

## **John on Jesus - To Honor God the Father, Honor God the Son**

**Sign Title: To Honor the God Father, Honor God the Son**

**September 2, 2012**

Good morning Faith Church. For those of you who are new, my name is Kurt. I am one of the pastors. We are working our way through the Gospel of John. This morning we are at John 5:16.

This morning, we hit a new part of John. Today isn't a story about Jesus and real people. Instead, this is the first of Jesus' teachings about his relationship to God the Father.

Let's put our finger in the text at John 5:16 where we begin reading God's Word.

**And this was why the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because he was doing these things on the Sabbath. John 5:16 (ESV)**

Jesus' healing of the invalid was not his first healing on the Sabbath. The word "things" is plural. Jesus did multiple miracles and healings on the Sabbath. Every time he accomplished a miracle on the Sabbath, it was poking a stick in the eye of the Jews. Their identity was about what good religious people didn't do on the Sabbath. Healings was on their list.

Jesus did a Sabbath healing. Jab! Right in the eye. The next week, he did two more healings on the Sabbath. Jab! Jab! Right in the eye. That can become irritating. While the Jews fumed about Jesus healing on the Sabbath, Jesus told them why they shouldn't have a problem with what he was doing.

**Jesus claims to be God.**

**But Jesus answered them, "My Father is working until now, and I am working." John 5:17 (ESV)**

We need a little background to understand this. The Jews passed the time by making lists of things people could not do on the Sabbath. Some wise guy started wondering if God had to keep the list. They wondered if God kept the Sabbath. This was the coffee shop question of the day. If the Sabbath is such a big deal did God need to keep it? The question was finally answered with rabbis deciding God was exempt. If God stopped working, the universe would fall apart.

In Jesus' day, everybody knew about the big discussion over God keeping the Sabbath. Everybody knew that God didn't have to observe the Sabbath because he kept the world running.

Jesus picked this up and used it as an explanation for why he could heal on the Sabbath. "If you have no problem with God, my father, working on the Sabbath, then you should have no problem with me working on the Sabbath because I am his son."

How do you think that went over? Does anybody think the Jews were bent out of shape after Jesus answer? Yes! John the apostle, who wrote the Gospel of John, was aware that most people who read Jesus' answer are not aware of the historical background about God the Father having a free pass to not keep his own Sabbath. John the apostle adds a summary statement in case we missed what just happened.

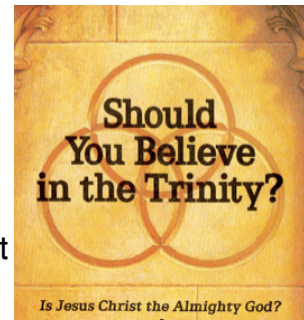
This was why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God. John 5:18 (ESV)

Last week I told you that from this point forward things go down hill. Jesus called God his Father and claimed to be equal with God. That puts him in a

different category from the rest of us. John 5:18 is one of the big verses in the Bible. Circle it twice in your outline. Jesus said he is God. This is very important. Why is this verse such a big deal?

When I grew up, I wondered about the differences between religions. How did I know the church I grew up in told me the truth about God? I set out on a mission to explore other religions. What I discovered is every other religion either tells you Jesus never claimed to be God or he is not God. Jesus is the dividing line that defines the difference between Christianity and all other religions.

The whole purpose of this passage and this sermon is to beat into our heads one super-important truth. Jesus is God. Let me give you an example. When I finished college, a man from the Jehovah's Witnesses tried to convince me I should become a Jehovah's Witness. He gave me a pamphlet that talked about Jesus. Let me read you a line from it.



Jesus never claimed to be God. Everything he said about himself indicates that he did not consider himself equal to God in any way - not in power, not in knowledge, not in age. -*Why You Should Not Believe The Trinity, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, 1989, pg. 16.*

What did we just read? Put your finger in the text. Why did the Jews want to kill him? Jesus claimed to be equal with God. A couple great lessons here.

First, don't believe everything you read about the Bible, especially on the Internet. Check the Bible out for yourself. There is a ton of stuff out there that is flat wrong.

