



DATE: August 30, 2009

TEXT: John 5: 19-47

TITLE: “John XIV: the Claims of Christ”

We are continuing our study of the Gospel of John and we are continuing our look of Jesus healing the man at the pool in Bethesda. After the man was healed... Jesus was attacked by the Pharisees. These Religious leaders did not see the miracle. They did not see the act of God in their midst... they just saw a man who broke their rules. The amazing fact is this.... what did Jesus do when he was attacked by these religious leaders? He counter attacked. He defended his actions and boldly declared who he was.

Notice the primary mistake of the Pharisees.... they refused to allow the Word of God to speak to them. *John 5: 39 states....*

**You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me, 40yet you refuse to come to me to have life.**

These men studied the Bible.... the Old Testament.... but they allowed their preconceived ideas to dictate their understanding. We have to be honest. We all do this to an extent. The danger is this.... when we allow our preconceived ideas to dominate our understanding. My

determination is this..... I will allow the clearest understanding of scripture to be my guide. For the most part the Bible is not hard to understand.... I am convinced if you get a modern translation of the bible and you sit down and read it.....90% will be very clear. What makes the bible hard to understand is when we do not like what it says and we try to twist it's clear teaching into our belief system. This is a fundamental aspect of Protestant faith.

Allow me to briefly tell the story of Martin Luther. Martin Luther in the 1500's was a priest who had a problem with guilt. He went to his Father Confessor every day and did hours and hours of penance. He was a Bible teacher in a seminary. From 1514 to 1517 he taught classes on the book of Romans and the Book of Galatians. It revolutionized his life. He gained an understanding of the wonderful grace of God. He understood the idea of justification by faith alone.... not by works.... not by going to mass....not by the sacrament of penance. In 1517 he posted his thoughts on the walls of his monastery. The 95 thesis. He was immediately attacked by the church officials . They demanded that re recant. He refused. A series of debates took place with him and the officials of the Catholic church. He refused to give in. Finally, in 1521 he

was called before the official court of the Catholic Church. This was called the Diet of Worms.

He was told to either recant his understanding of grace and justification by faith alone... or be removed from the Priesthood. He gave this speech....

**Since then your serene Majesty and your Lordships (the Bishop and officials of the Church) seek a simple answer, I will give it in this manner, neither horned nor toothed. Unless I am convinced by testimony of the Scriptures or by clear reason (for I do not trust either in the Pope or in councils alone, since it is well known that they have often erred and contradicted themselves), I am bound by Scriptures I have quoted and my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I can not and will not retrace anything, since it is neither safe nor right to go against conscience.... here I stand, May God help me, Amen.**

This needs to be our attitude. We stand on the Word of God. Nothing else. Do not stand on my words. Do not stand on your parents words. Do not stand on societies words. Do not stand on the governments words. Do not even stand on the churches words..... stand on the Word of God. Not in arrogance. Not in ignorance..... but on truth.

The pharisees were experts of the Law.... experts on the bible.... and they failed to see the truth of Jesus Christ. What did Jesus do immediately after His resurrection? He took a walk to Emmaus and taught the truth about himself from the scriptures. Stand on the Word of God.

We not turn to the words of Jesus. We see his claims about himself. I will share 3 claims

**Claim # 1** Jesus claims that he is precisely like the God the Father. *John 5:19 states*

**19 Jesus gave them this answer: "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.**

How is Jesus Christ like George Washington? Both are historical figures. Both are considered great men who taught great principles. What is the difference? Washington was a great man.... Jesus Christ is God. Washington was a good man..... Jesus was a perfect man.

The problem is this... many people treat Jesus Christ the same way they treat George Washington. They believe in him....they respect him.... they follow his principles.... they have a holiday celebrating him. But if Jesus Christ is treated in the same way as George Washington... Christianity is missing.

