

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. John 5:24.

We now come to the claims of Christ about Himself and the responsibility of man to believe on Him as Savior. Man cannot just acknowledge Christ without dealing with both his Person and His redemptive claim in their behalf. Jesus Christ's very incarnation presents this issue - there is no other purpose for His entrance into the world except to seek *and* to save man. For man to reject this redemptive presentation is to reject both Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit's convicting work and the Father's plan to save man from hell.

Our passage says it all: to hear Jesus Christ's word is to listen with spiritual curiosity. The original for "hear" is where we get our word "acoustic" from. Please note the definition lifted from Crosswalk.com's web page. The strong suggestion is that it was not enough for the religious leaders in our context to be there and to hear Jesus' words with the idea of refuting them. No. The mutually inclusive nature of the phrase "**heareth my word, and believeth**" says it all. Jesus incarnation's *sole purpose* was to execute the Father's redemptive plan. Man's *sole responsibility* is to hear with the view of *belief* and acceptance of Jesus as Savior. Period.

Original Word	Word Origin
ἀκούω	a root
Transliterated Word	TDNT Entry
Akouo	1:216,34
Phonetic Spelling	Parts of Speech
ak-oo'-o	Verb

- Definition**
1. to be endowed with the faculty of hearing, not deaf
 2. to hear
 1. to attend to, consider what is or has been said
 2. to understand, perceive the sense of what is said
 3. to hear something
 - a. to perceive by the ear what is announced in one's presence
 - b. to get by hearing learn
 - c. a thing comes to one's ears, to find out, learn
 - d. to give ear to a teaching or a teacher
 - e. to comprehend, to understand

We have previously seen two examples in chapters 4 and 5 of this faith. We will now see the active *unbelief* of men who were there not to peak their spiritual curiosity but rather to refute Jesus and to condemn Him for violating not the Sabbath but their own legalistic regulations concerning keeping the Sabbath. Herein is the crux. First-faith¹ is contrasted with the tragic active-rejection - unbelief. May I make a further point. Unbelief is not merely the lack of faith but the result of active rejection of Christ by the sinner. The sinner does not come to the point of unbelief without an active role of being the enemy of God and carrying that action to its conclusion. Let us take a look at Paul's commentary on this issue:

For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. Romans 5:10 (my emphasis).

The point Paul makes in this passage is that all during the process of being reconciled, the redemptive call is affecting the sinner. There is absolutely no meritorious effort on the sinner's part rather, the Holy Spirit is doing the calling work. The sinner merely accepts or rejects this process. Faith, the end result of this process,

¹ See my previous lesson, [Quenching Spiritual Thirst - an Evangelistic Thrust into Samaria](#).

is *given* to the sinner as the result of his positive volition toward redemption's call.² So we come to Jesus' presentation - His pleading of the case, if-you-please, much as in a court of law and the rejection of the man who were there listening to Him - not to peak their spiritual curiosity but to refute, condemn and to ultimately reject Jesus as Savior.

Jesus' Case for Himself as the Son of God.

And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day. John 5:16.

Here is rejection in its raw form. The problem was that there was nothing wrong with Jesus making the infirm man well on the Sabbath. Indeed, He makes the point that were it not for His and His Father's constant "work," the existence of the men around Him would be impossible. Paul alludes to this in Colossians 1:15: **"And he is before all things, and by him all things consist."** The Jewish religious leaders had formed a "hedge" of legalistic interpretations around the law by their own admission. In fact, Edersheim points out that their position was that if there were an apparent disagreement between the reading of the law and their regulations, then the regulations were to be accepted as the correct interpretation over what the law was apparently saying - the ultimate in rationalism gone amuck.³ But I digress. Let us consider what Jesus makes for a case about Himself before these unbelieving men.

The Three Claims of Christ.⁴

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, making himself equal with God. John 5:17, 18.

Equal to God in nature. Please note my previous comments in relation to Colossians 1:15. This might on the surface seem to be an audacious claim - indeed it was to the unbelieving men before Him. But for Jesus to make the claim that He was the Messiah before the Samaritan woman, who was spiritually curious, that claim was not audacious. Indeed, she readily accepted it as true. So in this lesson we focus not on the claim that Jesus put Himself on the same level as God, being his Father, since that was true, rather, we focus on the response of the Jews who responded to the claim by wanting to kill Him. Here, again, is rejection in its raw form. There was no room for constructive dialogue with the Pharisees as was the case with the Samaritan woman - the conclusion was at hand in their minds. He was guilty of "working" on the Sabbath. The fact was that Jesus was equal to His Father and so He was doing the same work

² *"For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith."* Romans 1:17. My emphasis.