Second, all religions are not the same. Later this morning we will learn that if you don't believe Jesus is who he claimed to be, you do NOT know God. The Jehovah's Witnesses do NOT know God. I don't care how religious they are. I don't care how respectable they look. I don't care how many orphans they feed. If anyone doesn't believe Jesus is who he claimed to be they do NOT know God. I am not trying to be mean-spirited. I am simply being truthful.

Now we have a problem.

### **If Jesus is God, and the Father is God, do we still have one God?**

We are about to put on the intellectual waders and head for the marsh. There is some heavy thinking here.

Every day the Jews say the Shema.

**"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one." Deuteronomy 6:4 (ESV)**

The Jews pounded this into their heads. The cultures around them worshipped multiple gods. WRONG! Do not pass go. Do not collect \$200. There is only one God. What about other cultures that worship one god but it is a different god? WRONG! There is only ONE God. The Jews know this God and worship him.

That is still true today. Allah, of Islam is not God. He is a demon. Zeus is not God. Krishna is not God. There is only one God. How do we put this together with Jesus claiming he is God and his father is God? The next passage explains.

**So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise. For the Father loves the Son and shows him all**

that he himself is doing. And greater works than these will he show him, so that you may marvel.” John 5:19–20 (ESV)

Jesus begins by saying “Truly, truly.” We learned earlier in our study that when a sentence begins with “truly, truly,” this is the way the Bible says, “I know you are not going to believe this, but this is the honest truth.”

### **The Son only does what he sees the Father doing.**

The heavenly Father decides to do something and that is what the Son does. God the Son is separate from the Father but his joy is in completely submitting his will to the Father so they operate as one.

When my kids were young, we played a game. They stepped on my feet; I held their hands, and we walked around the house. Where I walked, they walked. What I held, they held. The key to making this work was they needed to completely submit themselves to me. When they did, they did what their father was doing. I know every analogy breaks down but this is similar to how Jesus describes his interaction with his heavenly father. He loves the Father so much that he completely surrenders his will to his father’s will. Even when God the Father’s will is that God the Son humble himself to take on flesh and to die on a cross in our place for our sins, the Son does it out of honor and love for his father.

### **The Father loves the Son and shares all he does with him.**

Not only does the Son joyfully surrender his will to the Father in complete trust, but the Father loves the Son so much that he shows him everything he does. There is nothing the Father does that is not revealed to his son. We have God the Father and God the Son as separate parts of the Godhead, but because

the Son so joyfully submits his will to his father and because the Father so completely loves the Son that he shares with him all things, they act as one.

What we have is a picture of the perfect relationship. The Father and Son are so close, they are effectively one.

There are a few things we can learn from this. The relationship between God the Father and God the Son is a picture-perfect relationship. If we want to discover how a picture-perfect relationship works, we can take some cues from this. Let me simply point out two. There is submission and transparency.

These are also key components to any good relationship here on Earth, especially the marriage relationship. Genesis 2 tells us the wife was created as the helpmate for her husband. Ephesians 5 says that she is equal in value but her role is to submit and support her husband's leadership in the home. When that isn't taking place, the marriage will not work.

Loving transparency is another key. The Bible speaks about physical, mental and emotional nakedness being some of the qualities in a good marriage. Love shows itself in transparency. Ladies, if you like a man because he is the strong, silent type, lose him. You want the strong, transparent type.

The Jews were amazed that Jesus called God his own father. Jesus explains to them that the only thing he does is what the Father is doing. The Father tells him all things so there is no separation between God the Father and the God the Son. It is God the Father doing the miracles and the healings. That is why they are done on the Sabbath. Now the fun begins.

## **Miracles were only the beginning.**

And greater works than these will he show him, so that you may marvel. John 5:20 (ESV)

How many of you think Jesus is a big deal? We are about to learn that Jesus is a much bigger deal than we realize. Let me show you what I mean.

### **God the Father delegated to Jesus the right to give life and raise the dead.**

For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will. John 5:21 (ESV)

“Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself. John 5:25–26 (ESV)

In the Old Testament, it is clear that only God the Father has the ability to raise the dead.

