another steps down before me."**

When you hear this, you may think, "Why doesn't he just say yes?" That would be a better answer, right? "Yes." But in their day, this pool at Bethesda was a place where there was a superstition among the Jews that every once in a while, the water would stir up. The people thought that was an angel of the Lord, and whoever got in the water first would be healed. So, what the man says to Jesus is an attempt to stir Jesus to compassion. He's saying, "Sir, I do want to be healed, but I can't get to the water quick enough." He's essentially asking, "Would you take me in if the water stirs up?" And Jesus doesn't take him in if the water stirs up.

"Get up," Jesus told him, "pick up your mat and walk." Instantly the man got well, picked up his mat, and started to walk.

John 5:8-9a CSB

Instead, Jesus says, **"Get up, pick up your mat and walk," and instantly the man got well, picked up his mat, and started to walk.** Jesus doesn't need to carry him down there; he has all the power. He speaks and tells the man what to do, and the man is well.

Now, prepare yourselves because this is about to get real upsetting. Now, that day was the Sabbath. Good, good, whoever said, "Oh, my goodness." Good job, good job, good job. In that day, on the Sabbath, to pick up your mat and walk would have been the most devastating thing you could do because you cannot profane the Sabbath by working on the Sabbath. The Jewish people, the Jewish leaders at that time, over the course of Jewish history, came up with all of these rules and regulations, not in the Bible. But they said there are like 30-some things that if you do, it counts as work on the Sabbath. One of them was if you picked up your mat or your rug or your bedroll and moved it from point A to point B on the Sabbath. For shame! You are sinning in the highest order.

Now that day was the Sabbath, and so the Jews said to the man who had been healed, "This is the Sabbath. The law prohibits you from picking up your mat." He replied, "The

man who made me well told me, 'Pick up your mat and walk.' "Who is this man who told you, 'Pick up your mat and walk?'" they asked. But the man who was healed did not know who it was, because Jesus had slipped away into the crowd that was there.

John 5:9b-13 CSB

Now, you may be wondering, "Why does the guy ask Jesus to essentially pick him up and put him in the water?" Well, there's an exception to this. If you had compassion on someone who was blind or lame, you could serve them. You could pick them up or guide them on the Sabbath, and that was different. But for a man who was formerly paralyzed to pick up his mat and walk even a step would have been the most devastating thing in the world, according to the Jews.

So the man picks up his mat and walks, and the Jews said to the man—and when it says "the Jews," it's referring to the Jewish leaders—they say to the man who had been healed, **"This is the Sabbath. The law prohibits you from picking up your mat."** Notice what they don't say: "Who healed you?" **He replied, "The man who made me well told me, 'Pick up your mat and walk.'"** They don't say, "Who's the man who made you well?" **They say, "Who is this man who told you, 'Pick up your mat and walk?'" But the man who was healed did not know who it was because Jesus had slipped away into the crowd that was there.**

You know how through this series, every time the word "believe" comes up, it's in orange? It's kind of missing here, right?

After this, Jesus found him in **the temple** and said to him, "See, you are well. Do not sin anymore, so that something worse doesn't happen to you." The man went and reported to the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well.

John 5:14-15 CSB

After this, Jesus found the man who had been healed in the temple. And before I go any further, I want to tell you there's an incredible thing happening right now. This man who's been lame, he's been paralyzed 38 years. In the Jewish culture of that day, that meant he couldn't go to the temple. Probably for the first time in his life, he's welcome in the temple, in the place where heaven and Earth meet, where God and his people can dwell together. Jesus finds him there and says to him, "See, you are well. Where you're standing, you are well."

