



John 5:19-24

“One of the Deepest Things in the Bible”

19 Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner.

20 "For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself does; and He will show Him greater works than these, that you may marvel.

21 "For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to them, even so the Son gives life to whom He will.

22 "For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son,

23 "that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.

24 " Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.

In verses 19-47 of this chapter we have one of the most important of Christ’s discourses. In it he makes absolutely clear who He is and why He is able to do the things He did and make the authority claims he does. If the statements that Christ makes in these verses aren’t true, then all of his other claims to be the Good Shepherd, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, the Light of the World and so on cannot be true either. The title I gave to the sermon, *One of the Deepest Things in the Bible* is actually a quotation from what JC Ryle said about these verses:

“One thing only is certain Nowhere else in the Gospels do we find our Lord making such a formal systematic orderly regular statement of His own unity with the Father His Divine commission and authority and the proofs of His Messiahship as we find in this discourse. To me it seems one of the deepest things in the Bible.” – J.C. Ryle

We saw before that what infuriated the Jews was not merely that they felt that Jesus had broken the Sabbath, but that He had said ***“that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.”*** Jesus in these verses is not going to back off that claim that they thought was blasphemous, He is going to confirm it.

If fact, Jesus starts off his statements in verse 19 with that two-fold Amen. In the KJV Verily, Verily, or truly, truly. If someone says something we agree with wholeheartedly, we say AMEN to it. What we are saying is *absolutely, that’s the truth of the matter*. Jesus who is truth, can start off his statements saying, listen because this is how it really is.

In these verses, Jesus is making three points:

- 1) That He is One with the Father
- 2) That He has been given all power and authority

3) That He Alone is the Way to Eternal Life

1) That He is One with the Father

Jesus tells his Jewish critics that nothing that He does is independent of the Father, and in fact the works that He is doing amongst that they are criticizing are the works of the Father. He is saying that this is because there is an unbroken communion between the Father and the Son and continuous contemplation of one another, a bond of love beyond our ability to understand.

Now brothers and sisters an earthly Son can watch what his father does and imitate it. I am sometimes taken aback when I see my own sons imitate me, or say something that I would say with the same kind of inflection. It was no different with me, I picked up my father's mannerisms, I even walk the way he does, and I didn't make a conscious decision to adopt his walk. It used to be the case that a Son would learn his Father's trade by watching him day after day, and go into the same business. But that is not what Jesus is talking about here, he does the works of the father "*not in imitation, but in virtue of His sameness of nature*" as one commentator put it, and not in a slavish obedience, but out of Love.

Two persons, but the same in heart and will. Here we have the essence of the relationship between God the Father and God the Son spelled out, they are two persons, but one God. This is a difficult thing for us to get our minds around. a great mystery, even the Apostles called it that:

1 Tim. 3:16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, Justified in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Preached among the Gentiles, Believed on in the world, Received up in glory.

Jesus then tells them that because of this unity between He and the father, He will do even greater works than the healing at the pool of Bethesda and the other miracles that He has done up to this time. Which brings us to Jesus' second point:

2) That He has been given all power and authority

As he talks to them about the greater things, Jesus makes reference to two things that only God has power to do, the first is to raise the dead, and the second is to judge. Jesus says explicitly that He has the power to do both, once again making himself equal with God. Jesus raises the dead. Now first he raises the dead in His earthly ministry several times, there is daughter of the synagogue ruler, the widow's son, and Lazarus. I'm struck that in most cases as He is raising the dead, his command to them is "ARISE" as though they were sleeping and He is saying "get up". Because there is a day when He will say "ARISE" to all the dead, and they will come forth to the final judgment. And at that judgment, it will be the Son before whom every knee bows.

Along those lines, I hope you see the warning that Jesus is giving to those who were seeking to kill Him in verses 22 and 23. They seem Him as a lowly Galilean and a blasphemer. They believe they already know the Father and that they have do not need eternal life. Jesus warns them and says if they do not know and honor Him, they do not know or honor the Father. And that one day all of them will come before Him, either they will honor Him now, or later in judgement when every mouth that blasphemed Him is shut, and every knee that would not bend to His will, will do so. To put it crassly as the bumpersticker puts it, in judgment "*every knee will bow, beat the rush.*"

Now I hope none of you are clinging to the belief that Jesus is not God, but just in case you are, please notice that the language of honoring the Son *just as they honor the Father. It literally means to honor or value the Son exactly as the Father.* To worship for instance the Son in the same way they worship the Father. Now it would be terrible blasphemy to worship a man or even an angel, when John in the book of Revelation bows down before an angel, the angel says “***Do not do that; I am a fellow servant of yours***” there is only one we should worship and that is God. So too it would be blasphemous to give the same honor to a man as to God. For instance Herod Antipas was struck down by God and eaten by worms precisely because he allowed the people of Tyre and Sidon to honor Him as a God. If Jesus is not who he says He is then to honor him as God would be blasphemous too.