The Lord kills and brings to life; he brings down to Sheol and raises up. 1 Samuel 2:6 (ESV)

Who did God the Father give the ability to raise the dead? Jesus. Why did God the Father delegate to Jesus the right to raise the dead? God the Father wants us to know Jesus is not some kind of secondhand deity from a thrift store. In John 11, when Jesus said, “Lazarus, come out,” and he raised Lazarus from the dead, if he had not specified Lazarus by name, everybody would have come out of the grave. Someday, that is exactly what will happen. God the Father gave to Jesus that authority!

### **God the Father delegated to Jesus the right to judge the dead.**

The Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, John 5:22 (ESV)

And he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man. Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment. John 5:27–29 (ESV)

The Jews understood that one day God the Father would raise the dead, and everyone will be judged by God the Father.

“Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?” Genesis 18:25 (ESV)

And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. Daniel 12:2 (ESV)

God the Father delegates his authority to judge the Earth to God the Son. Some day it is the voice of Jesus that will call all the dead back to life. Everyone will stand in front of Jesus to be judged for their lives.

By the way, notice there are two resurrections. There is a resurrection of life. That is when Christians are judged by Jesus for how they lived their lives. Everyone in that resurrection lives in the new heavens and earth because of their faith in Jesus, but they are also rewarded by Jesus for how we lived out their faith on this earth. The other resurrection is a resurrection of judgment. Jesus is also the judge at that resurrection. He will judge people for how they lived but rather than a judgment of rewards because their sins are unforgiven, it is a judgment to determine the severity, not the longevity of their eternal condemnation in the Lake of Fire. Why is there a judgment? God is just. Hell is fair. All sin results in eternal condemnation, but some sin deserves greater condemnation. Jesus is in charge of all judgment. I love the way it is summed up at the end of Matthew.

And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.” Matthew 28:18 (ESV)

**God the Father's will is that we honor God the Son.**

...that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. John 5:23a (ESV)

Why did God the Father delegate all authority to his son? God the Father's desire is that all honor and worship go to Jesus. God the Father wants Jesus to be honored just like God the Father is honored. Right now, in worship, the best way we can please God is to honor and worship Jesus. Making Jesus the focus of our lives and worship brings joy to God the Father. God the Father is not insulted when we worship and honor God the Son. He is not insulted; rather, he is delighted.

Here is some application. When we worship, worship Jesus. I listen to Christian preachers and Christian programs and everybody talking about God in the generic. In one sense, that is good. It is good to worship God. In another sense, that is incredibly deficient. Now that Jesus has come, God the Father wants us to worship and honor Jesus. God the Father is not offended when we focus on Jesus, instead he is delighted!

**Let the New Testament sharpen our application of the Old Testament.**

The way the Bible works is that it draws us a picture of God with growing clarity. If all we had was Genesis, we wouldn't know much about God. We would only have rough lines and big pictures. By the time we get to the end of the Old Testament in Malachi, we understand God much better because so much more of the picture is drawn. When Jesus came in the New Testament, there is this quantum leap forward in our understanding of God. No longer did God talk

through a prophet. God took on flesh and talked to us directly. Here is an example:

**Worship the Lord in the splendor of holiness; tremble before him, all the earth!**  
**Psalm 96:9 (ESV)**

This is a great verse. Now that Jesus has come, how does God the Father want us to apply Psalm 96:9 today? We are to worship Jesus. The specific worship of the Son brings delight to the heavenly Father. Let your New Testament inform your understanding of the Old Testament.

**Those who do not honor the Son, do not honor the Father.**

**Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him. John 5:23 (ESV)**

Those who do not see Jesus for who he is, who do not honor him and worship him; they fail to honor God the Father. If we fail to make Jesus the main event of our faith and life, we fail in our honor of God the Father.

**A church that is weak on Jesus is a weak church.**

One of the reasons churches are powerless is because they don't make enough of Jesus. God is generic in their eyes. Jesus is either not worshipped or he is treated like power windows. He is an accessory. Jesus is a big deal. Now that Jesus has come, if we fail to worship and honor God the Son, we fail to worship and honor God the Father.

**Religions that do not honor Jesus as God do not know God.**

Earlier we talked about the Jehovah's Witnesses. We know they don't honor Jesus as God. According to the Bible, they do not know God. Now let's talk about Islam. Let me quote from a man who claims to be a Muslim scholar.

