

“The Prosecutorial Christ”

John 5:15-47

VIDEO: *Gospel of John 5:1-14*

Summing up Israel's rejection of Jesus, John observed, "He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him" ([1:11](#)). The Jewish people were hostile to Him because of both their hypocritical legalism and their misconceptions concerning His mission (they looked for a political-military messiah who would free them from the yoke of Rome). After His death, they continued to reject Him because of the offense of the cross ([1 Cor. 1:23](#); [Gal. 5:11](#)).

The outbreak of hostility toward Christ was triggered by an incident at a pool in Jerusalem known as Bethesda. **Jesus' cleansing of the temple had stirred up antagonism ([2:13-22](#)), which only grew as His ministry gained popularity ([4:1-3](#)).** His rejection of self-righteous Jews and His violation of the Jewish traditional regulations concerning the Sabbath fanned the flames of resentment into open opposition. The passage may be divided into two parts: the miracle performed, and the Master persecuted. - John MacArthur

Don't miss the tragic irony... The “religious” leaders were persecuting Jesus over HIS “misappropriations” of the Sabbath...

In fact, the Lord deliberately chose to heal this man on the Sabbath to confront superficial and bankrupt Jewish legalism. The man's condition was not life threatening, and he was constantly at the pool. Jesus could have easily chosen another day to heal him. But the Lord not only wanted to show mercy to this man; He also wanted to call the nation to repentance by confronting the self-righteous and unbiblical stipulations that led to their illusion of spiritual life. **They had become experts at substituting their traditions for God's commands ([Matt. 15:9](#)).**

Not only in John, but also in the Synoptics is Jesus portrayed as seemingly unconcerned for the rabbinic traditions about the Sabbath....

The rules of the rabbis were a misunderstanding of God's design for the Sabbath. The Sabbath was not the means to God's approval, as the rabbis seem to have suggested. The Sabbath was not merely a rule for humans, but *a gift to humans* (cf. [Mark 2:27](#)). It was to be used to honor God and to benefit his people. More importantly, **Jesus was Lord of the Sabbath** (cf. [Mark 2:28](#)).

- MacArthur New Testament Commentary

TRIAL = WHO IS JESUS?

Note: this trial is not about the religious establishment's misunderstanding regarding who Jesus claimed to be... No! On the contrary, the exact opposite is the case... This trial is underway precisely because they DO understand the claims & implications of Christ's claims!

- Opening arguments...

Accused: Savior

Accusers: sinners

T/S: read vv.14-15... "Let's walk into the metaphorical courtroom together and watch as this trial really gets underway..."

14 Afterward Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, "See, you are well! Sin no more, that nothing worse may happen to you."

(v.15 PROVES this guy's a scoundral)

15 The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had healed him.

16 And this was why the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because he was doing these things on the Sabbath.

Plaintiff's Complaint... = "Charges Filed" against...

- A. Transition into total courtroom role-playing...
- B. Declare "plaintiffs" & "Defend"

* Plaintiffs = "the Jews"
* Defendant = Jesus

17 But Jesus answered them, "My Father is working until now, and I am working."

v.17D = "Legal Grounds of Defense"

- a. Misinterpretation of Law
- b. Defense does NOT deny the charges... but rather DEFINES them as good vs bad...

Defense becomes Plaintiff

Divine Defendant becomes the "perfect Prosecutor"

T/S: Christ on His Christology: (18-24)

1. Jesus is = to God in His Person (18)
 - 2. ...in His Works (19-20)
 - 3. ...in His Power & Sovereignty (21)
 - 4. ...in His Judgment (22)
 - 5. ...in His Honor (23-24)

18 This was why the Jews (**M**) were seeking all the more to kill him, (**N**) because not only was he (**O**) breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God (**P**) his own Father, (**Q**) making himself equal with God.

1. Jesus is = to God in His Person (18)

v.18P = "restate & elevate charges"

a. Sabbath-work

b. Declaring:

Son-ship

Lord-ship: "equal with"

19 So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, (R)the Son (S)can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father[e] does, that the Son does likewise. **20** For (T)the Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing. And (U)greater works than these will he show him, so that (V)you may marvel.

2. Jesus is = to God in His Works (19-20)

v.19-21D =

- NOTE: "TRULY, TRULY"

- Father/Son unity

- Father/Son unique love

- Father/Son "work" = u "marvel"

- Father/Son BOTH raise the dead

- Father/Son BOTH "give life"

- Father/Son BOTH = sov. choice

21 For as the Father (w)raises the dead and (x)gives them life, so (y)also the Son gives life (z)to whom he will.

3. Jesus is = to God in His Power & Sovereignty (21)

22 (AA)The Father judges no one, but (AB)has given all judgment to the Son,

4. Jesus is = to God in His Judgment (22)

v.22-23D. = Defense intensifies...

- Father defers judgement to Son

* ...so that all will honor the Son"

- Father/Son unity demands equal honor...

- To dishonor (persecute &/or prosecute) the Son is to dishonor & disobey the Father!

23 that all may honor the Son, just as they (AC)honor the Father. (AD)Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him. **24** Truly, truly, I say to you, (AE)whoever hears my word and (AF)believes him who sent me has eternal life. He (AG)does not come into judgment, but (AH)has passed from death to life.

5. Jesus is = to God in His Honor (23-24)

v.24D. = TRULY, TRULY

- Believe the Son = believe Father
- Believe the Son:
 - * ...ends death...
 - * ...brings life...

