

John 5:19-47
June 15, 2025

Open with Prayer

HOOK:

Q: Jesus was all about doing His Father's will. And he tells us in today's text that "he only does what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does, the Son also does." It looks prescriptive for us. If we will watch what God is doing in our life on a given day, then we join Him and do what He does.

How about you? What is your understanding of how to know what God is wanting us to do on any given day? [Let people engage]

Transition: Henry Blackaby has built a huge study called "Experiencing God," which uses John 5:19 where Jesus does what He sees His Father doing. Henry frames it this way: When God reveals what He is doing in our life, *that is our invitation to join Him*. Of course, this requires that we have a high level of spiritual awareness to know how the Holy Spirit is trying to lead us! Let's read the text and see what we can learn.

BOOK:

¹⁹ Jesus gave them this answer: "I tell you the truth, **the Son can do nothing by himself**; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.

²⁰ For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does. Yes, to your amazement he will show him even greater things than these.

²¹ For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it.

²² Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son,

²³ that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him.

²⁴ "I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.

²⁵ I tell you the truth, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live.

²⁶ For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son to have life in himself.

²⁷ And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man.

²⁸ "Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice

²⁹ and come out—those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned.

³⁰ **By myself I can do nothing**; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me.

Testimonies About Jesus

³¹ “If I testify about myself, my testimony is not valid.

³² There is another who testifies in my favor, and I know that his testimony about me is valid.

³³ “You have sent to John and he has testified to the truth.

³⁴ Not that I accept human testimony; but I mention it that you may be saved.

³⁵ John was a lamp that burned and gave light, and you chose for a time to enjoy his light.

³⁶ “I have testimony weightier than that of John. For the very work that the Father has given me to finish, and which I am doing, testifies that the Father has sent me.

³⁷ And the Father who sent me has himself testified concerning me. You have never heard his voice nor seen his form,

³⁸ nor does his word dwell in you, for you do not believe the one he sent.

³⁹ You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life.

These are the Scriptures that testify about me,

⁴⁰ yet you refuse to come to me to have life.

⁴¹ “I do not accept praise from men,

⁴² but I know you. I know that you do not have the love of God in your hearts.

⁴³ I have come in my Father’s name, and you do not accept me; but if someone else comes in his own name, you will accept him.

⁴⁴ How can you believe if you accept praise from one another, yet make no effort to obtain the praise that comes from the only God?

⁴⁵ “But do not think I will accuse you before the Father. Your accuser is Moses, on whom your hopes are set.

⁴⁶ If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me.

⁴⁷ But since you do not believe what he wrote, how are you going to believe what I say?”

Process Observations/Questions:

Q: What stood out to you? What questions do you have? [Let people engage]

Q: What did you learn about man? [Let people engage]

Q: What did you learn about God or Jesus or the Holy Spirit? [Let people engage]

Q: What is your takeaway? [Let people engage]

LOOK:

Following Jesus involves seeking His glory and living in accordance with His will, rather than seeking human approval or pursuing self-centered goals.

Close in Prayer

Commentaries for Today's Lesson:

Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). The Bible Exposition Commentary (Vol. 1, pp. 306-309). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

The Claims (John 5:19–47)

In response to their accusations, Jesus made three significant claims that proved His sonship.

He claimed to be equal with God (vv. 19–23). Instead of denying their accusation, He endorsed it! If today a man made this kind of a claim, we would conclude that he was joking or mentally disturbed. Jesus was certainly not insane, and there is every evidence that He was deadly serious when He spoke these words. Either He is what He claims to be, or He is a liar; and if He is a liar, how do you explain all the good He has done in the lives of needy people? Nobody wants to trust a liar; Jesus' disciples were willing to die for Him.

Jesus claimed to be one with His Father in His works. If healing a man on the Sabbath was a sin, then the Father was to blame! Jesus did nothing “of Himself” but only that which the Father was doing. The Father and the Son worked together, doing the same deeds in the same way. “I and the Father are One” (John 10:30).

When our Lord came to earth as man, He submitted Himself to the Father in everything. “Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God” (Heb. 10:9). He veiled His glory and laid aside the independent exercise of His divine attributes. In the wilderness, Satan tempted Him to use His divine powers for Himself; but He refused to act independently. He was totally dependent on the Father and the power of the Holy Spirit of God. Not only did the Father show the Son His works and enable Him to do them, but the Father also shared His love (John 5:20). The first three Gospels open with the Father calling Jesus “My beloved Son,” and John echoed this statement in John 3:35. We usually think of the Father's love for the lost world, as in John 3:16; but we must also remember the Father's love for His dear Son.

