Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Witness to the Deity of Christ
Scripture: John 5:30-47
Code: 1510A

As we come to chapter 5, this morning we're going to endeavor to look, Lord willing, at verses 30 to 47, a very important unit of Scripture in consideration of what is happening in John's gospel at this point.

As we come to John chapter 5, Christ is on earth. In fact, Christ is in Israel. In fact, He's in Jerusalem. He is right there moving among them. But they do not see Him. Well here and there someone sees Him. The disciples saw who He was, the light shone, the darkness was shattered and they came to life. A few in a little village called Sychar, a few Samaritans and a Samaritan woman by a well, she did. And a nobleman in Galilee, he did. The light dawned, he came alive. And then there was a pool called Bethesda and then there was a man 38 years with a disease and he picked up his bed and walked and the light shone and he saw Christ and he came alive.

So here and there as it is in God's plan, the remnant comes to Christ. Here and there a believing Jew, here and there a group of Gentiles. But the nation, the multitudes rejected Him. They didn't hear Him, they were deaf. They didn't see Him, they were blind. But the tragic thing is, deafness and blindness does not remain negative, it becomes positive. That is you can't just not hear Christ or not see Him, sooner or later that turns to hostility. It would be one thing if a man could just say, "Well I don't want Christ," and just let it go at that, but he can't. And so said Jesus, "He that is not with Me is...what?...against Me." You cannot merely say no to Christ without being hostile. And so the negatives in Israel soon turned to positive hostilities and whereas initially they said, "Oh can anything good come out of Nazareth," pretty soon they said, "He bothers me," pretty soon they said, "We don't like Him," and then they said, "Let's get rid of Him." And their non-response turned to a positive hostility.

You see, there's never any middle ground with Jesus. You stand at the cross either with those who loved Him or you stand with those who nailed Him. There's no middle ground. So the blessed Son of God is rejected in Israel and He begins the road to the cross, but oh how He loved Israel...how He loved Israel. In all that Israel has done in unbelief through the years His promise to Israel has never stopped, oh how He loves Israel. They are His chosen people even yet. Paul says, "Has God set aside Israel whom He foreknew? God forbid." And I will never understand as long as I live anybody, anyplace, any time who calls himself a Christian and does not have a constant lingering love for Israel. Christ did, even in the midst of their unbelief.

So starting in verse 17 clear through verse 47 Christ defends His action. They have accused Him of breaking the Sabbath. And then in verse 17 to 47, that whole passage that we've been studying, Christ defends Himself. And you know what His defense is? He says, in effect, "Don't tell Me I'm breaking the law, I'm God...I don't break laws. If this is a law that doesn't square with what I do, there's nothing wrong with what I do, there's something wrong with your law," that's what He says. And He also says this, "When you were accusing Me of breaking a law, you are accusing God of immorality because I'm God." Now that's quite a statement.

And so, they come to Him and say, "You're a blasphemer because You broke the law." And He turns it around and says, "No, you're a blasphemer because you're impugning My morality and I'm God and you're impugning God and that's the ultimate blasphemy." So He turned the tables on them. They accused Him and they wound up being accused.

And so, in these verses then Christ is giving a defense of Himself. And, of course, this is beautifully fit into John's pattern in his gospel because on every page John has that constant almost defiantly repetitious ringing claim that Christ is God...Christ is God...Christ is God, it just goes on through the whole book. And so this fits beautifully because here's Christ, in effect saying that He's God. Just another one of John's witnesses to prove that his thesis is correct. And so again we see the relentless ring of the claims of Christ to be God on every page.

Now coming to verse 30 and beginning for our lesson this morning, verse 30 and 31 are kind of an introduction and then we'll look at an outline in verses 32 and following. Verse 30 is a summary of all that He said in claiming equality with God. Christ is God, equal with God. He sums it up by this statement, verse 30, "I can of Mine own self do nothing." In other words, He says I am not acting independently, you can't accuse Me of breaking God's law, I'm God, I'm hooked up with God inseparably. I can't act independently of God. I don't do anything of My own self. "As I hear, I judge." What do you mean as You hear? As the Father shows Me things to do, I do them. "As I hear God speak, I judge and My judgment is just because I seek not Mine own will but the will of the Father who has sent Me."