And then he says, **"Do not sin anymore, so that something worse doesn't happen to you."** Now, when we read these words, some people think "do not sin anymore" means that he was paralyzed because of sin. But as we'll see later in the Gospel of John, that's a very simplistic way to think. That's not really what's happening. Jesus here is saying, "Do not sin." Jesus is saying right now, **"Repent,"** because this man who has been healed by Jesus has yet to **believe**. When Jesus finishes saying, "So that something worse doesn't happen to you," because what's worse than being lame and paralyzed your whole life? Hell. And Jesus here is saying, **"Repent."** But the man doesn't believe. Instead, **he goes and reports to the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well.**

It's a very disappointing story. He gets the power of Jesus healing him. But from that point forward, he doesn't **believe** what Jesus is saying. He doesn't follow after. He has such an incomplete picture, and he's blind.

And here we see our second example of Authority, Testimony, and Judgment.

The Paralyzed Man and Jesus (John 5:1-15)

Authority – Jesus showed his authority to heal the man (on the Sabbath)

Testimony – Jesus warned the man to stop sinning

Judgment – The man rejects Jesus and shows he does not have life

Jesus has shown his authority to heal a man on the Sabbath, and we'll talk about the Sabbath part in a moment when Jesus talks to the Jewish leaders. Jesus warns the man to stop. He's warning the man to turn to him as the source of life. Yet the man rejects Jesus. He shows he does not have life. If he had life in this passage, in the Gospel of John, when someone has life, that word "believe" shows up. This man does not believe, despite thirty-eight (38) years, being healed in a moment, he does not believe; he misses it.

Therefore (This is why), the Jews began persecuting Jesus because he was doing these things on the Sabbath. Jesus responded to them, "My Father is still working, and I am working also." **This is why** the Jews began trying all the more to kill him: Not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal to God.

John 5:16-18 CSB

Then we come to the interaction between Jesus and the Jewish leaders. **Therefore, the Jews begin persecuting Jesus**, and the word "therefore" could be translated as "**This is why**," and I think "**This is why**" is the stronger word. It shows up again later, the same word there. **This is why the Jews begin persecuting Jesus, because he was doing these things on the Sabbath. Jesus responded to them, "My Father is still working, and I am working also."** Now they were persecuting him because he did this on the Sabbath. When he says these words, "**This is why the Jews began trying all the more to kill him, not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal to God.**"

When Jesus says, "My Father is still working," everyone in that day believed that God was at work all the time, even on the Sabbath. When God created the heavens and the earth in six days, he created everything. On the 7th day, he rested. Even when God is resting, everything is held together by him. That is, it's in the Old Testament. In the New Testament, all things are held together by God. When Jesus says, "And I am working also," he's saying, "I've got the same level of authority as God." He's calling God his Father and saying, "I'm allowed to work on the Sabbath."

By the way, when we go to the book of Colossians, we're told He, **Jesus, is before all things, and by Him all things are held together.**

So as Jesus is talking to them, he's even holding together creation in that moment. And so what he is telling them is completely true. But their response to seeing this miracle, to seeing what he is doing, is they first, they're persecuting him, saying he's wrong, and by the end of it, they're ready to kill him. And by the way, they're successful [Pastor Matt points to the cross] by the end of John. But when we get there, they're not the ones in control. Even in the agony of the Crucifixion, Jesus is the authority and in control.

But I tell you this because when we read this, when Jesus says these words, he is saying above any shadow of a doubt that he is God. He is saying he is the Son of God. Everyone in that day, in that culture, would have had no doubt about what Jesus was saying. For them, when he says this, a switch flips. When he says it, they have to say, "We are going to kill this man," because if they don't kill him, they have to agree with him. But at this point, they fully reject him even as they see him do this miracle, even as they see him show this authority on the Sabbath.

By the way, the Jewish people would believe that if somebody was doing miracles in the name of God, if they were working, it was because God was in them. So the fact that he's doing this on the Sabbath speaks to how true his testimony is. But the Jewish leaders can't accept that. "Did you see that guy holding his bed mat?" That's what they were focused on. And when Jesus says, "I have the same authority as God," they are not willing to believe, even though the only way he could do what he's doing in front of them is if he had what he claimed to have.

