

John, Part 34: The Testimony of Jesus is True

John 8:12 ESV Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." **13** So the Pharisees said to him, "You are bearing witness about yourself; your testimony is not true." **14** Jesus answered, "Even if I do bear witness about myself, my testimony is true, 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. **15** You judge according to the flesh; I judge no one. **16** Yet even if I do judge, my judgment is true, for it is not I alone who judge, but I and the Father who sent me. **17** In your Law it is written that the testimony of two people is true. **18** I am the one who bears witness about myself, and the Father who sent me bears witness about me." **19** They said to him therefore, "Where is your Father?" Jesus answered, "You know neither me nor my Father. If you knew me, you would know my Father also." **20** These words he spoke in the treasury, as he taught in the temple; but no one arrested him, because his hour had not yet come.

- I. Last week in our text Jesus declared himself to be the "Light of the World". We showed that He was likely comparing himself to the Pillar of Fire that lit the way for the children of Israel as they emerged from Egyptian captivity by the hand of God.
 - A. He seemed to be making a comparison to the burning torches in the Temple that symbolized that event, now extinguished, demonstrating that the covenant of law they represented would soon be gone, replaced by a better one of grace.
 - B. The New Covenant would be centered on **his** words and work. **He** was the Light of the World; unquenchable, eternal, and for the **whole** world! He added, "Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."
 1. Like the Pillar of fire burning in the desert between Egypt and Canaan, he would illuminate the path of those who journey in Him so that they would never have to walk in any kind of spiritual darkness: darkness of confusion, darkness of depression, darkness of sin, etc.!
 2. But he also said that his followers would have "the light of life". This speaks of something that is not just **eternal**, but also **internal**.
 3. They would not only have the Light of the World guiding their feet, but, through the indwelling Holy Spirit, have the light of eternal life, of comfort, power, and wisdom **within** themselves, all day, everyday for eternity.
 - C. You might remember that when Jesus spoke to the immoral Samaritan woman by Jacob's well (John 4) of the living water that only he could give, her immediate response was to humbly ask for a drink. "Sir, give me this water, so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water." (John 4:15).
 1. Jesus gets a much different, colder response from the audience of religious authorities to whom he declares himself to be the "Light of the World".
 2. **John 8:13 ESV** So the Pharisees said to him, "You are bearing witness about yourself; your testimony is not true."
 - D. They are most likely drawing a precedent from Numbers 35:30 and Deuteronomy 17:6. Those verses state that no one can be condemned to die on the testimony of a single witness.

1. That being true, the Jews here extrapolate that Jesus also cannot stand as his own judge, jury and witness to defend the authenticity of his own ministry. His claims are therefore ruled invalid by them.
 2. As they are so often prone to do, they get caught up in a legal technicality. Their point is that anyone can just say that they are the “Light of the World, or Napoleon, or Superman, but it carries very little weight if it is only the testimony of a solitary madman; which is exactly what they thought he was in their arrogance and spiritual blindness!
- E. **John 8:14 ESV** Jesus answered, “Even if I do bear witness about myself, **my testimony is true, 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.”
1. No fewer than five times in John chapter 7, the Jews dispute over these two points: where Jesus came from (origin) and where he is going (destiny).
 - a) He is saying to the Pharisees, “How can you possibly make any credible judgement about my testimony, if you don’t even know where I came from or where I am going?”
 - b) Though they could not account for his origin (Bethlehem? Nazareth? Heaven? Earth? Empowered by God? Demons?), yet they dismissed him as a fraud because of their own prejudices and petty insecurities.
 - c) They knew nothing of his destiny; while he was headed for a kingdom and a throne, they could only imagine was that he was disrupting the nation’s traditions, Their plan for his destiny was arrest and execution.
 2. Pay careful attention to how Jesus states that knowing his origin and destiny actually lends credibility to his testimony: “my testimony is true, **for I know** where I came from and where I am going”.
- F. Jesus is demonstrating that there is tremendous security that results from knowing your origin and your destiny...and I don’t mean in some “touchy-feely” motivational speaker sense! The difference between what Jesus is saying and the psychobabble of the Tony Robbins types is that he is speaking of a God-ordered spiritual origin and sovereign destiny, and so should we.
1. So the critical question to be resolved is this: as a child of God, what is **your** origin? **John 1:12 ESV** But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, **13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.**
 2. Similarly, what is **your** destination? **2 Timothy 4:6 ESV** For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. **7** I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. **8** Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also **to all who have loved his appearing.**
 3. As children of God, we were born of God’s intent, his express purpose and election, and one day we will be given a crown of righteousness (that we did not earn) by Christ himself. And as all of heaven watches, we will remove those same crowns as cast them at our Savior’s feet, for he alone is worthy.
- II. **John 8:15 ESV** You judge according to the flesh; I judge no one.

