

# Jesus: Judge of All

# John 5:19-30

Preached at 8.15, C@10 & CC on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2015

## Intro

Gen. 1:1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 1:2 He was with God in the beginning.

...

Gen. 1:24 And God said, "Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, each according to its kind." And it was so.

Gen. 1:26 Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

John 1:3 Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.

...

Gen. 2:7 the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

John 1:4 In him was life, and that life was the light of men.

John 1:14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.

...

God speaks – life appears.

Jesus is the Word who is God and who gives life.

## **Hearing, Rising, Living**

In the beginning of chapter 5, Jesus spoke to the crippled man at the pool. The man heard Jesus speak, he was raised, and he started a new life.

In John's purpose statement in 20:30-31 he tells us that he has written these miraculous signs of Jesus down for a reason – that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

The conversation Jesus has with the Jews after this miraculous sign is the teaching that explains what it has revealed about Jesus and about life in his name.

But notice first the key actions in the miracle:

A broken, helpless man...

Jesus speaks, "get up! Pick up your mat and walk."

The man gets up, picks up his mat (or bed) and walks off into a life that he couldn't have before.

## **Like Father, Like Son**

When our boys were little they saw me playing my guitar around the house and at church and in my band... and they started to want to do what I was doing.

So I showed them a bit of what I knew and we got them their own guitars and they started doing what I was doing – and now they can both run rings around me.

Jesus deliberately performed this miracle on the Sabbath – the day of rest – not because he liked annoying the Jews, but to make the point he makes in vv16-18...

...that He is the unique Son of God.

God doesn't rest from his work on the Sabbath, and neither does he.

The Jews understand clearly what Jesus is doing... he's claiming to have equal authority with God, and that he has the kind of close relationship with God that no one else has – Father to Son.

That means more than just Jesus had a good relationship with his Father.

In those times sons worked with their fathers in their trade or business – like apprentices.

The father taught his son all about his work, and the son obediently copied what he saw his father doing.

That's what Jesus is describing in v19

*“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.” (John 5:19 NIV)*

*“For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does.” (John 5:20 NIV)*

Jesus knows the Father's business, and he can do what the Father does.

## **The Son Gives Life**

Firstly, he can do what God alone can do – give life...

*“The Lord brings death and makes alive; he brings down to the grave and raises up.” (1 Samuel 2:6 NIV)*

*“See now that I myself am He! There is no god besides me. I put to death and I bring to life,” (Deuteronomy 32:39 NIV)*

Jesus says:

*“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.” (John 5:21 NIV)*

The Father's work, that the Son shares in, is to give life – risen, restored life.

## **The Son Judges**

But the life that Jesus gives, comes alongside of judgment.

*“Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son, 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.” (John 5:22–23 NIV)*

Jesus hasn't only been entrusted by the Father to give life, but also to exercise God's judgment.

They are two sides of the same coin.

And the difference between one and the other turns on your decision about Jesus.

To honour the Son as you honour the Father means you honour Jesus as the Son of God... you accept the evidence/testimony about Jesus and accept him as God.

To refuse to honour him is to refuse to honour God the Father who sent him.

If I send my son Bryce to a meeting as my proxy, he is there as my representative – whatever he says and does can be taken as what I would say or do.

If the other people at the meeting treat him like he doesn't really have my authority to act on my behalf, it's insulting to me.

And that's the way it is with Jesus and the Father.

Reject Jesus – treat him as if he doesn't come with all the authority and power of God himself – and you are rejecting God.

Jesus does what God does – he gives life, and he brings judgment, depending on how each of us treats him.

### **What Is The Son Doing Now?**

Ever since I started in ministry our kids have loved to tease me saying that I only work one day a week now.

Once I've written my sermon, I can just sit around waiting for next Sunday to arrive...

I've heard people ask what Jesus is doing today and tomorrow and until he comes back.

After he died on the cross and was raised, Jesus ascended into heaven where he now sits at the right hand of the Father (Hebrews 12:2).

But what's he doing now?