In other words, He says I'm not acting independently. You can't accuse Me without accusing God. You can't say I broke your laws unless you want to say God broke your law. And that's blasphemy. So in that verse then He is summarizing all that He said. And He says, in effect, "I do the will of the Father." And we've talked about this earlier, so we'll leave it at that.

Now verse 31, "If I bear witness of Myself, My witness is not true." Now that's been kind of a mysterious statement to a lot of people. They say, "Wait a minute, does Christ say there that He's not telling the truth?" Not at all. When you understand the context and you understand the dialogue and what's going on, it's very clear what He's saying. He's saying, let me read it this way, "In your opinion

or in your estimation, if I am the only one to testify about who I am, that's not good enough." Right? He's saying you're not going to believe just Me, you've got to have some other witnesses. In your own mind it's not enough for Me to claim this, just on My own.

And, you know, He's got a good point. I mean, I could stand up in the pulpit and say, "I want you to know, ladies and gentlemen, that I am God...I'm God." Now I doubt very seriously whether there would be anybody who would believe that. You'd say, "Oh yeah? Well I'm not going to believe it just because you said it." In effect that's what Jesus is saying here. He's saying if I'm the only one claiming to be God, you're not about to believe Me. You don't like Me anyway, you want to get rid of Me.

So, that sets the stage for verses 32 to 47 because He says you need more witnesses. Now back in Deuteronomy the Old Testament law of testimony was two or three witnesses, remember? In other words, to corroborate truth you had to have two or three witnesses. So Jesus says now I'm not just going to speak for Myself, I'm going to bring in not two, not three, but four outside witnesses. And so in the remaining verses Christ calls four different sources of testimony to say what He has said that indeed He is God. And we're going to look at these four. Four testimonies that Christ is God, and He adds these in order that He might fill out the testimony needed to prove He's God. The four testimonies we're going to see are the testimony of the forerunner's witness, that is John the Baptist, the testimony of the finished works, the testimony of the Father's Word and the testimony of the faithful writing. And we'll delineate these as we go.

First testimony that He calls as if it's a courtroom, perhaps we could say He's calling a witness, the first one is the forerunner's witness. Now who was Christ's forerunner? John the Baptist. So He's saying to them, in effect, now I'm not the only one making this claim, remember John the Baptist, he also said, "Behold, the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." He also told you who I was.

Now notice with that in mind verse 33, we'll come back to verse 32 in a minute. Verse 33, here comes the forerunner's witness in verse 33 to 35, "Ye sent unto John...that is John the Baptist...and he bore witness unto the truth." Jesus says, "Remember John the Baptist? You must have had some confidence in his testimony, you sent a whole group of people out there to see him." And if you go back to John...in John's gospel to verse 19 of chapter 1 it says this, "And this is the witness of John...John the Baptist...when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, `Who art thou?' And he confessed, `I am not the Christ.'" And then he went on to tell them who was the Christ. And Jesus says you yourselves sent a little group out there to see John, he told you he wasn't the Christ, he told you I was. He bore witness to the truth. There's another witness for you. He supported My claims to being Messiah, the Christ...And Christ is the Greek equivalent of Messiah, it means the anointed one.

He says John the Baptist told you I was, there's another witness, I'm not alone in this. And you said he was a prophet. Remember the Bible says that all men perceived that John the Baptist was a prophet. They thought he was a prophet, first one in 400 years in Israel. You went running out there, "O Ballyhoo, John the Baptist." Thought he was great stuff. Went out there in the wilderness to hear what he had to say. What did he tell you when you got there. He said I'm not Christ, He is...pointing and focusing to Jesus. If you don't want to listen to Me, listen to John. John's testimony ought to be valid, you thought enough of it to go all the way out there and ask him.