Brothers and Sisters, if you hear people saying I don't believe Jesus was God, I do believe though that He was a Good prophet. Answer them “Either Jesus is God, or He is not good. Because he told us to honor Him as God. And a mere man who would do that is not Good, he *would be a blasphemer.*

But Jesus is God, and if we do not honor Him as God, then we do not honor the father either, because friends *we Come to the Father through Jesus the Son, or we don't come at all. No man comes to the Father except by Me is what Jesus said.* You can't get to God any other way but by Faith in Jesus Christ, *1 Tim. 2:5 For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.*

Which is of course the final point:

3) That He Alone is the Way to Eternal Life

Jesus tells You that if you would escape Judgment and have Eternal Life, you must hear Him and Believe. He does not say that nice people have eternal life, He does not say that baptized who go to church have eternal life, He does not say that people who do good works have eternal life. He says that people who hear His word and believe have eternal life. If you will hear the Gospel and trust in Jesus Christ, then believe in the One Who Sent Him and You shall not come into judgment.

Now some people reject that message that to be saved we must simply hear the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and believe it, not because it is too hard, but because it seems too easy to them. They are like Naaman the Leper who thought that merely washing in the humble Jordan was too lowly and simple a thing for him to do and therefore they will not do the only thing that will save them. How can a small thing like moving from unbelief to belief be the difference between life and death? If you are standing in the road at night, and a tractor trailer is coming your way, then you can well see how moving a few mere feet is the difference between life and death.

Spurgeon in making an analogy between how that change of position, which seems such a small thing can be the difference from being a slave to sin to being free indeed told the story of an American lady who went out to visit an English ship in Charleston Harbor accompanied by one of her slaves. He writes: “The lady remarked to the captain that if she were to go to England and take this black woman with her, she would become free as soon as she landed. The captain replied, “Madam, she is free already. The moment she came on board a British vessel she was free.” When the negro woman knew this, do you think she went on shore with her mistress? By no means; she chose to keep her liberty. But what made her rise from a slave to a free woman? It was the distance between the ship and shore.

Kids, you know after God judged the world by flooding it with water there were only a few inches of gopher wood between Noah and His Family and all water that had drowned everyone else, but those few inches made all the difference in the world. If you are in Christ as Noah was in the Ark then you are safe from judgment.

And please note, the person who believes *has everlasting life*. At that moment they are completely forgiven. They have passed over from one side of a great gulf to another. Romans 8:1 "There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit."

Friends you cannot lose your salvation. Salvation is something that you can have no other way but through faith in Jesus Christ, but once you have it, there is no way it can be lost.

If you are a believer in Jesus you have a treasure that can never be lost, and I want to give you a summary statement by JC Ryle summing that up, because I find that so many believers lack peace and assurance because they don't fully grasp what has happened to them by believing, and certainly the devil doesn't want them to know:

The privileges of a true Christian are greatly underrated by many. Chiefly from deplorable ignorance of Scripture, they have little idea of the spiritual treasures of every believer in Jesus. These treasures are brought together here in beautiful order, if we will only look at them. One of a true Christian's treasures is the "presentness" of his salvation. It is not a far distant thing which he is to have at last, if he does his duty and is good. It is his own in title the moment he believes. He is already pardoned, forgiven, and saved, though not in heaven. Another of a true Christian's treasures is the "completeness" of his justification. His sins are entirely removed, taken away, and blotted out of God's book, by Christ's blood. He may look forward to judgment without fear, and say, "who is he that condemns?" (Rom. 8:34.) He shall stand without fault before the throne of God. The last, but not the least, of a true Christian's treasures, is the entire change in his relation and position toward God. He is no longer as one dead before Him--dead, legally, like a man sentenced to die, and dead in heart. He is "alive unto God." (Rom. 6:11.) "He is a new creature. Old things are passed away, and all things are become new." (2 Cor. 5:17.) Well would it be for Christians if these things were better known! It is lack of knowledge, in many cases, that is the secret of lack of peace.