

From **Jn. 5:17-47** Jesus explains His healing a lame man on the Sabbath. He asserts His equality with His Father and thus His right to work on the Sabbath just as the Father did. He also claimed equality with God by His works, giving life, receiving honor, and executing final judgment on all. How do we know Jesus is the truth and is telling the truth? Jesus reveals credible witnesses (5 of them) who back up His claims. (1) The witness of Jesus Himself (:31-32, also **8:12-18**). (2) The witness of John the Baptist, the promised forerunner, whom the Jews had already questioned in **1:19-27** (:33-35). (3) The witness of Jesus' works (:36). (4) The witness of the Father (:37-38). And (5), the witness of the Scriptures (:39-47). This was in line with **Dt. 19:15** read. See **Dt. 17:6; Mt. 18:16; Jn. 8:17; 2 Cor. 13:1; 1 Tim. 5:19; Heb. 10:28**.

In **5:30**, Jesus makes it clear He can do nothing on His own initiative so by accusing Him of wrongdoing, the Jewish leaders were accusing the Father too.

**Read :31-47. :31-32 If I alone testify about Myself, My testimony is not true** [admissible as legal evidence]. **There is another who testifies of Me, and I know that the testimony which He gives about Me is true. The 1<sup>st</sup> witness is Jesus Himself.** Yet, "If I testify concerning Myself, My testimony is not valid in your estimation." **Read 8:12-18. "...My testimony is true (valid), for I know where I came from and where I am going; but you do not know where I come from or where I am going." There is another who testifies of Me...**

**:33-35 You have sent to John, and he has testified to the truth. :34 But the testimony which I receive is not from man, but I say these things so that you may be saved. :35 He [John] was the lamp that was burning and was shining and you were willing to rejoice for a while (lit. an hour) in his light.** See **1:6-8,15,19-36, 3:22-30. The 2<sup>nd</sup> witness is the Baptist.** John testified that Jesus was the long-expected, long-predicted LORD (**1:23**) and the Lamb of God (**1:29**), would be the Baptizer with the Spirit (**1:33**), and was the Son of God (**1:34**).

John was one witness in their midst whom they knew. John came to prepare the nation for the Messiah/Lord and to identify Him when He came. Had the Jews believed the Baptist, they would have believed Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing they would have had life in Jesus' name (**20:31**). John was a small oil lamp. The Baptist as a lamp attracted great crowds of people. They had been willing to rejoice for a while in the light of the Baptist's lamp. But they had not been willing to accept his testimony regarding Jesus the Light. They rejected that part of John's testimony. "Why didn't you pay attention to the credible witness you had?"

**:36 But the testimony which I have is greater than the testimony of John; for the works which the Father has given Me to accomplish—the very works that I do—testify about Me, that the Father has sent Me. The 3<sup>rd</sup> testimony: the 'works' of Jesus.** The Father's own testimony by the works of Jesus surpasses the Baptist's testimony. The miracles/signs of Jesus were witnesses to who Jesus was. Nicodemus had recognized that no one could do these 'signs' unless God is with Him (**3:2**). Yet what Jesus is referring to at this moment was the healing of the without-strength man at the Bethesda pool, one of the seven signs John picked out to emphasize who Jesus was: (Turning water into

wine, healing of an official's son, healing of a without-strength man, feeding of 1000s of people, walking on water, giving sight to a blind man, and raising Lazarus from the dead). These works were a seal of the Father's approval, specifically of the fact that the Father had sent Jesus and had strengthened Him to do these works. Notice, Jesus mentions His works to point, not to Himself, but to His Father. Jesus interpreted His actions by the declaration that He was working together with His Father. See **Mt. 11:2-6, Lk. 7:18-22**.

**:37-38 And the Father who sent Me, He has testified of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time nor seen His form. You do not have His word (logos) abiding in you, for you do not believe Him whom He sent. The 4<sup>th</sup> witness is the Father.** Yes, a voice from heaven spoke: **12:28, Mt. 3:17, 17:5; Mk. 1:11, 9:7; Lk. 3:22, 9:35; 2 Pet. 1:17**. There is also the witness of the Spirit mentioned in **16:8-11**. Additionally, there's the witness of the Father to Him in the OT Scriptures, referring to **:39-47**. And finally, there is the witness of the Father in the hearts of believers (**1 Jn. 5:9-11**).

"The Father sent Me and has testified of Me, but you haven't heard His voice or seen His form. His word is not abiding in you. Why? For you don't believe Me whom He has sent!" Hearing His word and believing Jesus are crucial.