But, as so often was the case, they had gone out there and asked John's message and then when they heard it, they didn't believe it, see. They said, "John, who is it?" And he said, "It's Him." "No, we don't buy that." And they left, see. They heard his message but they rejected it.

Now notice verse 34, here's a tremendous truth. "But I receive not testimony from men but these things I say that ye might be saved." Now what is this? Jesus is saying this, listen, I'm not telling you about John the Baptist for My sake, I don't need John the Baptist to remind Me who I am. This is for your sake.

Get it again, now look at verse 37 with that in mind, "I receive not testimony from man," I don't need men telling Me who I am, I know who I am. I don't need the witness of man. Listen, He says, "I didn't have John the Baptist out there in the wilderness for his health, I didn't have him out there in the wilderness just to keep Me reminded of who I am. I didn't have him point to me and say, `Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God,' so I'd remember who I was. Ridiculous, I know who I am. I had him out there in order that ye...what?...might be saved."

See, human testimony is not for God's sake. God doesn't need it. God knows who He is. So does Christ. But Jesus says John's testimony was for your sakes, that's why he was there. I put him there as a witness. No other reason, I don't need him to remind Me who I am, you need him to remind you who I am." Christ didn't need to be reminded that He was God.

You see, His testimony rested on a higher claim. His testimony rested on His relation to God the Father, didn't it? Not on human witness. Yet at the same time He knew that the simple testimony of John the Baptist could really be devastating in terms of the children of Israel.

Now right there we introduce two important truths. And this is something you can remember, this is kind of a overriding truth in many things in the Christian experience. Now listen to this. Human testimony is important but it is weak theoretically. In other words, a lot of people say, "Well how do you know that Christ is really real? I mean, how do you know that Jesus Christ can change your life?"

"Well I know because He did it to me. I know Christ is real because I walk with Him. I know what He's like because I love Him and I share His life in me and I read the Word of God and He speaks to my heart. And I know because I've experienced Him."

That's all right. That's kind of exciting, in fact. But you know what? There's a big problem with that and that's this, you know something, even if you never did experience Him He'd be real, right? If nobody in this world ever believed in Jesus Christ He'd still be the Son of God, wouldn't He? So, you see, you can't make Christ the Son of God just because you've experienced it. He's the Son of God whether you experience Him or not. So from a theoretical standpoint, that criterion for judging Jesus Christ is lousy. There's got to be higher testimony than that because people are having experiences all the time. I mean, I talk to people who thought they saw pink elephants, but they didn't. And there are kids who have experiences from drugs. And I'm sure there are Buddhists who sit under a tree and think themselves in a nirvana and they're having an experience. And I'm sure some people go see a guru and have an experience. But I don't want to judge truth on experience. I want my Jesus Christ to be what He is if I don't even experience it. I want Him to be that because He's absolutely that.

So, theoretically experience is a terrible proof of the deity of Christ. Lest you be upset, practically...now watch this, I just shifted gears...practically it's probably the best. Did you get that? Because when somebody comes to you and says, "Man, I'd like to believe in something, what can I believe in to give my life meaning?" You say, listen, let me tell you about Jesus Christ. He touched my life. He changed my life.

You know what happens? That devastates people. Theoretically it's no good, practically it's terrific. That's what Jesus is saying. Verse 34, I don't need the testimony of man to corroborate who I am, theoretically. But practically it just so happens to reach people's hearts, human testimony does, doesn't it? I imagine many of you were saved because you saw what Christ was doing in the lives of others, or you heard somebody's testimony. I've given my testimony, I don't know, 15,000 times traveling and speaking. I don't know how many people have come to Christ as the Holy Spirit used my testimony. He'll use your testimony...not theoretically but practically...it works cause it touches people where they live in the experiential world.