The Jewish Leaders and Jesus (5:16-18)

Authority – Jesus has healed on the Sabbath

Testimony – Jesus declares himself the Son of God (equal to God)

Judgment – The Jewish leaders decide to kill the one who gives life

So we see the Jewish leaders:

- Jesus is healed on the Sabbath,
- He declares himself the Son of God or equal to God.
- Out of this, the Jewish leaders decide to kill the one who gives life.

That's where they land, they don't believe his Authority. They don't believe his Testimony. Now, how they don't **believe** his Authority, I have no idea. But we see in the next few chapters how hard they work to not believe what he's saying.

But we've now seen three examples, and this is in your notes. I know it's real tiny up here, but we've seen Jesus show his authority first to the royal official, then to the paralyzed man, and finally to the Jewish leaders. We've seen his testimony. And we've seen three responses: the royal official and his household believe, the paralyzed man rejects, and the Jewish leaders are ready to kill. In those three examples, we're forced to come away thinking about why they are so different.

	The Royal Official and Jesus <i>John 4:43-54</i>	The Paralyzed Man and Jesus <i>John 5:1-15</i>	The Jewish Leaders and Jesus <i>John 5:16-18</i>
Authority	Jesus showed his power to heal even from a distance	Jesus showed his authority to heal a man (on the Sabbath)	Jesus has healed on the Sabbath
Testimony	Jesus said "Go, your boy will live"	Jesus warned the man to stop sinning	Jesus declares himself the son of God
Judgment	The man and his whole household believe and have life	The man rejects Jesus and shows he does not have life	The Jewish leaders decide to kill the one who gives life

Jesus teaches on Authority, Testimony, and Judgment (5:19-47)

It's here that we see Jesus teaching. For the rest of our time, we're going to be in Jesus' response to the Jewish leaders, but really to all three of these as he talks about why a prophet has no honor in his hometown and how he talks about his own testimony.

Authority (John 5:19-30)

So we're going to look first at his Authority in John 5:19-30. In these verses, Jesus begins:

<p>Jesus replied, "Truly I tell you, the Son is not able to do anything on his own, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, the Son likewise does these things. For the Father loves the Son and shows him everything he is doing, and he will show him greater works than these so that you will be amazed. And just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so the Son also gives life to whom he wants.</p> <p align="right">John 5:19-21 CSB</p>

Jesus replied, "Truly, I tell you, the Son is not able to do anything on his own, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, the Son likewise does these things. For the Father loves the Son and shows him everything he is doing, and he will show him greater works than these so that you will be amazed. And just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so the Son also gives life to whom he wants."

Now, we're talking about two persons of the Trinity, the Father and the Son. When we read this, Jesus is making very clear that he is unique from the Father. There's the Father and there's the Son. And what Jesus does, he does because it's what he sees the Father doing, and the Father loves him. I want to tell you something: as I start talking about this, the Trinity to me is the most wonderful and overwhelming concept. There's God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. God in three persons. They are all unique and distinct, yet they are all one. It is beyond my ability to fathom and yours as well. It is beyond human understanding, but we see it testified again and again in Scripture.

So when Jesus is saying these things, he is talking about his unique purpose as part of the Trinity. He's also talking about what he does at the behest of and because he sees the Father doing. Jesus is not going off on his own. He's not like the Greek gods, who had

children and their children did whatever they wanted and rebelled. The Father and the Son are united. The works that the Son does, he does because the Father has set those before him.

When Jesus says, "***Just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so the Son also gives life to whom he wants,***" Jesus is talking about people in this life who are dead because they don't have life in him. He's not talking about the final death; we'll get there. But he's talking about those who do not have life in Christ in the present of when he is speaking.

Authority (John 5:19-30)

The works of the Son are dependent on the works of the Father (19-21)

So the first thing we see here is the works of the Son are dependent on the works of the Father. I know you may be thinking that's a really simple way of summarizing all those verses. That's because that's the key idea. Jesus talks about how his works are dependent on the works of the Father. He's not on his own. It's the Father. God so loved the world that he sent his one and only Son. Jesus in the garden before he's crucified, he says, "Not my will, but yours be done." The whole time he is on earth, he does the will of the Father, and he is completely obedient in it.