What is the difference? Respect Washington..... love Jesus Christ. *Verse 20* of our text says.... **"For the Father loves the Son."** Love is the difference. *Deuteronomy 6:4 commands*

**Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. 5 Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. 6 These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts.**

As pastor of a church I work with many, many people. I have seen literally thousands of

people come to church. I have seen hundreds of young people come to Youth Groups.

Unfortunately I have seen many adults come for a short while and then drop out. I have seen scores of young people come to church and then drop out. Why? Why do some stay and some wander in and out. Love. Some fall in love with Jesus Christ some do not. Some come out of fear.... fear never lasts.... it comes and it fades and they drop out of church. Some come out of requirement.... parents force kids to come which is good for children... but kids have to fall in love with Jesus or they always fall away. Some come out of obligation.... obligation fades.

The only motive strong enough to bring a person to a life-long relationship with Jesus Christ is love. We discover his commitment to us and we return our commitment to Him. That is love. He is the bridegroom.... we are the bride.... we pledge ourselves to him for ever and ever. That is love. That is Christianity.

**Claim # 2** Jesus states that the Father has revealed the process of salvation to him. Let me read two amazing verses from our text. First *John 5: 24*

**24" I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.**

Hear and believe... not just head knowledge... really surrender to Christ. Next *vers* 28-29

**28"Do not be amazed at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice 29and come out—those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned.**

The *New American Commentary* gives this understanding of this text....

**The basis of judgement has already been suggested earlier, namely believing in the Son. (Verse 28 and 29 teaches that) In this decisive hour the division that takes place will be based on what people have “done.” Because that believing is often superficial, the integrity of believes is to be judged by a person’s activity, not merely by what a person says.**

Let me return to Martin Luther. His fundamental teaching that differed from the Catholic church was Justification by Faith alone. It is not by Sacraments. It is not by coming to mass 9or church). Salvation is by faith. But Luther was quick to say.. Not superficial faith. True faith affects every action that we take. REPEAT. True faith affects every action that we take. We are not saved by coming to church.... but because we have faith, of course we come to church.

Does that mean that a person who chooses to not come to church does not have faith?

Probably... not assuredly. Does that mean a person who regularly comes to church as faith?

Probably.... not assuredly.

Jesus gives us the path of salvation.... believe in Him.... act upon that believe.

**Claim # 3** Jesus Christ is the Judge. *John 5: 22 and 27 states....*

**22Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son,  
27And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man.**

Scripture speaks about a number of judgement.... at least 4 judgements are taught in

Scripture. The first one is the Judgement of believers Sins. *John 5:24 says this....*

**24"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.** (New American Standard Translation)

By the way you lose this idea in the NIV translation. We. As believers in Jesus Christ will pass through the Judgement unto Salvation. Good News. Great news! Because of Christ's death on the cross.... his death covers our sins and we are saved. No judgement. Salvation and eternal life. Done deal. God directly to heaven do not stop at the judgement seat.

But there is another judgement spoken about in scripture... the Judgement of a Believers

Works. I will read *2 Corinthians 5:10*

**10For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.**

Yes indeed, we will all stand before the judgement seat of God. Jesus will be upon that judgement seat and we will be judged on how well we have obeyed our Lord Jesus. What will

be the basis of our judgement. Jesus tell us this when he tells this parable in Matthew 25

"Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. 35For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, 36I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'

**37"Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? 38When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? 39When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'**

**40"The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'**

We will be judged on how well we have served.

The logical question is... what will be the rewards and punishments from this judgements?

Remember it is for believers and we are in heaven. I don't know.... possibly proximity to the throne of god... but I am not sure. But we are accountable for our actions. They do matter.

The other two judgements are The Judgement of nations and the final judgement of the wicked spoken about in Revelations 20

These are the revealed truths that Jesus teaches about himself. He...

1 He claims to be God. **"I and the Father are one."**

2. He claims to give the path of salvation. Belief in Him as demonstrated by our actions

3. He claims to be the judge. He will judge all people... for their faith and for their works. This

is the clear teaching of scripture... we will believe it

AMEN