Because the Father loves the Son, the Father shows Him His works. The blind religious leaders could not see what Jesus was doing, because they did not know the Father or the Son. In fact, even greater works were in the Father's plan, works that would cause them to marvel. Perhaps He had in mind the healing of Lazarus; for in John 5:21, He mentioned the raising of the dead.

For Jesus to claim to have power to raise the dead was a blasphemous thing in the eyes of the Jewish leaders; they gave that power to God alone. They said that Jehovah held the three great keys: the key to open the heavens and give rain (Deut. 28:12); the key to open the womb and give conception (Gen. 30:22); and the key to open the grave and raise the dead (Ezek. 37:13). As far as the Gospel records are concerned, Jesus had not yet raised anyone from the dead; so to make this claim was to invite even more opposition.

John 5:21 certainly can mean much more than the physical raising of people from the dead, for certainly Jesus was referring to His gift of spiritual life to the spiritually dead. He amplified this truth further as recorded in John 5:24–29. So, Jesus claimed to be equal with the Father in His works, but He also claimed to be equal with the Father in executing judgment (John 5:22). To the orthodox Jew, Jehovah God was “the Judge of all the earth” (Gen. 18:25); and no one dared to

apply that august title to himself. But Jesus did! By claiming to be the Judge, He claimed to be God. “Because He [God] hath appointed a day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained” (Acts 17:31).

Our Lord claimed equality in another area, namely, equal honor with the Father (John 5:23). The fact that He is the appointed Judge should cause men to honor Him. What a tremendous claim: if you do not honor the Son, you are not honoring the Father! The “religious” people who say that they worship God, but who deny the deity of Christ, have neither the Father nor the Son! Apart from Jesus Christ, we cannot know the Father, worship the Father, or serve the Father.

He claimed to have authority to raise the dead (vv. 24–29). For a second time, Jesus introduced His words with the solemn “verily, verily” (see John 5:19, 24–25). More than twenty times in John’s Gospel you will find Jesus using this solemn form of address. It is as though He was saying, “Pay attention to this! What I am about to say is important!”

In this fascinating paragraph, Jesus spoke about four different resurrections. **He described the resurrection of lost sinners into eternal life** (see John 5:24–25; Eph. 2:1–10). The lost sinner is as lifeless and helpless as a corpse. No matter how an undertaker may prepare a corpse, it is still dead; and no corpse is “deader” than any other corpse. If you are dead, you are dead! The lost sinner is helpless to save himself and he certainly cannot give himself life.

How are dead sinners raised from the dead? By hearing God’s Word and believing on God’s Son. Jesus healed the paralyzed man at the pool by His word (John 5:8). Each time He raised somebody from the dead, He spoke the word (Luke 7:11–17; 8:49–56; John 11:41–44). His Word is “living and powerful” (Heb. 4:12) and can raise sinners from spiritual death. “Everlasting life” means that they can never die spiritually again, nor can they ever come into judgment (Rom. 8:1). To hear His Word and believe means salvation; to reject His Word means condemnation (John 12:48).

The second resurrection mentioned is the resurrection of our Lord Himself (John 5:26). Our life is derived, but His life is original, “in Himself.” “In Him was life” (John 1:4). The grave could not hold Him because He is “the Prince of Life” (Acts 2:24; 3:15). Jesus laid down His life and then took it up again (John 10:17–18). Because He has life in Himself, He can share that life with all who will trust Him.

The third resurrection named is the future resurrection of life, when believers are raised from the dead (John 5:28–29a). This wonderful truth is explained in 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18 and 1 Corinthians 15. Keep in mind that resurrection is not reconstruction. It does not imply that God “puts the pieces back together again.” The resurrection body is a new body, a glorified body, suited to the new heavenly environment. Death is not the end for the believer, nor will he live in heaven as a disembodied spirit. God saves the whole person, and this includes the body (Rom. 8:23; Phil. 3:20–21). This resurrection of life will take place when Jesus Christ returns in the air and calls His people to Himself.