The Father, in fact, judges no one but has given all judgment to the Son, so that all people may **honor** the Son just as they **honor** the Father. Anyone who does not **honor** the Son does not **honor** the Father who sent him. Truly I tell you, anyone who hears my word and **believes** him who sent me has eternal life and will not come under judgment but has passed from death to life.

John 5:22-24 CSB

We go on: "***The Father, in fact, judges no one but has given all judgment to the Son, so that all people may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. Anyone who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him. Truly, I tell you, anyone who hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not come under judgment but has passed from death to life.***"

When Jesus here talks about honor—do you remember our keyword at the beginning? "***A prophet is not honored in his hometown.***" Jesus here is talking about, "I'm in front of you right now. I am the Son of God, and you are rejecting me. Anyone who does not honor the Son cannot and does not honor the Father who sent him." Jesus says that the way to honor the Father, truly, "***I tell you, anyone who hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and has passed from death to life.***"

Authority (John 5:19-30)

The works of the Son are dependent on the works of the Father (19-21)

The Son has been given authority to judge by the Father (22-24)

Out of this, we see that the Son has been given authority to judge by the Father. And he's judging based on whether or not you believe in his name, you believe his word, and you give him honor. You cannot give the Father honor unless you give honor to the Son. So we see the authority that has been given to him from the Father means we need to honor him as well.

Truly I tell you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. For just as the Father has life in himself, so also he has granted to the Son to have life in himself. And he has granted him the right to pass judgment, because he is the Son of Man.

John 5:25-27 CSB

Jesus goes on to talk about the length and width of his authority, the scope of his authority: ***"Truly, I tell you, an hour is coming and is now here when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. For just as the Father has life in himself, so also he has granted to the Son to have life in himself. And he has granted him the right to pass judgment because he is the Son of Man."*** Jesus has authority over all who are alive.

Do not be amazed at this, because a time is coming when all who are in the graves will hear his voice and come out—those who have done good things, to the resurrection of life, but those who have done wicked things, to the resurrection of condemnation. I can do nothing on my own. I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, because I do not seek my own will, but the will of him who sent me.

John 5:28-30 CSB

Yet Jesus goes on, ***"Be amazed by this because the time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out—those who have done good things to the resurrection of life, but those who have done wicked things to the resurrection of condemnation. I can do nothing on my own; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just because I do not seek my own will, but the will of him who sent me."***

Authority (John 5:19-30)

The works of the Son are dependent on the works of the Father (19-21)

The Son has been given authority to judge by the Father (22-24)

The Son has all authority over life for the living and the dead (25-30)

Jesus here speaks to the fact that his **authority is over the living and the dead.**

The Son has all authority over life for the living and the dead. Jesus has been given that authority by God the Father, and it is his to judge. He was before all things; all things were created by him and for him and through him. There is not a human who does not fall under the judgment of Jesus. But those who believe have life. Those who don't believe have the resurrection of judgment. You're going to spend an eternity in hell, separated from God. You're not going to have life in him. You're going to live in death for all eternity. I know I say live in death, but that's the image here—the resurrection of judgment for all who reject the Son and all who don't turn and believe the Son. Hell. That's all there is to it. You'll never

have life because life only comes from him, and he has the authority to judge the living and the dead. There is no one outside the judgment. There is no other authority. There aren't certain people who get to have a separate idea because they follow a different religion. Jesus is the sole authority over all the living and all the dead. His authority is complete, and he is the only source of life.

Testimony (John 5:31-40)

This brings us to his Testimony. As he finishes this, he goes on to start talking about why he can say these things, has this Authority, and if someone asks, "Who put you in charge? How do we know what you're saying is true?"

If I testify about myself, my testimony is not true. There is another who testifies about me, and I know that the testimony he gives about me is true. You sent messengers to John, and he testified to the truth. I don't receive human testimony, but I say these things so that you may be saved. John was a burning and shining lamp, and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light.