³ *The Life and Times of JESUS THE MESSIAH*, Alfred Edersheim, Page 68.

⁴ This outline is lifted out of *THE GOSPEL OF JOHN, BELIEVE AND LIVE*, Elmer Towns.

as His father mattered not in the minds of these men.

Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, 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. [21] For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. John 5:19 - 21.

Equal to God in power. The ultimate demonstration of this claim would be in the raising of Lazarus but should not be limited just to power over physical life. Our key verse asserts that the believer is passed over from death unto life. Only Jesus Christ has this power - power to resurrect the spiritually dead.⁵ The important point to be made here is that these claims by Christ were audacious to those who were actively rejecting Christ. To those who respond positively to the call of the Gospel, it is truly Good News to hear that Jesus has the power to raise the dead unto life.

For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: [23] That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him. [24] Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. John 5:22 - 24.

Equal to God in authority. What a touch of irony! The Jews were judging Jesus in their sinful hearts as worthy of condemnation for breaking their regulations and thus deserved capital punishment and here Jesus is saying to them that *He* was the one who had all judgment having received that authority from the Father. The image should not be lost to the reader. We honor the judge as he comes into the court of law by responding to the command "all rise."

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The image here is that the whole bizarre scene should be turned around. Rather than Jesus being judged by the Jews, the Jews should be judged by Jesus Christ the Judge. They should be giving honor to the Son as they should the Father. The tragedy was that neither was the case. In fact, the reason for this dialogue is that the unbelieving Jews would be eventually judged for the rejection of these very claims by Jesus Christ.

⁵ Read Romans 6:1 - 10; Ephesians 2:1 - 10, NIV.

Surely the Jews should have called into mind Malachi 3:

But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: [3] And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness. [4] Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the LORD, as in the days of old, and as in former years. [5] And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the LORD of hosts. Malachi 3:2 - 5

but they did not. These words will ring in their minds when they stand before the judgment throne in that terrible day.

The Three Acts of Christ.

The three claims are reinforced by Christ's action. Jesus Christ is, indeed, the giver of life. Let's continue with Towns outline.

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; John 5:25, 26.

All life is in His hands. I refer you to my lesson [The Logos, the Light of Life](#). We studied that *all* life comes from Jesus Christ. Towns refers this passage to the giving of spiritual life to the dead in sins. But please note that in verse 26 Jesus is going far beyond that in His statement. I refer you to 1 Timothy 6 where Paul teaches that Jesus Christ *only* [along, of course with the Trinity] has immortality. Jesus makes it clear that He is God in nature and as God He will tell the Good News *as will the church* and dead souls will become alive in Christ but the indisputable fact is that *all* life is Christ's alone.

And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. John 5:27.

All Judgment is in His hands. Why the term "Son of man?" Because this is a reference to His unique Person - the God-Man. The Jews were having a real problem with Jesus because they thought of Him as the son of Mary and Joseph, born under less than ideal circumstances (see John 8:41). Here Jesus was saying that the Person standing before them has been given authority to execute judgment by the Father - God.

Another point was brought up in class as I taught this lesson as does Kenneth O. Gangel in his [Holman New Testament Commentary, John](#), is that Jesus is the heavenly

figure in Daniel 7:13, 14.⁶ Jesus in prophesy is called the Son of Man who was glorified and was given to have dominion, glory and a kingdom that shall not be destroyed (to paraphrase the passage). Certainly this prophesy was alluded to by Jesus and not missed by many in the group.

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. John 5:28, 29.

All resurrection in his hand. What an ominous warning here. Jesus is referring to the judgment day:

Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. [12] And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. [13] The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done. Rev. 20:11 - 13

Jesus will be on this throne and these very men who were judging Him as deserving capital punishment will be judged in the white hot heat of the Judgment Throne. Their works will be undeniable. What a horrible end for those who rejected the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁶ "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. [14] And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." Daniel 7:13, 14.