T/S: Two Resurrections: (25-29) = Spiritual & Physical

- A. Spiritual Resurrection: (25-26)
 - Persons resurrected (25a)
 - Purpose for resurrected (25b)
 - Power that resurrected (26)

25 "Truly, truly, I say to you, (AI)an hour is coming, and is now here, when (AJ)the dead will hear (AK)the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear (AL)will live. **26** (AM)For as the Father has life in himself, (AN)so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself.

v.25D. = TRULY, TRULY

- Declaration: past & present prophecy is being proclaimed & fulfilled!
- The dead will hear the Son & live
 - * Note: messianic & miraculous

vv.26-27D.=

- Father/Son BOTH have life...

B. Physical Resurrection (27-29)

- Persons {all} (28a)
- Power {His voice} (28b-29a)
- Purpose {eternal state} (29b)

27 And he (AO) has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man. **28** Do not marvel at this, for (AP) an hour is coming when (AQ) all who are in the tombs will hear his voice **29** and come out, (AR) those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.

vv.28-29 = Son-initiated, eternal Judgment Day...

- "Do not marvel at this..."
- * You should know this...
- * Old Testament foretold...
- Judgment based on:
 - * Faith: did you "believe"
 - * Truth: life vs lips!

30 (AS) "I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge, and (AT) my judgment is just, because (AU) I seek not my own will (AV) but the will of him who sent me. **31** (AW) If I alone bear witness about myself, my testimony is not true. **32** There is (AX) another who bears witness about me, and (AY) I know that the testimony that he bears about me is true.

vv.30-32D = Son depends on Father

T/S: Witnesses to Deity of Jesus (33-47)

Four Witnesses for Christ's Christology:

1. Forerunner's witness (33-35)
2. Finished works witness (36)
3. Father's Word (37-38)
4. Faithful writings (39-47)

1. J.B.'s Forerunner's witness (33-35)

33 You sent to John, and he has borne witness to the truth. **34** Not that the testimony that I receive is from man, but I say these things so that you may be saved. **35** He was a burning and shining lamp, and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light.

2. Finished works witness (36)

36 But the testimony that I have is greater than that of John. For the works that the Father has given me to accomplish, the very works that I am doing, bear witness about me that the Father has sent me.

3. Father's Word (37-38)

37 And the Father who sent me has himself borne witness about me. His voice you have never heard, his form you have never seen, **38** and you do not have his word abiding in you, for you do not believe the one whom he has sent.

vv.37-38D = HUGE TURNING POINT

- Jesus turns the tide...

- Father defends Me & decries you!

* The Father SENT the Son...

* The Father "bore witness..."

* Plaintiffs/Prosecutors have NEVER even heard His voice

* Ditto... " NEVER seen Him "

* v.38... AND...

* His word is NOT abiding in you!

* "for, you do not believe" (pause)

* "...the One the Father sent"

39 You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, **40** yet you refuse to come to me so that you may have life.

vv.39D = take a breath & RELOAD!

- "You search the Scriptures"

* Watch how cunning & deceptive the devil can be...

* Q: How can "searching the Scriptures" be a bad thing?

Watch and learn...

Motive(s) matter!

Truth matters!

- a. Christology
- b. Christianity
- c. Church
- d. Bible
- e. Belief / Believer
- f, Knowledge / Wisdom
- g. Faith
- h. Repentance
- l. Mercy
- m. Grace
- n. THE Gospel

- "because you believe.." (wrongly)

* Religion = relationship

* Study = salvation

* Expertise = exercise

* Knowing Greek = know Gospel

*** Remember:

Lesson from Nic @ night

Ditto... J.B.'s disciples...

*** Jesus is saying: "You think salvation comes thru the Scriptures (of the Savior); rather than thru the Savior of the Scriptures..." - JDP

- 39c = proverbial punch in mouth!

- * Paraphrase: "Some experts you turn out to be..."
- * "...I AM... the very Person and point of the Scriptures you study..."
- * "...I AM... the Redeemer that your religion requires you to seek relationship with..."
- * "...I AM... THE good news of the Gospel, the single Savior sought by God's saints..."
- *** ...yet you still deny @ attack Me --- totally ignoring the Scripture's pointed & prophetic witness to Me!"

- 40D = (FURTHERMORE...)

- * "yet you refuse to come to Me"

"yet" implies sight-less or stubborn... blind or bull headed

"refuse" implies willful SIN

"come to Me" = definitive!

*** "come" = Miracle

*** "Me " = Messiah

*** "come to Me" = follow!
(follow = Mission)

- * Note: Stubborn Pride kills!

- 40b = NOTWITHSTANDING...

* see the gospel's LOVE

- * IF you would come to Me...

I would/will GIVE you life

*** universal invitation

*** conditional application
(Come one, come all -
but you HAVE to come)

(Christ alone gives life!)

v.41 = Transition... Prep for close

41 I do not receive glory from people.

vv.42-47 = CLOSING ARGUMENT!

vv.42 = SEE 1st John Confrontation!

dark vs light

liars vs. truth-tellers

anti-christs vs. always-Christ's

children of the devil vs. children of God

42 But I know that you do not have the love of God within you. 43 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 from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the only God? 45 Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father. There is one who accuses you: Moses, on whom you have set your hope. 46 For if you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me. 47 But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words?"

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CLOSE:

- Note: the initial prosecutor never got up again...
- This case was closed before it started (see: 1:11 & 3:19)

*** Tragically, notwithstanding 3:19 & today's cut & dry case... the world's prosecutors are going to raise "appeal after appeal," constantly re-trying Jesus in the sinful courtroom of public opinion...

...see thru rest of Gospel
...SAME goes on TODAY!

Skeptics, lukewarm-counterfeit Christians (often disguised in religious garb & self-righteous garbage) have long since spread a cunning & killing cancer... J. Gresham Machen put it this way:
QT: They lead people astray by championing Jesus as "an example FOR faith...NOT the object OF faith."

Crescendo = Jesus walks out of the courtroom uncontested!

Amen!!!

Let's Pray