The fourth resurrection He mentioned is the resurrection of condemnation (John 5:29b). This resurrection involves only the lost, and it will take place just before Jesus Christ ushers in the

new heaven and the new earth (Rev. 20:11–15). What an awesome event that will be, when the dead “small and great” stand before Jesus Christ! The Father has committed all judgment to the Son (John 5:22) and has given Him the authority to execute judgment (John 5:27). Today Jesus Christ is the Savior, but one day He shall sit as the Judge.

The title “Son of man” used in John 5:27 refers to Daniel 7:13–14 and is a definite messianic title. It is used twelve times in John’s Gospel and over eighty times in all four Gospels. The Jews would know this title from their reading of the Book of Daniel; and they would know that, by using it, Jesus was claiming to be the Messiah, and the Judge.

Believers will be given resurrection bodies so that they might reign with Christ in glory. Unbelievers will be given resurrection bodies—but not glorified bodies—that they might be judged and then suffer punishment in those bodies. Bodies that were used for sin will suffer the consequences of that sin.

The fact that Jesus has the authority to raise the dead is proof that He is equal with the Father, and therefore He is God.

He claimed that there are valid witnesses who support His claim to deity (vv. 30–47). The word witness is a key word in John’s Gospel; it is used forty-seven times. Jesus did bear witness to Himself, but He knew they would not accept it; so He called in three other witnesses. The first was John the Baptist (John 5:30–35), whom the religious leaders had interrogated carefully (John 1:15ff). In fact, at the very end of His ministry, our Lord pointed the rulers back to the witness of John the Baptist (Matt. 21:23–27). John knew who Jesus was and faithfully declared what he knew to the people of Israel. John told the people that Jesus was the Lord (John 1:23), the Lamb of God (John 1:29, 36), and the Son of God (John 1:34).

John was a “burning and a shining lamp” (Jesus is the Light, John 8:12), and the Jewish people were excited about his ministry. However, their enthusiasm cooled; and nobody lifted a finger to try to deliver John when he was arrested by Herod. The leaders looked on John as a “local celebrity” (Matt. 11:7–8), but they did not want to receive his message of repentance. The publicans and sinners accepted John’s message and were converted, but the religious leaders refused to submit (Matt. 21:28–32).

Whenever God raises up a spiritual leader who commands attention, there is always the danger of attracting people who want to bask in his popularity but not submit to his authority. A “mixed multitude” followed Moses and Israel out of Egypt, people who were impressed with the miracles but not yielded to the Lord. The prophets and Apostles, as well as the great leaders in church history, all had to put up with shallow people who followed the crowd but refused to obey the truth. We have them in churches today.

Our Lord’s second witness was the witness of His miracles (John 5:36). You will remember that John selected seven of these “signs” to include in his Gospel as proof that Jesus is the Son of God (John 20:30–31). Jesus made it clear that His works were the works of the Father (John 5:17–20; 14:10). Even Nicodemus had to admit that our Lord’s miracles identified Him as “sent from God” (John 3:2).

But the Bible also records miracles performed by ordinary men, such as Moses, Elijah, and Paul. Do these miracles prove that they are also sent of God? Yes, they do (see Heb. 2:3–4), but none of these men ever claimed to be the very Son of God. No servant of God able to perform God’s mighty works would ever claim to be God Himself. The fact that Jesus made this claim, backed up by His mighty works and perfect life, is evidence that His claim is true.

Jesus indicated that the Father gave Him a specific ministry to finish while He was here on earth. “I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do” (John 17:4). He was not only on a divine timetable, but He followed a divine agenda. He had specific works to accomplish in the Father’s will.

Since the Old Testament Law required the testimony of two or three witnesses (Num. 35:30; Deut. 17:6), the Lord met that requirement by giving three trustworthy witnesses.

The third and final witness our Lord summoned was the Word of the Father (John 5:37–47). The Jewish people highly revered the written Word of God, particularly the Law that was given through Moses. Moses heard God’s voice and saw God’s glory; but we have that same voice and glory in the inspired Word of God (see 2 Peter 1:12–21). The Old Testament Scriptures bear witness to Jesus Christ, yet the people who received and preserved that Word were blind to their own Messiah. Why?

For one thing, they did not permit that Word to generate faith in their hearts (John 5:38). John 5:39 is probably a statement of fact and not a command and could be rendered: “Ye search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life.” The Jewish scribes sought to know the Word of God, but they did not know the God of the Word! They counted the very letters of the text, but they missed the spiritual truths that the text contained.