- A. Note first Jesus' assertion that the Jewish leaders were way off track because of their limited sensory perception; They judged according to the flesh.
1. This means they saw a "flesh and blood" man standing before them; yet who was making fantastic claims about his identity. They saw calloused hands, a bearded face, and dirty feet. They saw him sweat when he was hot, eat when he was hungry, and sleep when he was tired. Pretty mundane stuff!
 2. They had expected a glorious, conquering messiah; the heir to King David's throne, bringing back Israel's glory days. But this guy is from a small town, lives off of donations and hangs out with the blue collar folks! Not very kingly!
 - a) They wanted signs and proof; things which were all around them had they not been so spiritually blind! **"They stand in the light of day, but demand a formal proof that the Sun has risen."** -Charles Ellicott
 - b) How different is the testimony of John, the author of this gospel! He said in chapter 1, "And the Word **became** flesh (He wasn't always flesh! John understood his origin!), and we have seen his **glory** (Because John saw spiritually, he understood his destiny - to be glorified! And John was blessed to get glimpses of this glory during his lifetime)."
- B. But what does Jesus mean when he says "I judge no one"? Don't Matthew 25 and Revelation 19 teach that he will one day judge the nations? How then can he say, "I judge no one"?
1. Many have tried to overcome this difficulty by suggesting additions to the text that cannot be found in the original Greek. They have tried to make it say, "I don't judge **alone**" or "I don't judge **yet**" or "I don't judge **as you do**". The problem is that none of those modifications are in the original.
 2. So what is Jesus communicating here? **John 3:17 ESV** For God did not send his Son into the world **to condemn the world**, but in order that **the world might be saved through him**. The Jews wanted to size him up according to the flesh, so Jesus gave them some insight as to why he came in the flesh...to save (and not destroy) the image bearers of God. "I judge no one."
 - a) This is important because destroying (at least) the Gentile world is what they had always envisioned the Messiah would primarily do!
 - b) I love the Pulpit Commentary's take on this... "our Lord is claiming the lofty position of Savior **rather than** Judge. He came with that as his primary aim, purpose, intent; to heal, not to wound; to save, not to destroy; to give time for repentance, not to hurry sinners to their doom; to illumine, not to cover with darkness." But next Jesus defends his authority to judge because of his intimate connection to the Father.
- III. **John 8:16** Yet even if I do judge, my judgment is true, for it is not I alone who judge, but I and the Father who sent me.
- A. The fact that Jesus has been sent, anointed and commissioned by the Father, is proof enough that Jesus' witness and testimony is true.
1. On the Day of Pentecost, on which 5,000 sinners came to believe in Christ, Peter referred to "Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst". (Acts 2:22)

2. Yahweh God had connected his own reputation to the testimony of Jesus Christ; and the testimony of God is unassailable. I dare you to try!
- B. But the Jewish leaders had a consistent burr under their collective saddle ever since John 5 because of Jesus' insistence on aligning himself with God. Specifically, He had said he was God's son, making himself equal with God.
1. In John 5:31-47 he provides 4 "witnesses" that confirm every point of his testimony to them: John the Baptist, the miraculous signs he has performed, The Father himself (at his Baptism), and even their own scriptures!
 2. But now he goes one step further and points out that **according to their own law**, the testimony of the Father and himself should be enough!
 - a) They have refused to believe his testimony, even as it was confirmed by any witnesses!
 - b) So as he has done a couple of times already in John, Jesus points to the very law of Moses that they had accused him of breaking and dishonoring, and shows that in reality, it is they who are ignoring the Law.
- C. **John 8:17 ESV** In your Law it is written that the testimony of two people is true. **18 I am the one who bears witness about myself, and the Father who sent me bears witness about me.**"
1. Since they have rejected Jesus (and by extension, God the Father) as a credible judge, or witness, he turns to the law that they have cherished and condemns them with it.
 - a) The same will happen to us. If we reject the offer of free grace in Christ, we will be judged by the Law of Moses. And don't think you'll squeak by!
 - b) Also do not blame me for a harsh or unloving gospel! It is you who have sat week after week hearing the testimony and yet rejected Jesus, depending on your own moral good! Your blood is on your own head!
 2. **Galatians 3:10 ESV** For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, "Cursed be everyone who does not abide by **all things** written in the Book of the Law, **and do them.**"
- D. The combined testimony of the Son who did wondrous works, and taught with authority, as well as the Father who sent him, is sufficient verification of truth!
- IV. **John 8:19 ESV** They said to him therefore, "Where is your Father?" Jesus answered, "You know neither me nor my Father. If you knew me, you would know my Father also." **20** These words he spoke in the treasury, as he taught in the temple; but no one arrested him, because his hour had not yet come.
- A. "Where is your Father?" This is the question that the entire culture is asking (even if they don't know or won't acknowledge it!). Let Hurricane Harvey or Irma steamroll Houston or Miami and people begin asking, "Where is God?" Let famine or genocide grip a nation, and the voices cry out, "Where is the Father?" Let some suffer through the trauma of an abusive marriage or childhood and the wounded spirit will invariably sob, "Where is God?" we all are familiar with this.
- B. But in the Pharisee's case, "Where is your Father?" does not rise from inexplicable pain, but from unbelief. God can sustain us in occasional battles with doubt in the face of our tragic circumstances, and how they fit into His sovereign plan; but what he absolutely will not tolerate is our unbelief.