John 5:31-35 CSB

Here's where he starts: "***If I testify about myself, my testimony is not true.***" Jesus says this to these Jewish leaders, and you may be thinking, "Wait, so could Jesus say a lie?" No, Jesus here is saying, "You won't believe me if I tell you myself. ***But there is another who testifies about me, and I know that the testimony he gives about me is true.***" Then he goes on to these Jewish leaders and says, "You sent messengers to John in John Chapter 1:19 and on, the Jewish leaders sent messengers to John the Baptist and said, 'Are you Elijah? Are you the Prophet? Are you the Messiah?' And John said, 'No', 'no', 'no'. 'I'm not the Messiah.' He went on to say, 'Look, that guy right there,' pointing at Jesus, 'that's the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. That is the Son of God.' John points to Jesus and testifies about who Jesus is. And Jesus here is saying, '***You sent messengers to John, and he testified to the truth. I don't receive human testimony.***' Jesus is saying, 'I don't need this testimony, but I say these things so that you may be saved. ***John was a burning and shining lamp, and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light.*** For a little while, you seemed like you were ready.'

Testimony (John 5:31-40)

The Son's authority was testified by John the Baptist (31-35)

But Jesus here is saying, '***My testimony has been testified by John the Baptist.*** You've heard it from his mouth that I am the Messiah.'

But I have a greater testimony than John's because of the works that the Father has given me to accomplish. These very works I am doing testify about me that the Father has sent me. The Father who sent me has himself testified about me. You have not heard his voice at any time, and you haven't seen his form. You don't have his word residing in you, because you don't **believe** the one he sent.

John 5:36-38 CSB

Jesus goes on: "***But I have a greater testimony than John's because of the works that the Father has given me to accomplish. These very works I am doing testify about me that the***

Father has sent me. Works like healing a boy from 20 miles away; works like healing a paralytic on the Sabbath. **The Father who sent me has himself testified about me. You have not heard his voice at any time, and you haven't seen his form. You don't have his word residing in you because you don't believe the one he sent.** Jesus here is saying the testimony of the works I'm doing should be enough. I want to tell you there's a deep irony.

Testimony (John 5:31-40)

The Son's authority was testified by John the Baptist (31-35)

The Son's works he does through the Father are a testimony to his authority (36-38)

Jesus here is talking about the works he does through the Father and how they are a testimony to his authority. And do you know who has told Jesus he is sent from the Father? One of the Jewish leaders, Nicodemus. In John Chapter 3. **"Rabbi, we know that you've been sent by God because of the signs you are doing."** Those are the words of one of the Jewish leaders, and he doesn't just say "I know," he says "We know." They all think Jesus is doing these works on behalf of God the Father until he tells a guy to hold a bedroll on the Sabbath. Jesus here is not just speaking to the testimony of the Father but the testimony from one of their own's mouth. But he's focused on the testimony of the Father, and he's reminding them they've already testified to that authority too.

You pore over the Scriptures because you think you have eternal life in them, and yet they testify about me. But you are not willing to come to me so that you may have life.

John 5:39-40 CSB

He goes on: **"You pour over the scriptures because you think that you will have eternal life in them, and yet they testify about me. But you are not willing to come to me so that you may have life."**

Testimony (John 5:31-40)

The Son's authority was testified by John the Baptist (31-35)

The Son's works he does through the Father are a testimony to his authority (36-38)

The Scriptures testify to the authority of Jesus (39-40)

Here **Jesus says the scriptures testify to the authority of Jesus.** I want to tell you, the scriptures—the author of the scriptures—there are human authors, but the ultimate author of the scriptures is the Holy Spirit. Every word, every pen stroke is from the Spirit of God. So here in the testimony, we start with John the Baptist, the earthly testimony of one sent from God. But then we see the testimony of the Father, the testimony of the Son, and the testimony of the Spirit, all united. Jesus here is showing that his testimony—there's nothing greater than the testimony of God, and he's pointing it out in two different ways. And yet they don't believe.

