

## Like Father, Like Son

*John 5:19-24*

**Thought for the Day.** Because He is God, Jesus Christ has the authority to give eternal life to all who trust in Him for salvation.

Jesus has performed a great miracle; He has healed a man who had been an invalid for 38 years. He deliberately chose to perform this miracle on the Jewish Sabbath in order to challenge the spiritually dead legalism of the Jewish religious leaders. In the process, He has claimed to be the Lord of the Sabbath, the very Son of God, God in human flesh! For this reason, the Jewish leaders began to persecute Jesus and actually began seeking a way to put Him to death. So, in John 5:19-29, Jesus sets forth His authority and His justification for His actions. He tells them that He is going to perform even greater works than those they have already seen: 1) He's going to raise the dead; and 2) He's going to be the Judge of all mankind. He warns them that, if they do not honor Him as they honor the Father, then they are not, in fact, honoring God. And then, He graciously explains to them what they (and we) must do to avoid His judgment and receive God's gift of eternal life.

**19 So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise.**

- How did Jesus "see" what His Father was doing in heaven?
  - Jesus knew and understood the will, purpose, and plans of God by studying the Word of God, by spending much time in prayer and fellowship with His heavenly Father, and by being led and empowered by the Holy Spirit.
  - Jesus modeled for us the victorious, fruitful Christian life!
- "This does not mean that He did not have the power to do anything by Himself, but that He was so closely united with God that He could only do the very things which He saw His Father doing. For while the Lord claimed equality with the Father, He did not claim independency too. He is not independent of [the Father] although He is fully equal with Him."

"The Lord Jesus clearly intended the Jews to think of Him as equal with God. It would be absurd for a mere man to claim to do the very things which God Himself does. Jesus claims to see what the Father is doing. In order to make such a claim, He must have continual access to the Father and complete knowledge of what is going on in heaven. Not only so, but Jesus claims to do the very thing which He sees the Father do. This is certainly an assertion of His equality with God." (*MacDonald, p. 1449*)

**20 For the Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing.**

- Because of their intimate relationship, "the Son always knows what the Father is doing and works in harmony with him to see it accomplished." (*Life Application Commentary Series*)
- Jesus was clearly a student of the Scriptures – Luke 2:40; 2:52
  - Jesus did not just instantly know the Scriptures because He was God; He had to study and learn them just like we do.
  - He knew the Scriptures because He studied the Scriptures!

- Jesus was devoted to prayer – Luke 6:12; Mark 1:35; Matthew 14:23
  - We frequently see Jesus resorting to prayer in the Gospels, and this is the reason why—that He might discern and do the will of His heavenly Father, that He might “see” what His heavenly Father was doing.
- Jesus was continually full of and empowered by the Holy Spirit – Matthew 3:16; Luke 4:1, 14-15, 18; 10:21; Matthew 12:27-28; John 3:34
  - These exact same resources are available to you and me!
  - If we fail to know and understand what God is doing, if we are unable to discern His will, if we are not busy doing His work, it is because we are not in the Word, we are not praying, and we are not filled with the Holy Spirit. We are operating in our own human strength, according to our own feeble thinking, in isolation from God rather than in intimate fellowship with Him.

**And greater works than these will he show him, so that you may marvel.**

- In harmony with His heavenly Father, Jesus was going to prove His identity and His authority by means of even greater works!

**21 For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will.**

- Jesus was claiming a power which belongs exclusively to God!
- Jesus demonstrated that power when: 1) He raised the widow’s son in the town of Nain (Luke 7); and 2) when He raised Lazarus from the dead (John 11).

**22 The Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, 23 that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him.**

- There are many people today who claim to honor God but the reality is, if they do not honor Jesus Christ, they are not truly honoring God. They are dishonoring God by dishonoring His Son, whom He sent.
- “Here Jesus was referring to that time when everyone will recognize his lordship. Paul described that event in this way: “Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Philippians 2:9-11 *NIV*). The tragedy will be that many will then recognize Jesus' true nature but will have lost the opportunity to receive his saving help. Those unwilling to honor Christ now will discover that they have not been honoring the Father either. People should not say they believe in God while ignoring the power and authority of his Son.” (*Life Application Commentary Series*)
- “Many people claim to worship God, but deny that Jesus Christ is God... But this verse puts Him on an absolute equality with God, and requires that men should give Him the *same honor* which they give to *God the Father*. If a person does not honor the Son, then he does not honor the Father. It is useless to claim a love for God if one does not have the same love for the Lord Jesus Christ... Jesus Christ is God manifest in the flesh.” (*MacDonald, p. 1450*)
- If Jesus Christ is not our Savior, then He will be our Judge!

## **What must we do to have Jesus Christ as our Savior?**

**24 Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.**

"This is one of the favorite gospel verses in the Bible. Multitudes have become possessors of eternal life through its message. Doubtless the reason for its being so greatly loved is the manner in which it sets forth the way of salvation so clearly."

**Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word.** "To hear the word of Jesus means not only to listen to it, but also to receive it, to believe it, and to obey it. Many people hear the gospel preached, but do nothing about it. The Lord is saying here that a man must accept His teaching as divine, and believe that He is indeed the Savior of the world."

**Whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me.** "It is a matter of believing God. But does that mean that a person is saved simply by believing God? Many profess to believe in God, yet they have never been converted. No, the thought here is that one must believe God, who sent the Lord Jesus Christ into the world. What must he believe? He must believe that God sent the Lord Jesus to be our Savior. He must believe what God says about the Lord Jesus, namely, that He is the only Savior and that sins can only be put away through His work on Calvary."

**Has eternal life.** "Eternal life is the life of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is not only life that will go on forever, but it is a (higher) quality of life. It is the life of the Savior imparted to us who believe in Him. It is the spiritual life received when a man is born again, in contrast to the natural life which he received at his physical birth."

**He does not come into judgment.** "The thought here is that he is not condemned now and will never be condemned in the future. The one who believes on the Lord Jesus is free from judgment because Christ has paid the penalty for his sins on Calvary. God will not demand the payment of this penalty twice. Christ has paid it as our Substitute, and that is sufficient. He has finished the work, and nothing can be added to a finished work. The Christian will never be punished for his sins."

**But has passed from death to life.** "The one who has trusted Christ has passed out of a state of spiritual death into one of spiritual life. Before conversion, he was dead in trespasses and in sins. He was dead as far as love for God or fellowship with the Lord was concerned. When he put his faith in Jesus Christ, he was indwelt by the Spirit of God and became a possessor of divine life."

*--William MacDonald, Believer's Bible Commentary, p. 1450*