1. According to Marvin Vincent, their use of the word “where” versus “who” is because “the testimony of an unseen and unheard witness (i.e., God) would not satisfy them”. Because of their unbelief, they were mocking Christ!
 2. They are also looking for a direct answer from Jesus that they can transform into a legal charge of blasphemy. “Where is your Father, Jesus? And we dare you to say that he is in Heaven!”
- C. **Occasional doubt** like I described earlier is oftentimes honest. It admits wavering in the face of things we do not yet understand (or may not ever understand!), but reaches out to God anyway. Unbelief, on the other hand, is the willful, proud stand that what God has said isn’t true, what he has done isn’t valid, and what he has affirmed is corrupt. This is dangerous ground to tread!
- D. Don’t miss what Jesus is saying here. Once again he inseparably links Himself to the Father. “You know neither me nor my Father. If you knew me, you would know my Father also.”
1. Not only is Jesus saying that they have missed his true identity because they don’t know the Father, but the opposite is just as true: they can only know the Father by the means provided to do so! Matthew Poole says, “The eternal Father is not to be known but in, and by, and through the Son.”
 2. **John 14:6 ESV** Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”
 - a) The Father, Yahweh God, to whom the Pharisees claimed such allegiance, has decreed that those who wish to approach him are granted only one access point, and that is, always has been, and always will be Jesus the Son.
 - b) Don’t ever give in to the heretical lie that all religions teach basically the same thing; that all roads lead to the same place. I’ll say it again: those who do not trust Christ alone, by faith alone, through grace alone for their salvation will be judged by God’s holy law. There is no third option!
 - c) And if you are judged according to the witness of the law, there is no escape. You can expect no last minute call from the governor. Justice will be served and a sentence will be handed down. You will be tormented forever in the fires of hell, prepared for the devil and his angels.
 3. Your only means of pardon is through the free grace of God offered through Christ alone. It is free and it is full! It is available to you no matter what you’ve done or who you are! Won’t you say yes to Jesus today so that you can know the Father and find everlasting favor with him?
- V. One last point: **John 8:20 ESV** These words he spoke in the treasury, as he taught in the temple; but no one arrested him, because his hour had not yet come.
- A. Since the beginning of John, this is the 5th time we have seen this reference to Jesus’ “hour” or “time” having not yet come. Notice two things about it...
1. First, note the way in which God’s sovereign hand is restraining those who deny the testimony of Jesus. God will not let anyone lay a finger on Christ until the time that is set for them to do so. Though they do not believe him, his testimony is confirmed again in the way that God protects him. These Pharisees have been plotting his arrest and death for some time now. But they cannot do a single thing until God gives the green light.

2. Secondly, Never forget that the same is true for all that belong to God, including you! You are not just a floating leaf, going wherever the stream takes you. No! God is ordering your steps and guiding your path.
 - a) You do not have to fear whether you find yourself in a time of plenty or need, sickness or health, good company or loneliness, because God is holding you in the palm of his hand.
 - b) And as you suffer, He is patiently teaching you that there is nothing he could ever give you that is better than himself.
- B. There have been many witnesses to Jesus; more so in our day than in his when you add the testimony of the Apostles and the blood of the martyrs that continues to flow every day. But they are all only reinforcements to the sure testimony that has been given already by the Father and the Son.