Judgement (John 5:41-47)

You do not have life because you do not love the Father (41-42)

We come to the Judgment in verses 41 through 47: **"I do not accept glory from people, but I know you and you have no love for God within you."** Jesus knows their hearts, and he tells them, **"You do not have life because you do not love the Father."** Jesus makes it very

clear: "You do not love the Father. If you loved the Father, you would love the one he sent. You do not have life because you do not love the Father."

I do not accept glory from people, but I know you—that you have no love for God within you.

John 5:41-42 CSB

These are not soft words Jesus is using when he says that **"you have no love for God within you."** He's talking to the religious leaders in the temple, and he is rebuking them, condemning them. He is saying, "You have no life because you have no love for God."

I have come in my Father's name, and yet you don't accept me. If someone else comes in his own name, you will accept him. How can you **believe**, since you accept glory from one another but don't seek the glory that comes from the only God?

John 5:43-44 CSB

He goes on: **"I have come in my Father's name, and yet you don't accept me. If someone else comes in his own name, you will accept him. How can you believe, since you accept glory from one another but don't seek the glory that comes from the only God?"**

Judgment (John 5:41-47)

You do not have life because you do not love the Father (41-42)

You do not have life because you love the things of this earth (43-44)

Jesus here is saying, **"You do not have life because you love the glory of this earth."**

I want to tell you, when Jesus says these words to them, they do accept the testimony of other earthly leaders. In the time that people would have read the Gospel of John, around 90 AD, when John wrote it, the temple had been destroyed. How was the temple destroyed? The Jews rose up together under the leadership of one man and said, "Let's go kill all these Romans. Let's take back the Holy Land for ourselves." They were willing to accept that testimony. When Jesus is about to be crucified, who do the people cry out for? They say, "We want Barabbas," who was a revolutionary, someone who was an insurrectionist trying to overthrow the Romans.

They're willing to accept those things, but the Son of God, displaying the power of God again and again, they reject. You do not have life because you love the things of this earth. He tells them, "You're willing to accept the testimony of one another, but when you see power displayed in front of you and hear my testimony, you're unwilling to accept it as it is."

Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father. Your accuser is Moses, on whom you have set your hope. For if you **believed** Moses, you would **believe** me, because he wrote about me. But if you don't **believe** what he wrote, how will you **believe** my words?"

He goes on: **"Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father."** And he's got all authority to judge them. And here he says, "I'm not even going to need to accuse you. **Your accuser is**

Moses, on whom you have set your hope." Now, this doesn't mean that Moses, on judgment day, is going to be the prosecution. What Jesus is talking about here is this: **"For if you believed Moses, you would believe me because he wrote about me."** He's talking about Genesis through Deuteronomy. The books you hold as the law of God—those books speak to me, and I'm standing in front of you and you don't realize it. By the way, there is a deep irony here as he talks to the Jewish leaders in the temple because last week he was with Samaritans, who only believed in the writings of Moses, and they received him. **Jesus says, "If you don't believe what he wrote, how will you believe my words?"**

Judgment (John 5:41-47)

You do not have life because you do not love the Father (41-42)

You do not have life because you love the things of this earth (43-44)

You do not have life because you cling to the law for life, and it reveals you deserve death (45-47)

He is saying, "You stand accused because you think your righteousness is in the law, and you don't realize it's me." **You do not have life because you cling to the law for life, and it reveals you deserve death.**

Jesus tells them, "You don't love the Father. You love the things of the earth, and what you think brings you righteousness, what you cling to for life, reveals you deserve death and already have death." Where he ends—and then we're going to see again next week as he interacts with the Jews again and teaches again, and they're going to reject him again. But in each of these stories, they miss because they do not believe his words at his word.

Will you **believe** in the absolute authority of Jesus?

But will you? **Will you believe in the absolute authority of Jesus?** Will you believe his authority, the testimony about his authority, and will you accept that he's the one who can and does judge? Will you believe in the absolute authority of Jesus? I've got three questions tied to this.

