



Gospel of John 1-12

The Work of God

Here, in the aftermath of the healing at Bethesda—Jesus answers His persecutors with a powerful message about His mission. His mission is God’s mission because He was sent by God.

A. At Issue: The Relation of Father and Son vv. 16-20

1. After the healing: v. 16 Jesus’ enemies react quickly and violently. They “persecuted Jesus, and sought to kill Him, because He had done these things on the Sabbath.” In response to their anger, Jesus declares His relationship to His Father. He is not off on His own, defying tradition as a lone star faith healer. He has healed this man on the Sabbath because He is doing the work of His Father.

2. The work of God: v. 17-18 Jesus has been sent by God—the works of the Son and Father are the same, for the Son and the Father are One. Claiming sonship with God was claiming that He was God.

3. Co-labor: vv. 19-20 Jesus does only what He sees the Father doing. It is because the Father loves the Son that He has revealed everything to Him. The Son will continue to do even greater works throughout His earthly ministry which will culminate in the raising of Lazarus from the dead!

B. Life and Judgment Are in the Son vv. 21-30

1. Giver of life: v. 21 Every devout Jew knew that God was the Source of all life—not only in the act of creation, but even in raising the dead. They accepted the accounts of life being given to the dead in the Old Testament records, but for this itinerant preacher to claim that gift of life was an affront to their rigid orthodoxy. Yet, specific proof that the life of God was in Him was before them in the one who had been healed.

2. Authority of judgment: vv. 22-24 With that power came the authority of judgment. This, too, the Father had committed to the Son. In His coming, “*the ruler of this world is judged*” (John 16:11; 12:31). Those who reject the gift of life come under that judgment. These very Jews who refused to hear and accept this One who stood before them are even now experiencing judgment!

Since life and judgment have been given to the Son, He is to be honored as is the Father; and if the Son is dishonored, the Father will be dishonored.

3. The hour is upon us: vv. 25-30 There is an “*hour coming ... when the dead will hear the voice of the Son*” and come forth to face judgment. The Father has given Him the authority to speak that final word. But that time of crisis and judgment is also now!

In Jesus, the present moment of decision and the final hour of judgment are brought together. The word of life and death that He will speak at the end is heard now. And the response given in this moment of faith or rejection will be clearly known at the end.

4. The Son of Man: vv. 27 The man Jesus, who issues this invitation, calls Himself the “*Son of Man,*” in this context the One spoken of in Daniel 7:13, 14. This mighty Man of God, now clothed in flesh, confronts these men. This is the “place of decision.”

John 5:15-47 (NKJV)

—**16** For this reason the Jews persecuted Jesus, and sought to kill Him, because He had done these things on the Sabbath.

17 But Jesus answered them, “My Father has been working until now, and I have been working.” **18** Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God. **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. **25** Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live. **26** For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself, **27** and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man. **28** Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice **29** and come forth— those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation. **30** I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me.

C. The Witnesses Who Surround Him vv. 31-39

1. **John the Baptist:** vv. 32-36
2. **Jesus' own works:** v. 36
3. **God the Father:** vv. 37-38
4. **The Scriptures:** v. 39 and by Moses 45-47
5. **Beyond this passage:**
 - (a) Jesus Himself: 3:11, 32; 8:14, 18; 18:37
 - (b) The Spirit: 14:26; 15:26; 16:8-11, 13-14
 - (c) The disciples: esp. John 15:27; 19:35; 21:24

D. The Tragic Rejection vv. 40-47 What an awesome tragedy, then, that the very ones who searched the Scriptures, who prided themselves on being experts as they worked over every jot and tittle, thinking in all this they had eternal life, were not willing to come to the One of whom the Scriptures spoke.

They rejected Him! Here He was standing before them, bold and clear, inviting them and challenging them, and they turned on Him in anger—all the time believing they were being faithful to the Scriptures. So they did not hear the voice of the Father, nor could they perceive His form, and in the end, the words they studied did not abide in them.

The great irony in all this is that the very one these Jewish leaders felt they knew and trusted, **Moses**, ended up being their accuser. For if they really understood and believed what Moses had written, they would have accepted Jesus, the One to whom he bore witness. But they misread and misinterpreted because they came to the Scripture with hard, unbelieving hearts. So they missed His message and consequently missed life. They were condemned, having rejected the One of whom he spoke!



—**31** “If I bear witness of Myself, My witness is not true. **32** There is another who bears witness of Me, and I know that the witness which He witnesses of Me is true. **33** You have sent to John, and he has borne witness to the truth. **34** Yet I do not receive testimony from man, but I say these things that you may be saved. **35** He was the burning and shining lamp, and you were willing for a time to rejoice in his light.

36 But I have a greater witness than John's; for the works which the Father has given Me to finish—the very works that I do—bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me.

37 And the Father Himself, who sent Me, has testified of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His form. **38** But you do not have His word abiding in you, because whom He sent, Him you do not believe.

39 You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me.

—**40** But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.

41 “I do not receive honor from men. **42** But I know you, that you do not have the love of God in you.

43 I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive. **44** How can you believe, who receive honor from one another, and do not seek the honor that comes from the only God? **45** Do not think that I shall accuse you to the Father; there is one who accuses you—Moses, in whom you trust. **46** For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me. **47** But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?”