Because of my radio ministry, I often receive letters from people who disagree with my interpretations or applications of Scripture; and sometimes these letters are quite angry. (I will not quote here the language I have seen in letters from professed Christians!) It is unfortunate when our “study” of the Bible makes us arrogant and militant instead of humble and anxious to serve others, even those who disagree with us. The mark of true Bible study is not knowledge that puffs up, but love that builds up (1 Cor. 8:1).

So, there was something wrong with the minds of these Jewish leaders: they did not see Christ in their own Scriptures (see 2 Cor. 3:14–18; 4:3–6). But there was also something wrong with their wills: they would not trust in the Savior. Because they did not have the Word in their hearts, they did not want Christ in their hearts. They were religious and self-righteous, but they were not saved.

These leaders had a third problem, and this was the lack of love in their hearts. “Ye have not the love of God in you” (John 5:42). This means the experience of God’s love for them as well as their expression of love for God. They claimed to love God, but their attitude toward Jesus Christ proved that their love was counterfeit.

Their attitude toward God's Word hindered their faith, but so also did their attitude toward themselves and one another. The Pharisees enjoyed being honored by men (see Matt. 23:1–12) and they did not seek for the honor that comes from God alone. They did not honor the Son (John 5:23) because He did not honor them! Because they rejected the true Son of God who came in the Father's name, they would one day accept a false messiah, the Antichrist, who would come in his own name (John 5:43; and see 2 Thes. 2; Rev. 13). If we reject that which is true, we will ultimately receive that which is false.

Our Lord closed this penetrating sermon by warning the Jewish leaders that Moses, whom they honored, would be their judge, not their savior. The very Scriptures that they used to defend their religion would one day bear witness against them. The Jews knew what Moses wrote, but they did not really believe what he wrote. It is one thing to have the Word in our hands or our heads, but quite another thing to have it in our hearts. Jesus is the Word made flesh (John 1:14), and the written Word bears witness to the Incarnate Word. "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself" (Luke 24:27).

The witness of John the Baptist, the witness of the divine miracles, and the witness of the Word of God all unite to declare that Jesus Christ is indeed One with the Father and the very Son of God. Our Lord was not intimidated by the accusations of the religious leaders. If you check a harmony of the Gospels, you will see that after the events recorded in John 5, Jesus deliberately violated the Sabbath again! He permitted His disciples to pick grain on the Sabbath, and He healed a man with a withered hand (Matt. 12:1–14). These events probably took place in Galilee, but the news would certainly reach the leaders in Jerusalem and Judea.

The healing of the man on the Sabbath would come up again (John 7:21–23). The leaders would persist in protecting tradition instead of understanding truth (see Mark 7:1–13). But before we judge them, perhaps we ought to examine our own lives and churches. Are we permitting religious tradition to blind us to the truth of God's Word? Are we so involved in "Bible study" that we fail to see Jesus Christ in the Word? Does our knowledge of the Bible give us a "big head" or a "burning heart"?

Blum, E. A. (1985). *John*. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, pp. 290-293) Wheaton, IL: Victor Books

5:19. **Jesus** explained that He is not independent of or in opposition to **the Father**. His activity is not self-initiated. The **Father** directs and has sent **the Son**. The Son's activity imitates the Father, and the Two always work together. (See comments on 1:51 for the clause **I tell you the truth**.)

5:20. **The Son** is in no way independent of or in rebellion against **the Father**. Their relationship is one of continuous love. The Son is not doing simply a part of God's will; He has a full disclosure of all the Father's works. By the Father, the Son will do even more amazing works **than** physical healings.

5:21. One of the prerogatives of Deity is the right over **life** and death. (A king of Israel asked Naaman, “Am I God? Can I kill and bring back to life?” [2 Kings 5:7]) One of Jesus’ “greater” works (John 5:20) is the giving of life. **The Son gives life to whom He is pleased to give it**, just as He chose to heal one man out of a crowd of disabled people. The giving of life includes spiritual (eternal) life and a resurrected body. The resuscitation of Lazarus (chap. 11) would illustrate both.

5:22. The Son’s ability to give life is coupled with His right to judge mankind (cf. v. 27). **The Father** has placed this eschatological prerogative in Jesus’ hands.