There is no single scriptural text in which Jesus claimed explicitly to be divine. Nor is there any implicit text, which can be interpreted exclusively to mean a claim of divinity. - <http://www.sultan.org/articles/pjncd.html>

Where does Jesus claim to be God? John 5. Don't believe everything you read on the Internet. Put your finger in the book. Jesus clearly claims to be God. Let me quote from the end of the article to read his summary statement on what Muslims believe about Jesus.

These dogmas (claiming Jesus is God) are offensive to God and to Jesus, associating other (Jesus) with God in His exclusive divine attributes. Indeed, associationism (claiming Jesus is one with God the Father) is the cardinal sin that can never be forgiven should one depart this earthly life insisting on it. - <http://www.sultan.org/articles/pjncd.html>

According to Islam, if you claim Jesus is God, it is the unforgivable sin. According to the Bible, if you don't honor God the Son as God, you don't honor God the Father. To not honor the Son as God is to dishonor the Father. God the Father handed all authority over to God the Son so all will eventually bend the knee and honor him.

Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life. John 5:24 (ESV)

Time for another shocking statement. Jesus uses the phrase "truly, truly" again. It is only those who hear Jesus' words and believe he is sent from God that have eternal life. Nobody else has eternal life. They die and face judgment. Why is Jesus the only way? Once the son of God came to earth, God's plan is that everyone honor his Son. Only those who recognize Jesus as God have eternal life. That cuts out Jehovah's Witnesses, Muslims, Mormons, Hindus, Buddhists plus many others. Since they refuse to honor the Son, they do not

honor the Father. It is only those who honor the Son of God who have eternal life with God. I didn't write the book; I just put my finger in the book and read it.

And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life. 1 John 5:11–12 (ESV)

**Life from Jesus is not just in the future, it is NOW.**

Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life. "Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live." John 5:24–25 (ESV)

This is exciting. When we first read this, it sounds like those who hear Jesus' word and believe him as the Son of God will have eternal life after they die. This is the way the Jews viewed eternal life. They thought it was all future. Here is the amazing part. Those who acknowledge Jesus as the Son of God have eternal life not just in the future but it begins now. Eternity overlaps into the present.

Look at the tense of the verbs. They are all present tense, not future.

- Has eternal life NOW.
- Has passed from death to life NOW.
- Is NOW here.

It is Jesus' power that will raise the dead on the last day. As a down-payment of what is to come, when we worship Jesus as God, he breathes life into our hearts and transforms our lives today. He takes us from a life that is locked in the grip of sin to a life that is changed and alive with God. Look how Paul describes it.

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. 2 Corinthians 5:17 (ESV)

Everyone here this morning can be transformed into a completely new creation by coming to Jesus, believing he is the God in the flesh and asking his death on the cross to take away our sins once and for all.

It's all about Jesus. God the Father's desire is that we worship and honor God the Son. As evidence of this, God the Son transforms our lives today when we recognize him for who he is and respond in worship.

The more God the Son is the focus of Faith Church, the more God the Father is pleased with Faith Church. The greatest honor to God the Father is to honor his son.

## Conclusion

This past week, we had a meeting with a group from Illinois that is helping us develop plans to open another Faith Church campus in Spencer. It was a great meeting. Everyone is excited. You will receive information in a few days on our next steps.

Why do we want to open another campus? Aren't there plenty of churches? How many churches focus their worship of God the Father through God the Son? I don't know. I do know that most churches make too little of Jesus. As a result, they are weak and powerless, and lives do not change. Many people in our region will not spend an eternity with God, because they are not approaching the Father through the Son.

This next year, with faith that Jesus will provide and courage to take the next steps, we are going to do something about this with another campus.

The way to honor God the Father is to honor God the Son.

## Prayer

Jesus, thank you for submitting yourself to your Father's will. You humbled yourself to take on flesh. You submitted to your Father's will to die on a cross in our place for our sin. As a result of your submission to your Father's will, your Father has so delighted in you that he delegated all his authority to you. We worship you for saving us. We want to make a big deal about you.

As we look into another campus, we know it is only possible if you make it happen. We step forward in faith asking you would help make your name famous throughout our region.



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