So John the Baptist's testimony wasn't for Christ's sake, it was for the sake of those who weren't believing, that they might hear a human testimony to the reality of Christ. I always remember the girl who was shot in the neck and had her spinal cord severed and I didn't know what to tell her, and I just shared what Jesus did in my life. She said, "If He could do that in your life," she had only been shot about two days before, and she said, "I'm so miserable paralyzed the rest of my life, could He do something in my life?" That was the whole criterion, if He did something for you, could He do it for me. And I said yes He can. She said, "I want Him to." And I said, "Let's pray, Polly." She bowed her

head, prayed, invited Christ into her life, just like that she came alive, she said I'm glad this happened. I said, "You're glad you're paralyzed?" She said if it hadn't happened then maybe I never would have met Jesus. The whole thing was based on what Christ had done in my life. That's exciting.

Then in verse 35 He reflects on John's ministry in another thought. And here is a tribute to John and a rebuke to the Jewish leaders. "He was a burning and a shining light." This is a testimony of John. Wouldn't that be a tremendous...wouldn't that be a tremendous epitaph to put on somebody's tombstone? "He was a burning and shining light for Christ." Fantastic! I mean, he really lit up the place.

And, you know, it's an interesting word "light" there, that's not the word phos which is the word for light, the essence of light, you know, from which we get our word phosphorous or phosphorescent which means light. Christ is called the light. "I am the light of the world," phos, I am the light. This is luchnos, and luchnos is a little lamp, see. Christ is the light and we're little lamps. He says h's a shining and a burning little lamp. He's not the phos, remember what John said, "I am not that light...I'm not that light, I'm come to bear witness of that light who is Christ." I'm just a little lamp and a lamp doesn't have its own light and a lamp has to be lit by somebody else and a lamp only lights a little tiny area. But it's still a great epitaph, isn't it? Even if he was just a burning and shining little lamp. John was effective, burning and shining.

And you know, he really was, like moths to the flame, those Jewish people came out of the countries...out of the cities into the country to see John. He drew them. And they went out there and the crowds came, Herod himself came out there, Matthew 6 tells us. He drew them like moths to the light. They were drawn by his testimony.

But out of that tribute to John springs a bitter rebuke. Look at it at the end of verse 35, "And you were willing for a season to rejoice in his light," and there you have the word phos because a little lamp gives off the right kind of light. Light is still the light of Christ, even though it's in a little lamp. And even though you're only a lamp, the light you give is Christ, isn't it? It's the phos light given off in the little lamp, the true light. And they came out, it says there, that you were willing for a season to rejoice in his light. You went out there, "Oh, it's so wonderful to have a prophet in Israel, 400 years we've had nobody around, now we've got a prophet and look at him, he's a fascinating character, strangest clothes, sort of a modified Tarzan suit made out of camel's hair, has a very strange diet of grasshoppers and wild honey. Oh he's a most dynamic young preacher, you've got to hear this guy." And the mobs are going out there. Fabulous, we've got a prophet at last. They were eating it up.

And then John got out there and he started hammering on repentance and saying you're in sin, you need to get down on your knees before God and repent and turn in faith to God. And they said, "Oh, I don't like him so well. Beginning to step on our ecclesiastical toes." And they didn't like it.

So it was a little while they rejoiced in his light and then when the light was not the kind of light they liked, they wanted to get rid of him. They didn't want the light. You know why? Men love darkness rather than light. For what reason? Because their deeds are evil and they don't want to come to the light because the light will shine and reprove their deeds. So for a little season they kind of bashed, you know, they were kind of like gnats dancing in the sunlight. Oh it was just a glorious little heyday for a while until John started getting too personal, talking about repentance. And then they really turned him off. And by the time chapter 5 is being...is happening right here in chapter 5, John is no longer in the wilderness preaching, you know where he is? He's in prison and he's waiting for the day when he loses his head and it gets served on a platter. That's how far it went from rejoicing in his light to taking his life by chopping his head off.

You see, you cannot, say it again, you cannot reject the truth of the preacher of God without it turning to hostility. You just don't hang in some kind of nebulous nowhere. And so Jesus says you went out to John but you were phony about it, you were insincere. And when the message came and it was repentance and faith and all of that and the declaration that I am the Christ, you didn't like it. And your rejoicing turned to hatred and persecution and ultimately John lost his life. Now the Jews did not kill John but they without any qualms let him be turned over to the Gentiles who did it.