5:23. Jesus’ unity with His **Father** is so complete that the **honor** of God is tied to Jesus. To reject or dishonor God **the Son** is to reject and dishonor God **the Father**.

5:24. Since Jesus has the unity and divine prerogatives mentioned in verses 19–23, to trust His message and His Father is to have in the present time **eternal life** (cf. 3:36). No judgment will come in the future (he **will not be condemned** [cf. 3:18; Rom. 6:13; 8:1] because he has already passed **from** one realm—**death**—into another—**life** [cf. Eph. 2:1, 5]). Only once elsewhere (in 1 John 3:14) is the phrase “passed from death to life” used.

5:25. Jesus’ life-giving power can call a person out of the grave (11:43), everyone from their tombs (5:28–29), or anyone in spiritual death (v. 24) to eternal life. (The words, **a time is coming**, occur four times in John: 4:21, 23; 5:25, 28.)

5:26–27. Jesus’ discourse now returned to the two central prerogatives of God: **life** (vv. 21, 24–26) and judgment (cf. vv. 22, 24–25, 27). Jesus has both because **the Father ... has given Him** both. This giving is both eternal and temporal. In Himself Christ, the *Logos*, has life as an eternal gift of the Father (1:4), but in the Incarnation **authority to judge** was also delegated to Jesus. As **the Son of Man** (cf. Dan. 7:13), authority is given to Him.

5:28–29. Jesus said His hearers should **not be amazed at** His claim that right now those who believe pass from death into life (v. 24), because in the future there will be a universal physical resurrection at His command. This universal resurrection is clearly taught in Daniel 12:1–2. Other passages show that the resurrection to life, “the first resurrection,” will occur in stages (the church at the Rapture, and Tribulation saints at the Lord’s second coming at the end of the Tribulation), and that the resurrection of those who will **be condemned** will occur at the end of the Millennium (Rev. 20:11–15). John 5:28–29 is one of the few passages in this Gospel which expressly teaches eschatology.

The words **those who have done good** and **those who have done evil** (*ta phaula*, “worthless things”; cf. 3:20) by themselves might imply a salvation by good deeds or damnation because of evil deeds, but a consideration of John’s theology as a whole forbids this (cf. 3:17–21; 6:28–29). Those who are truly born again do live a different kind of life. They obey Him (14:15), they abide in Him (15:5–7), and they walk in the light (8:12; 1 John 1:7). They are saved by the Lamb of God who, as their substitutionary Sacrifice, takes away the penalty of their sin. Salvation is by faith in Christ. Damnation is because of rejection of God’s Son (John 3:36).

5:30. This verse is transitional; it concludes the section on Jesus' unity with the Father (vv. 19–30). The section ends the way it began, with the point that the Son **can do nothing** apart from the Father (cf. v. 19). His **judgment**, as everything He does, **is** from the express will of the Father. He is the perfect Spokesman for the Father and His effective Executive. Jesus' will is to do the Father's will (cf. 4:34; 8:29), which shows that He has the same nature.

5:31–32. The thought in this discourse moves from that of Jesus' unity with the Father to that of the Father's witness to Jesus. John 5:31 and 8:14 appear to be contradictory. But they speak to different issues. In 5:31, Jesus' point was that if He bore witness to Himself, this witness would not be accepted by the Jewish authorities. They would see it as an arrogant claim of self-exaltation. Yet in another setting (8:14), self-authentication is perfectly valid because an individual is the only one who knows his own full experience. Jesus affirmed that He did not seek an independent self-authentication. He was content to submit to the Father's will and to let the Father authenticate Him.

5:33–34. As stated earlier (see 1:7), the concept of witness or **testimony** is important in John's Gospel. The chart on the preceding page reveals John's stress on this subject in his various writings.

John the Baptist's function was that of a witness. A good witness tells the truth as he knows it. John's witness to Jesus had an abiding character (**has testified**). Jesus did not need **human testimony**, but John's work helped people because in their darkness he pointed them to the light. John's work was **that you may be saved**. His great popular movement was only an anticipatory one, in which he pointed to Jesus as the Lamb of God.

5:35. **John was only a lamp**, not the true Light (1:9). The Jewish nation **for a short time** was stirred by and rejoiced in his ministry. For a moment they thought the Messianic Age was dawning. Even though his preaching had some stinging rebukes, there was a great popular excitement about his message. The people thought that though Israel might be disciplined, their enemies would be destroyed.

