

John 5vs30-47

Evidence that demands a verdict...

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Evidence that demands a verdict...

John 5 vs 30-37

Chapters 5 to 10 are going to introduce us to people who reject Christ.

Let's read ch5 vs 30-37....and watch out for the sudden and dramatic shift in what Jesus says that appears half way through v 37!

John 5 vs 30-37: *"I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge, and my judgement is just, because I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me. ³¹ If I alone bear witness about myself, my testimony is not deemed true. ³² There is another who bears witness about me, and I know that the testimony that he bears about me is true. 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. 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. 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..."*

The Defence: eyewitness evidence

What are the words that appear more than any others here?

- Testimony
- Witness

In this section, we are in the courtroom... being asked to come to a verdict about Jesus.

EVIDENCE ABOUT JESUS:

- The Testimony about Jesus:
 - Is this just his own words about himself?
 - Are they just man's words ...even those of John the Baptist?
 - Or could it be that God is testifying about his Son..?!
 - v 32a ***"There is another who bears witness about me..."***
- The Witness about Jesus:
 - Who is bearing witness about him?
 - What has John the Baptist done?
 - v 33 ***"borne witness to the truth"***

➤ And what of God's witness:

v 37a ***“And the Father who sent me has himself borne witness about me...”***

From Defence to Prosecution

But Jesus makes a second point... this has to do with the way we handle and respond to the EVIDENCE

...after all, he has already said some pretty big things in ch 5 about his identity, his work and his word

..... and much of this passage is therefore about our RESPONSE.

Just look at what Jesus says to those around him – who have just accused him of healing on the Sabbath:

V 37b: ***“...His voice you have never heard, his form you have never seen”***

So - let's go back and un-pick this packed speech by Jesus...

Examining the Evidence...

In Jewish law if something was to be accepted as true it was necessary to have at least two male witnesses – hence John 5 vs 31-32:

Read vs 31-32: *“If I alone bear witness about myself, my testimony is not true. ³² There is another who bears witness about me, and I know that the testimony that he bears about me is true.”*

Jesus acknowledges that were his testimony to be supported only by his own word, then people might possibly have cause to complain.

That’s why he points out that his testimony does not only come “**from man**”:

5 v 34: *“Not that the testimony that I receive is from man, but I say these things so that you may be saved.”*

In contrast - Jesus is able to call upon at least three major “strands” of evidence in supporting his case - and they are all hugely impressive!!

Let’s try to identify the three strands of evidence in vs 30-37a:

1) Jesus refers to John the Baptist:

Read vs 32-33: *“There is another who bears witness about me, and I know that the testimony that he bears about me is true. ³³ You sent to John, and he has borne witness to the truth.”*

They all recognised John the Baptist as an important and authoritative prophet sent by God.

Remember John 1:

Read John 1 vs 19-22: *And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, “I am not the Christ.” And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the Prophet?” And he answered, “No.” So they said to him, “Who are you? We need to give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?” He said, “I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the way of the Lord,’ as the prophet Isaiah said.”*

So - John the Baptist's testimony is pretty impressive... BUT vs 34-36 line up two even more impressive strands of evidence...

- "John the Baptist was good..."

Read v 35: *"He was a burning and shining lamp, and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light."*

- "But MY testimony is even better than that!"
v 36a: ***"But the testimony that I have is greater than that of John..."***

2) "And it's not just my words – my works (i.e. the signs or miracles) also provide evidence!"

v 36b: ***"...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) And that's not all!! There is also GOD's voice which has borne witness about Jesus

v 37a: ***"And the Father who sent me has himself borne witness about me."***

God has spoken about Jesus in the Old Testament in hundreds of prophecies over hundreds of years... We've seen this numerous times again and again throughout John's gospel. And it doesn't stop here!

Read v 39: *"You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me..."*

The Evidence for Jesus, then is a three legged stool!

1. The WITNESS of first John the Baptist (and then the Apostles), as the baton is passed to them by John the Baptist in ch 1:

Read John 1 vs 35-37: *The next day John was standing with two of his disciples, **36** and he looked at Jesus as he walked by and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God!" **37** The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus.*

2. The WORD and WORKS of Jesus...that always identify him as GOD!
3. The WORD of God (the Old Testament)

There is NO apology here – rather 3 clear “legs” of evidence we can count on!

Tables turned...

But what should we make of the change in direction that Jesus takes in ch 5 v 37b?

v 37b: ***“His voice you have never heard, his form you have never seen...”***

Jesus now turns from THEIR cross examination of him to HIS cross examination of them!

Read John 5 vs 37-47: *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. 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 that you may have life. ⁴¹ I do not receive glory from people. 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?”*

Remember Jesus is in the Temple:

ch 5 v 14: ***Afterward Jesus found him in the temple...***

He is still talking to the very people who we have learned are plotting to kill him!

Read v 18: *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.*

Response

What does Jesus point to in order to show that their response has been illogical, ungodly and wrong!?

He tells them:

- “You don’t believe God’s word in the scriptures”
- “You have God’s word, but you don’t listen to it or believe it!”

vs 37-39:

- ***“his voice you have never heard”***
- ***“his form you have never seen”***
- ***“you do not have his word abiding in you”***
- ***“you do not believe the one whom he has sent”***
- ***“you search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me...”***

“All you are interested in is man’s praise and glory”

They are foreigners to God! Even though here they are in the Temple - their supposed power base with God!

“You don’t love God!”

Read v 44: *“How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the only God?”*

In summary then:

- They don’t listen to God!

Read v 39: *“You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me...”*

- They don’t believe God!

Read v 42: *“But I know that you do not have the love of God within you.”*

- They don’t love God!
- They don’t want God’s praise!

So – is there a problem with Jesus?!

- vs 30-37 would answer: “NO!! Just look at the “three legs to the stool” evidence!”

Summing up...

Where is the problem then - if a person rejects Jesus after all this evidence, where is Jesus saying the problem lies?

....and he is saying this to the religious leaders!

Read v 42: *“But I know that you do not have the love of God within you.”*

- THEY like receiving the glory!

Read v 44: *“How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the only God?”*

- The issue, then, has to do with personal glory vs glorifying GOD...i.e....
- The SELF-importance of man!

And finally the real ‘punch’:

- What a ‘zinger’! Moses – the ‘be and end all’ of the law...

Read John 5 vs 45-47: *“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?”*

- THEIR “be and end all” – the law in which they have placed their “HOPE” of salvation!

Conclusion

Let's close by putting the 2 halves of this study together...

This is like a law court....we have:

A) vs 30 – 37a: The Evidence for Jesus

B) vs 37b – 47: Jesus' case against Man

- But what do you make of the evidence?
- What does Jesus have to say to me and you if we fail to act on the evidence?

Is this not like a law court – where the witnesses are being ignored!!!!?

Jesus (as judge) therefore says :

- You are prosecuted by the evidence!
- You don't love God!
- Rather, you love the praise of Man!

Sobering! But what does it make you think?!

Coming next...

Only Jesus can truly provide

John 5 vs 30-47

³⁰ "I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge, and my judgement is just, because I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me. ³¹ If I alone bear witness about myself, my testimony is not deemed true. ³² There is another who bears witness about me, and I know that the testimony that he bears about me is true. 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. 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. 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. 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 that you may have life. ⁴¹ I do not receive glory from people. 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?"