So Jesus says My first witness is John. And in effect He's saying to them, "And you've already heard him and you thought he was so great, how could you think so much of him and not hear what he said?" And again that's hitting at the hypocrisy of their religion.

All right, so then the first of testimony is the testimony of the forerunner's witness. Now secondly the testimony of the finished works, verse 36. Christ says I'm going to bring another witness in here to show you that I'm God and this one's even greater than John. Verse 36, "I have greater witness than that of John for the works which the Father hath given Me to finish, the same works that I do bear witness of Me that the Father hath sent Me."

You know what Christ said? John's testimony is fine. You know what's more effective than John's testimony, Christ says? My own life and works. The glorious life and works of Christ speak of His deity. Nicodemus came to Jesus and said, "We know that Thou art a man sent from God because nobody can do the things that Thou doest except...what?...God sent Him." He be sent by God. You can't do the things Jesus did and not come from God. Nicodemus recognized that. It's all over John's gospel. Over in chapter 10, over in chapter 14, again and again and again he says His works declare who He is. Start looking at the life of Christ, you can't help but see that He's God.

But not everybody does. Isn't it amazing? Not everybody does. I meet them every morning five days a week at the Post Office with their little books announcing to the world that Christ is not God. Blasphemy. Listen, you see Him create wine and then tell me He's not God. You see Him heal from

a distance of 20 miles somebody that He's never seen with a visible eye and then tell me He's not God. You see Him speak to a man 38 years impotent, tell that man rise up, take up your bed and walk, and the man does it and then tell me He's a man. You hear Him call the dead to life as they come out of the graves and then tell me that's not deity. You see Him touch deaf ears so that where there was never hearing there's crystal-clear sound and tell me that's not God. You see Him touch blind eyes so that they see in complete focus, leper's skin so that it becomes pure and then tell me that's not God. You watch Him take a handful of loaves and a couple of fishes and feed approximately 15,000 people and then tell me He's not God. See His feet as they touch the troubled waters of the Galilee Sea and He walks undisturbed across its waves and then tell me He's not God. On second thought, don't tell me, I won't believe it...the incomparable Christ, the Son of the living God is so obvious you have to be blind and that's exactly what men are not to see it.

Notice in verse 36 an important word, and there's so many key words in the Bible. The word "given" in the middle of verse 36, it says, "The Father hath given Me to finish certain works." Now does this mean that Christ didn't have the ability to do them until God gave Him the ability? No, we talked about this last week, here's just a refresher. When Christ was with God in heaven in eternity past He was equal, right? In every way...every way. In Philippians 2, "He thought it not robbery or something to hold onto to be equal with God," totally equal. "But He stripped Himself and gave it all up and became one of us." When Christ came to earth He set aside all of His attributes, set them aside, all of them. Then in effect He said this, "God, I'll only use the ones that You give Me to use." He restricted Himself in humility to the operation of subordination to God. That's what His humility was. He said, "God, I'll only use the ones You want Me to use." So here you have that right here. The Father has given Me back of some of My own powers to do some things that He wants Me to do.

It wasn't that He was omnipotent, what did He say when He was standing right there in the garden and He said, "If I wanted to I could call 40 legions of angels," right? Why didn't He? Cause the Father hadn't given HIm to do that. He could have but He didn't because He restricted Himself to that operation of the divine will of the Father. And so God gave Him certain works to do. You remember His works, we've just gone over them...the healing, the walking on water, the feeding the multitude, the touching of the lives of people, all the works of Christ. You can't look at those and not conclude that He wasn't the Son of God. And then over in John 17:4, I just love this, He was praying that glorious prayer and He said, "O Father," He said, "I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do. Therefore glorify Me as I was before the world began." He says, "I'm done, Father, I'm ready to come back." He did the works God gave Him to do, the works of Jesus Christ are testimony to who He is.