5:36. Though **John** the Baptist was a great voice for God, he did not do any miracles (10:41). The "signs" were specific works which God had assigned for the Son to do. These miracles were predicted in the Old Testament (Isa. 35:5–6). Jesus' **work** was a clear manifestation that God was with Him and that He worked through Him (cf. Nicodemus' words [John 3:2]; Jesus' logic [Mark 3:23–29]; and the lesson from an ex-blind man [John 9:30–33]).

5:37–38. Jesus' witness is His Father. **The Father ... has Himself testified concerning Me**. But when and how did or does the Father give this witness? The possibilities include: (1) at Jesus' baptism (Matt. 3:17), (2) at the transfiguration (Matt. 17:5), (3) at the Triumphal Entry (John 12:28), (4) in Jesus' works (3:2), (5) in people's minds or hearts (6:45). Most likely Jesus was referring to the inner work of God in which He impresses on people's consciences that Jesus is the Truth (6:45; 1 John 5:9–12). Jesus' opponents are ignorant of God. They have no vision of God and no communication with Him. **His Word** is His message of salvation. This message had not been received by them (does not **dwell** [*menonta*, from *menō*, "remain, abide"] **in** them) because they had rejected Jesus.

5:39–40. The Jewish religious leaders studied the Old Testament with great diligence. They believed that if one could comprehend the words of the text, he would gain a share in the world to come. They considered those ignorant of the Law to be under a curse (7:49). Similarly, many people today think Bible study is an end in itself rather than a function leading to the knowledge of God and godliness. Somehow a veil was over the minds of these Jewish scholars (2 Cor. 3:15), and they failed to see that Jesus is the Promised One. He is the fulfillment of the Old Testament sacrificial system, the true righteous Servant of Yahweh, the coming Prophet, the Son of Man, the Davidic King, and the promised Son of God and great High Priest. In spite of the clarity of the revelation, they refused **to come to Him for life** (cf. John 3:19–20).

5:41–42. The Jews may have thought that Jesus was upset because He was not officially endorsed by the leaders. But He denied that idea. They thought they knew His motivation, but in contrast He knew them and the cause of their unbelief (cf. 2:24–25): they did **not have the love of God** (i.e., love for God, not love from God) **in their hearts**. The great command is that people should love God (Ex. 20:4; Deut. 6:5); the great sin is that they reject Him and love and serve “created things” (Rom. 1:25).

5:43–44. Two things evidenced their lack of love for God. (1) They rejected Christ, the **Father’s** “Representative.” To insult or reject one’s ambassador is the same as rejecting him. (2) They accepted false teachers or prophets. This reveals a lack of affinity with the truth. An additional failure was their desire for acceptance and approval from sinful men while ignoring the favor and the will of **the only God**. True faith was impossible because they were seeking the wrong object: man, not God.

5:45–47. Jesus came as the Savior, not as the Judge (cf. 3:17). It was unnecessary for Him to **accuse** the people. **Moses**, whom they claimed to follow, would condemn them because they had broken the covenant he instituted and missed the Person **he wrote about**. **On whom your hopes are set** implies that they thought salvation would come by their good deeds in keeping the Law. If the Jews really believed Moses, they would believe Christ, for Moses **wrote** about Him. Jesus here did not refer to any specific passage (cf. Gen. 3:15; 22:18; 49:10; Num. 24:17; Deut. 18:15) or to any specific types (such as the Passover, the manna, the rock, the offerings, or the high priesthood). He simply assumed the Old Testament clearly points to Him. Since Moses’ revelation was rejected (cf. Luke 16:29–31), Jesus’ words were rejected also. Later Jesus said that Isaiah had written about Him (John 12:41).

White, J. E. (1998). *John*. In D. S. Dockery (Ed.), *Holman Concise Bible Commentary* (p. 473). Broadman & Holman Publishers.

Testimony to Jesus (5:31–47)

Testimony regarding Jesus includes John the Baptist, the works of Jesus, God Himself, the Scriptures, and Moses. In this Jesus clearly distinguished the worth of human testimony from God’s testimony concerning that which is of worth and the worth of human praise compared to the praise that flows from God.

The Holy Bible: New International Version. (1984). John 5:19-47. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

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