Will you believe in the absolute authority of Jesus?

*Will you **believe** that He alone will judge the living and the dead?*

First off, **will you believe that he alone will judge the living and the dead?** I hope your answer to this is yes, but I want to tell you, I talk to Christians—and I say "Christians" from time to time—who think that Christianity is a religion for people who want to be Christian, who think it will help them sleep through the night or be a better person. And the idea that I hear sometimes from people is that Christianity is good for those who want it. It's a human-centered message for humans. The problem is, if you read everything Jesus is saying, he's speaking to his unique Authority. All things were created by him and for him and through him. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. Jesus is not just judging people who say they follow. All of humanity is made in the image of God, and all of humanity will be judged by Jesus. The good news of this is that for those who believe, we're not judged in our death, but we are given life in Christ.

Will you believe that he alone will judge the living and the dead? There's not some other way. Jesus later on in the Gospel of John is going to say, "***I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.***" He calls himself the way. He says we need life; he says we are dead without him. He says the way to have life is to believe in his name.

Will you believe in the absolute authority of Jesus?

Will you believe that He alone will judge the living and the dead?

Will you believe the Father, Son, and Spirit are united in their testimony?

So, **will you believe that he alone will judge the living and the dead? Will you believe the Father, Son, and Spirit are united in their testimony?**

One of the most maddening things in the world for me is when people say, "I think Jesus was a good teacher," or "I think he's got a lot of good points." C.S. Lewis has a wonderful quote about this that I'm regretting not making a slide for right now. But people will think, "Oh, I'm good with that Jesus guy, but not with the judgment, not with all that other stuff." And here's the problem: if Jesus is just a good teacher, when you read his word, if you come away thinking, "Oh, all that stuff about hell and all that stuff about judgment, that's all a lie. That's what other people say." You can't get a picture of Jesus without that from Scripture. It's what he said. Jesus doesn't hide those things. It's not other people who say later on, "Oh, this or that." No, Jesus speaks to these things. The Father speaks to these things, the Son does, and the Spirit does. They are united in their testimony. You can't pick and choose what you take from the Gospel. It is an all-or-nothing thing.

Will you believe in the absolute authority of Jesus?

Will you believe that He alone will judge the living and the dead?

Will you believe the Father, Son, and Spirit are united in their testimony?

Will you believe that all who reject him will never have life?

Will you believe the Father, Son, and Spirit are united in their testimony? And lastly, **will you believe that all who reject him will never have life?** I want to tell you, when I wrote this slide, I felt good about it, and it's in your bulletins. Then, as I was thinking about it, there's a word here I don't like, and I left it in your bulletins on purpose—not because we printed it this morning, so it wasn't that. But that word "will"—that's a word that needs to be crossed out.

Will you believe in the absolute authority of Jesus?

Will you believe that He alone will judge the living and the dead?

Will you believe the Father, Son, and Spirit are united in their testimony?

Will you believe that all who reject him ~~will~~ never have life?

If you've got your bulletin, cross it out right now. Because if Jesus is the source of life, **will you believe that all who reject him never have life at all?** That's the picture throughout

Scripture. That's what we see in John 3. We were condemned, and we don't have life until Jesus comes and saves us from the death we're in. To pass from death to life is a work of the Holy Spirit. When we are born again, we don't start alive. As hard as that is to accept, because I think, "Well, I'm breathing, I have life," the life being talked about here—from the moment the man and woman in the garden sinned and rebelled against God, death reigned. Outside of the work of Christ, we have no access to true life, which is found in him.

So, **will you believe that all who reject him never have life?** He is the only source of life. That's what he's teaching today in John Chapter 5. You're not going to get there if you just study the word on your own. You're not going to get there by your own works, by your own attempts at righteousness. There is nothing we can do to come to life. In Ephesians, it says, "We were dead in our trespasses and sins." We were walking corpses, but God, through his great love, by grace you have been saved. It is a work of God. You are unable to change yourself from dead to alive, but Christ came that we might pass from death to life if we believe and if we are born again through a work of the Spirit.