Think of His resurrection, fantastic miracle. It always amazes me when some peabrain character comes along and says, "Well He didn't rise, the disciples stole His body." Sure. When He died they scattered all over the place, eleven disorganized, crying, weeping, lost individuals tiptoeing through the whole Roman army, rolling away the stone and stealing the body. And then after they stole the

body eleven out of twelve of them went out and died as martyrs for a stolen body. Sounds to me like a band of half wits to pull something like that. Jesus Christ rose from the dead. Everything in the world gives evidence of it. Most of all the empty tomb. See the works of Christ and tell me He's not God, I don't believe it.

So we've seen two witnesses...the finished works. Thirdly, the Father's word, verses 32, 37 and 38. Verse 32 goes, connected with 37, verse 32, "There's another that beareth witness of Me, besides Myself, and I know that the witness which He witness of Me is true." Now verse 37, "And the Father Himself who has sent Me hath borne witness of Me." In other words, He is saying here God Himself, His own word. Now I'm not talking about

Scripture here, but God's word bears witness.

You say, "Well what is God's word if it isn't Scripture?" Oh, here's a fabulous truth. I really got blessed on this one. He says the Father word witnesses as to who I am. You say, "What is this?" Listen, this is conditional. Look at verse 37 in the middle, He says to these Jews, "You have neither heard His voice at any time nor seen His shape and you have not His word abiding in you." Ouch! Oh, what a shot to the hearts of legalists who made their boasts in the knowledge of the Word. He said you don't even have His Word in you. Why? "For whom He hath sent Him ye...what?...believe not."

What is this all about? Listen to this, do you get the message of that statement? He says to these Jewish leaders who had spent all their lives studying about God, "You don't know anything about God cause you don't know Me." Whew...that's blasphemous egoism or it's true. They prided themselves, they boasted themselves in the knowledge of God and here Jesus says you don't know anything about God. Why? Because you don't know Me, you don't believe in Me. And there are people all over our world in all kinds of religions and all kinds of denominations and all kinds of systems who think they know God but they don't because they don't know Jesus Christ. And listen, Christ is the theme of all God's revelation, isn't He? He's the embodiment of all God's person, the expressed image of God's person. And if a man rejects Christ he has no knowledge of God. Jesus is the only source of knowledge about God. John 14:6 Jesus said, "No man comes unto the Father...what?...but by Me, I am the way, the truth and the life." You don't know Me, you've got to way to God, no truth and you're dead, and you're dead, ignorant and lost without Christ. That's them.

But for the believer who believes in Christ, he hears the Word of God in his heart doesn't he? Giving evidence that Christ is God. Let me show you this, 1 John 5:9 and 10, "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater," right? John the Baptist's testimony was good, but how about having the direct witness of God that Christ is His Son? Fabulous. Watch this, "This is the witness of God which He's testified of His Son." Now here comes the key. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness...where?...in himself." Now you see what He's saying here?

Now go back to John 5, focus back on verse 37 and 38. He's saying, "Listen, this is not an external witness," right? It's internal and it comes only to those who love Christ. Isn't this what Paul meant in Romans 8:16 when he said, "We have the Spirit bearing witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God"? In other words, for the believer there's the internal, inside voice of God corroborating who Christ really is. What a tremendous evidence. But He says to them, "You wouldn't know that because you don't believe in Me.

Well, we've seen the forerunner's witness, the finished works and the Father's word, now the climax. The climax is the faithful writings, number four testimony, the faithful writings. And this refers to the Old Testament. Notice verse 39, the word "search" in the Greek can either be an indicative or an imperative, it can either be a command...search the Scriptures!...as King James or Authorized has it. Or it can be indicative...ye search the Scriptures. I choose the indicative just because that's my prerogative, some people choose the other. I think it makes a little more sense to say it's indicative. In other words, it would read this way, and I read it this way in the Scripture earlier, "Ye search the Scriptures," in other words He's not saying do it, He's saying you're doing it, you are doing it, and they did, the Jews faithfully searched the Scriptures, "Ye search the Scriptures...now watch it...for in them...and here's the key...ye think ye have eternal life." You know what that is saying in essence? You don't have it, you just think you do. You search the Scriptures and in them you think you have eternal life. But have you ever stopped to realize, you know what those Scriptures are talking about? Look at the end of verse 39, "They are they which testify of...whom?...of Me."