Some people think Christianity is ‘pie in the sky when you die’ – like Jesus is waiting at the pearly gates to send you either to life or to judgment when this world comes to an end.

But Jesus is saying here that he is still working to this day, just like the Father is.

His work on the cross is complete – there is nothing else needed for us to be forgiven and saved.

But today and tomorrow, Jesus is going about the work of giving life to people and condemning people.

Being condemned to judgment isn’t something that will happen one day if you reject Jesus.

It’s where you stand right now if you haven’t believed in him.

*“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.” (John 5:24 NIV)*

No one is in a neutral position with God until Jesus comes back.

A friend of mine used to have a t-shirt that said ‘people who plan to seek God at the eleventh hour, usually die at 10.30’.

It’s that thinking that ‘I’m okay for now’.

But none of us are.

Because of our sin, we’re all under the condemnation of God’s judgment.

And that condemnation is confirmed when we don’t accept Jesus as who he says he is and proves he is.

It’s the same point in John 3:36:

*“Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God’s wrath remains on him.” (John 3:36 NIV)*

Every day that you keep rejecting Jesus, you are condemned by him to eternal judgment.

But the moment you believe in him, you cross over out of that state of judgment, and into new life.

Jesus raises us to new life today when we believe that he is the one sent by God the Father, and honour him as God.

When I get up in the morning I thank God for raising me up out of bed and reminding me that he has raised me to new life with him through Jesus.

That's what Jesus is doing now.

He'll raise you to new life today if you'll believe and trust him to do it.

### **Hearing, Rising, Living**

I said at the beginning that this conversation is the explanation of what Jesus did with the crippled man at the pool.

The helpless man, condemned to a life of misery, heard the voice of Jesus and was raised to a new life.

The man knew no one who could help him.

Jesus, with a word, raised him up.

In v25 Jesus says:

*"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." (John 5:25 NIV)*

Life comes to the dead now as we hear the voice of Jesus.

It's not a voice whispering in your ear or a voice in your mind.

It's the word of God that is Jesus Christ.

It's the word who was God and was with God in the beginning giving life to his creation.

And Hebrews 1 tells us that in these last days God has spoken to us in his Son, Jesus Christ.

Jesus is the life-giving word of God who we hear speak through the pages of the Bible.

The word that stands at the centre of the Bible's message is the word of Jesus' death and resurrection to bring sinners like us from judgment and death to life.

As we hear that word, we hear the voice of Jesus calling us to come to him, believe him and receive life from him.

If we believe, and keep believing, we have new life now.

That is so assuring. We don't have to wait for someday in the future to know if we'll be right with God when this world comes to an end.

You can know for certain that you're right with God right now, because you're right with Jesus.

Because you've honoured him by believing what he told us he came to do, you've honoured the Father who sent him.

You can rest assured that you've already passed from death to life.

And Jesus says in vv28-29 that, when that final day comes, and all people come to stand before Jesus as their judge, we who've already heard his voice and listened need not fear.

In v29 he says:

*“those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned.” (John 5:29 NIV)*

I take it Jesus means that those who have responded rightly to Jesus now will rise with him to new life, while those who persist in rejecting him will be condemned to eternal judgment.

Friends, it's foolish to wait till the eleventh hour to start listening to Jesus.

We are all helplessly and hopelessly under God's judgment until we hear the voice of Jesus calling us to receive forgiveness and life.

The offer of the gift of life is on the table today. There are no second chances after we die.

To make no decision about Jesus is the same as making a 'no' decision about him.

If you haven't decided to believe him yet, do it today.

If you have, thank God for the assurance you can be reminded of when you get up everyday – that he has raised you and will raise you to new life with him forever.

And remember the urgency there is for the people you know and love – your neighbours... to hear the voice of Jesus.

Help them to hear his voice by telling them about him, by reading the Bible with them – one of the gospels...

...by inviting them to church or to your Growth Group, or to do Christianity Explored.

Jesus is still about God's work of giving life today, and tomorrow, and every day until he returns.