So my question for you, as we close, is: **Will you believe?** Throughout this series, we've been asking every week:

- Will you **believe**?
- Will you **believe** he's the living water?
- Will you **believe** you find life in his name?
- Will you **believe** he is the absolute authority?
- Do you **believe** that Jesus Christ is the Son of God who died for your sins, who rose, and who reigns?
- Do you **believe** that you can only have life in his name?

If you're a **believer** here and you're doing well, and as you listen, you're like, "This is true. I know this is true, and I'm living well," my challenge for you today is to be praying for those you know and be trying to show them the truth of the gospel. If you know others who do not know, pray for them. Be with them, lift them up. If you know believers who are struggling, come alongside them and remind them of the life they have in Christ. If you're doing well in your faith, that means help others see that life.

If you're a **believer** here and you're struggling, I want to tell you that I talk to believers sometimes who are really good with the death of Jesus, but they really want their own life. I've been guilty of that in the past. That's something I've been convicted of deeply before. There are people I know who believe Jesus died for their sins and they want that—they want to go to heaven—but they want to live their life their way. They're like the paralytic man whose body got healed, but who wants to now do all the things he didn't get to do, not even recognizing that the source of all life is the one who told him, "Get up, take your mat, and walk."

If you are here today and you want Jesus' death, but you want your own life, you have misunderstood the gospel to its core because it is his death and it is his life in you. If you settle for something less than that, you have not found life. I pray if you're in that position, if you're sitting here and you're feeling uncomfortable or feeling conviction, pray and cry out and confess, "I'm settling for my own life, but I want the life that you give."

If you're here today and you're not a believer, and as you hear this message, you are saying, "I think I'm dead as I hear this and as I think of the implications. I'm dead in my sin." If that's where you are, I want to tell you that you don't have to stay dead. I would encourage you, even now, to pray and cry out, saying, "Lord Jesus, you are the source of life. Jesus, you died for my sins, you rose from the grave, and you reign in heaven. I am dead in my sin, but you died that my sin could be forgiven, and you are Lord. I want the life you offer." I encourage you, if you are not a believer, to pray those words even now. Don't hesitate if you're feeling that. I pray the Spirit would just draw those words out of you.

We can have life in Christ. There is no life outside of Christ. He who has all that authority, who with a word brought creation into existence, he who is fully God came, lived, died for our sin, and rose and reigns. He did all that so we could have life in his name.

Let's pray:

Father in heaven, we thank you that you so loved us, that you sent your Son. We thank you that he came so that we could pass from death to life through his work on the cross and through the work of your Spirit. Father, we thank you for your testimony, for the testimony of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, that takes us from dead in our sins to alive in you.

Lord, I pray for everyone here, for those who are following you well, that as they sit here, they would just be in awe and marvel at what you have done and that they would allow others to see the life they have. And Lord, for those who are here struggling, who want what you have to offer but want it on their terms and want their own way, I pray you would humble them even now, that they would confess, that they would turn to you, that they would not settle only for your authority, but they would believe your testimony about yourself, would believe you at your word, and would have true life and everlasting life.

And Lord, I pray if there's anyone here today who passed from death to life for the first time, who believed in the name of your Son for the first time, I pray, Lord, that you would just be building them up, that even now you would be celebrating. I know there is rejoicing in heaven over lost sheep that have come home. Lord, I pray even now that you would open their eyes as we sing this last song. We praise you, Lord, for your work and the work of your Son. It's in your name we pray. Amen.

Benediction: In the prologue of John, it says, **"The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was created through him, and yet the world did not recognize him. He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, he gave them the right to be children of God, to those who believe in his name, who were born not of natural descent, or of the will of flesh, or of the will of man, but of God."**

If you are here today for the first time and became a believer today, I want to encourage you: You are now a child of God, and I'd love to talk with you. If you are a follower of Jesus, you are a child of God. Go in peace.