Now in the next verse, verse 40, read "but" instead of "and," same word chi, "But you will not come to Me that you might have life." In other words, He's saying look at the faithful writings of the Old Testament, they from one end to the other end talk about Me, Me, Me on every page and you don't see it. And you won't come to Me. All the Old Testament types, all the Old Testament prophecy, all the Old Testament patterns, all the Old Testament pictures, all the Old Testament period pictures Christ. And He says you don't see it and they testify of Me on every page.

Isn't it amazing how you could look into the Word of God and be so ignorant? But, you know, that's going on today. You know, all these strange groups and cults and sects and all, they spend all their time studying the Bible and I'll tell you, they never come out with a messier mess, it's impossible to understand it. In fact, you can't understand it on your own, you've got to have "Science and Health," and "Key to it," or something. They've got it all confused and they study the Bible all the time and come up with all the wrong answers. Why? Because it's just ink and paper without the living Spirit of God within the believer to teach them. So He's saying you search the Scriptures because you think just by searching the Scriptures you have life, but you don't because life is in Me and you won't come to Me. You think you have eternal life in verse 39 but you won't come to Me that you might really have life.

Isn't that a sad, sad thing? God blessed those dear lost people, the tragedy, the broken heart of God over Israel thinking they had eternal life and refusing it when it stared them in the face. He says I was all through the Old Testament, you read it but you didn't get it, you didn't read the message. You wouldn't come to Me. Oh, this is exactly the plight of Israel.

Paul paints this so beautifully in Romans 10. They were so wrapped up in the legalism of it all that they missed the person that was there, Jesus Christ. They were so busy taking care of the little tiny details of the law that they missed the Christ. Romans 10, listen, "Brethren," and this is our prayer too, and ought to be our prayer, "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved, for I bear them witness, they have a zeal for God." They're in the Scriptures, they're searching the Scriptures, they think they have eternal life, they have a zeal for God, "But not according to knowledge." And here's their problem. "They being ignorant of God's righteousness go about to establish their own righteousness." That's the problem. They miss the point. Instead of taking what God has provided in Christ as the way of righteousness, they try to establish their own. This is what people are doing today, trying to work their way into heaven. Sad thing.

And so the same challenge that Jesus, in effect, rather subtlety throws at these Jewish people, we give to you this morning. If you're desiring to know the truth, if you're desiring to experience abundant and eternal life, then look in the Word of God and discover the Christ that's there. For Peter said, "Neither is there salvation in any other, there's none other name under heaven given men whereby we must be saved."

Verse 41 then, He says, "I receive not honor from men." Now why would He say that? Well He's reading their minds. Remember back in John 2 where we saw that He doesn't need to have told to Him what men are thinking, He can read their minds. And in their minds undoubtedly they're thinking something like this, "Oh, this is...I can't take this." Here they're standing there with Jesus and they're saying, "Oh this man's got a monstrous ego problem. He wants us to believe that He is God. Unbelievable. He's telling us that we don't know the Scripture. He wants us to bow down to Him." On the contrary, He says in verse 41, "I receive not honor from men." I don't want your honor. I'm going to say this and take it as it's said, listen to this, glory from unsaved people Jesus doesn't want. Did you get that? Do you know why? Because it's the infinite point of hypocrisy. You say why. Listen, for you as an unbeliever or for any unbeliever to give some kind of token homage to Jesus Christ while refusing the message which He came to bring is some kind of hypocrisy, isn't it?