They refused to listen to Jesus, displaying their total ignorance of God, since those who reject Jesus don't know the Father (**5:23, 8:19, 14:6, 15:23**).

**Read :39-47. :39-40 You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me; :40 and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life. The 5<sup>th</sup> witness is from the OT.** Jesus thought it impossible to study the OT and not come to Him. They were missing out on eternal life and the Father's love by their unwillingness to believe. Glory/honor/fame from the one true God! "I'm not your accuser. Moses is! If you truly believed him, you would believe Me and My words."

'Search' implies diligent scrutiny in investigating the Scriptures to find eternal life. They knew the Bible's words ("the Pharisees were fanatical in their preoccupation with Scripture"). And if we follow where they lead, they will bring us to Jesus, and so we find the One who is Life. "The purpose of the Bible is like a window, that you may look through it and see Jesus." They searched the Scriptures to find arguments to support their own beliefs. "You're blind! In your unbelief, you have rejected the One who is life, Eternal Life."

**:41-42 I do not receive glory from men; :42 but I know you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves.** He received His glory from His Father. "If you had the love of God within, you'd listen to the testimony of Scripture regarding Me." The proof was that they were more concerned with the 'law' than with a without-strength man who had been healed!

**:43-44 I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, you will receive him. :44 How can you believe, when you receive glory/honor/fame from one another and you do not seek the glory/honor/fame that is from the one & only God?** "I've come in My Father's name, but you've rejected both Him and Me. Look what you're doing!"

**If another comes in his own name.** Most believe our Lord is referring to

the Antichrist, but it could be any man. They would readily accept the personal claims of others who acted solely on their own testimony.

**:44** Your dress, prayers, front-row seats in the synagogue, love for the flattering greetings of people in the street. “As long as we judge ourselves by human comparisons, there is plenty of room for self-satisfaction; and that kills faith, for faith is born of the sense of need. But when we compare ourselves with Jesus, we are humbled; there is nothing left to do but trust to the mercy of God.” When we repent of our desire for the glory of man and desire only the glory of God, then the truth becomes clear and believable to us. The glory of God is His actual presence in such a manner that it needs no other witness.

**:45-47** **“Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; the one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you have set your hope. :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?”**

**:45-46** Moses, whom they were using as their excuse to persecute Jesus, will instead become their accuser. Later in **9:28**, they would boast they were disciples of Moses! “Look at the Law, the sacrifices, the prophecies! They all point to Me,” the One even then in their presence! “If you don’t believe the truth you now have and know, you won’t believe greater truth when you hear it. You stand condemned by the Scriptures on which you say you depend.”

**:46** Jesus is the heart of the writings of Moses and the entire OT (**Dt. 18:15-18, Lk. 24:27-32**). They misunderstood the purpose of the law written by Moses (**Gal. 2:16, 3:24, Rom. 3:19-20, 7:7-12**). “If they rejected Moses’ truths, whom they revered, they could hardly be expected to accept the teachings of Jesus.” **Lk. 16:26-31**.

**:47** If one denies God-given knowledge (**Rom. 1:19, 2:14-15, Ps. 19:1-2, the Scriptures, the Spirit, Jesus, eyewitnesses**), he/she suppresses God’s truth, and becomes an idolater, dishonoring his/her body through sexual immorality, practicing degrading passions, and having a depraved mind, filled with all unrighteousness (**Rom. 1:18-32**).

The witness of Jesus Himself (**:31-32, 8:12-18**). The witness of John the Baptist (**:33-35**). The witness of Jesus’ works (**:36**). The witness of the Father (**:37-38**). The witness of the Scriptures (**:39-47**). Later, the witness of individual believers (**15:27**) and the witness of the Holy Spirit (**14:16-17, 26, 15:26**). The Scriptures, the voice of God, the OT prophets, the Spirit, John the Baptist, creation, history: they’re all speaking—visible evidence! Jesus once said that if His disciples didn’t cry out, the rocks would!

What does the evidence lead to? Jesus the Jewish Christ, the Son of God, the always-existing Word, face to face with the Father, the only begotten God, Creator, Life, the always-shining Light, the Lamb of God, the LORD, the One who baptizes in the Holy Spirit, the One of whom Moses and the Prophets wrote, King of Israel, the Son of Man. If you are rejecting Him, what’s your excuse? If you have received Him, how is your life (words, actions, choices, thinking) revealing HE is everything to you? Personal insights & applications?