Toot Shore(?) owns a bunch in nightclubs in New York made this statement one day, he said, "I wouldn't be where I am today if it weren't for the Big Man upstairs." God doesn't want that. No, to say, "Oh it's so nice to have You up there, Big Man upstairs," God doesn't want that kind of stuff. If you're not willing to give your life to Jesus Christ and accept His death in your behalf, then don't sit around paying Him some hypocritical tokens. It's meaningless, hypocrisy.

He says I don't want your honor. You say, "Doesn't He want anything from men?" Yeah. "What does He want?" Look at verse 42, I'll tell you what He wants, "I know you that you have not the..." What? You know what He wants from men? What? He wants love, first love. He says I'm not going to receive your praise because it's loveless...it's loveless. I want your love and then your praise. And do you know what Christ wants out of the believer? Does He want praise from us? You better believe it. Does He want glory from us? Yeah, everything, not from the world, from us. Why? Because it's the offspring of what? Of love. I want the praise of love, Christ said, not...not self-centered egotism.

So, in verse 43 He says, "I am come in My Father's name, I came in God's name and you received Me not. If another shall come in his own name, him will you receive." Isn't that amazing? They wouldn't receive the true Messiah but do you know since that day until the present day there have been 60 plus Messiahs in Israel that some number or more of the Jews have received? Simon Barkokba(??) in 132 to 135 was acclaimed as Messiah and people began to die for him. Today within the last ten years there is a dentist in Israel that is being heralded as the Messiah. And you know, there's one other one that's going to come, too, and he's called the Son of Perdition in 2 Thessalonians and he's called the Antichrist, the Beast, the World Ruler, the Prince that shall come...you know, they're going to think he's their Messiah, too. Isn't that sad? They would accept every Messiah but the one that is their Messiah. That's what Jesus said prophetically, verse 43, "I came in My Father's name, you didn't receive Me. But if another comes in His name, you're going to receive him," and they have.

And then He kind of pensively says in verse 44, "How can ye believe who receive honor one of another and seek not the honor that comes from God only?" In other words, you're so caught up in self-esteem and seeking glory from each other that you couldn't see glory from God if it hit you in the face cause here it is right in front of you. Here was the Son of God standing there. They were so busy praising each other and trying to build up their own glory, they couldn't see the glory of God when it came.

Then in verse 45 He sums it up. You know, when you live like this there's going to be a judgment. Ignorance is judged. Verse 45, "Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father," watch this, "There is one that accuses you, even Moses in whom ye trust." Now this absolutely must have been a destroying statement by Christ. I don't know what happened but I can imagine them tearing their hair out when He said this. Their Moses was the one that everything revolved around. They were in love with Moses. Everything Moses said and did was gospel to them. Moses was their author, Moses was their father spiritually. Moses was everything to them. And He says, "Moses on the contrary is going to be your accuser." Whew, how do? Verse 46, "For had you believed in Moses you would have believed Me." Why? "For he...what?...wrote of Me." If you don't believe in Me then you don't believe in Moses either because Moses was writing about Me. Oh what an indictment.

Can you imagine the tragedy in their hearts of the life time spent learning and then finding out they knew nothing? If you would have believed Moses you would have believed Me, he wrote about Me...all the types, all the pictures of the paschal lamb, all the suffering, all Christ...Christ, Christ, Christ on every page. But He says, "How could I expect you to believe Me if you didn't even believe Moses?" Verse 47, "If you believe not his writings, you love him, you worship him, you believe not him, how should you believe in My words whom you hate?" What a shot. They thought that Moses was their Savior. They thought they prided themselves on keeping Mosaic Law and He says Moses is going to condemn you. If you don't believe Moses' words whom you love, how can I expect you to believe Mine?

And that's the confrontation right there. It ends in verse 47 on a tragic note. Jesus declares "I'm God." The Jewish leaders conclude, "Not You're not, You're a blasphemer." And they stand apart. And I give you the same choice this morning. He's either God or He's a blasphemer. If He's God, give Him your life. If He's a blasphemer, get out of the church, it's a mockery.

Our Father, we thank You this morning for Your Word to us.

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