

John, Part 19 – The Revelation of Jesus Christ— Jesus' Authority and Power

John 5:16-23

Jesus just healed the man at the pool of Bethesda on the Sabbath. Although the man had been paralyzed for at least 38 years, Jesus was able to make him well with the command, “Take up your bed and walk.” As a result of His actions of mercy on the Sabbath, the Jews persecuted Jesus and sought to kill Him. Pay attention to the claims that Jesus makes about Himself in the next verses.

John 5:17-18 NKJV But Jesus answered them, “**My Father** has been working until now, and I have been working.” Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that **God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.**

These two verses are full of claims of Jesus’ deity. First, He said God was His Father. Then He indicated that He and the Father had been working and that His and the Father’s works were equal. The Jews understood that He was claiming equality with God.

John 5:19 NKJV Then Jesus answered and said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, **the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner.**

Now Jesus was showing His complete obedience to, dependence on, and knowledge of the Father. He can do nothing of Himself. He sees the Father’s actions and thus knows God the Father. Jesus also elevated His actions in their sight by saying that He does the same work in the same way. After showing the unity and equality of working, Jesus said He and the Father were equal in knowing.

John 5:20 NKJV For the Father loves the Son, and **shows Him all things that He Himself does; and He will show Him greater works than these, that you may marvel.**

Since the Father loves the Son, He shows Him all things that He does. This elevates Jesus above every other prophet or man of God. Moses, Elijah, Elisha, Samuel and all of the other prophets were shown certain things, but Jesus said He was shown “all things that the Father does.”

Jesus is equal in knowing. His knowledge is omniscient. Not only does He know what the Father knows, Jesus declares that He will do greater works than what they have seen. He was telling them, “You have not seen all that God can do and what I can do.” They are going to see greater things than what happened to the lame man. They will marvel at His power.

Now Jesus makes a claim of His power over life and death making Himself equal with the Father.

John 5:21 NKJV For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to them, even so the Son gives life to whom He will.

Jesus speaks about the resurrection of the dead with absolute certainty. This is a fact that gives us hope when we face death and life altering situations. Jesus says He has power to quicken and give life, and to raise people from the dead. At this point in the Gospel account, we have no record of Jesus raising the dead, but shortly afterward He demonstrated His power over death, (Matthew 9:24; Matthew 11:5; Luke 7:12-16; Luke 8:52-53; John 11:1-43).

When John the Baptist was in prison, he sent two of his disciples to Jesus who asked, “Are You the Messiah?” In Matthew 11:4-5, Jesus said, “Go tell John, the blind see and the

lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up...”

When Jesus commissioned and sent His disciples, He gave them power to heal the sick and raise the dead in His name, (Matthew 1:8).

Later in this discussion, Jesus expanded on this statement.

John 5:28-29 NKJV Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.

Think about His equality with the Father in giving life. They should not marvel at the fact that He had the authority and power to give everlasting life and raise the dead. The Jews accused Jesus of making Himself equal with God and Jesus did not deny what they said.

John 11:25 NKJV Jesus said, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.

As we continue in this revelation of Jesus Christ, we will see this demonstrated by His power to call the dead back to life.

Jesus is equal in judging and honor.

John 5:22-23 NKJV For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son, that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.

The Father has committed all work of judgment to the Son. Romans 14:10 tells us, “For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.” Here Jesus said, “For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son.” This has been done so that everyone should give equal honor to the Son and the Father.

John 5:24 NKJV “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.

John 5:25 NKJV Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live.

Jesus has authority over our destiny to save humanity from death to life. Jesus shows us how we can have everlasting life. Notice here Christ’s ultimate authority over the destiny of the dead. Pay close attention to this verse for it has a dual meaning. First, it refers to the resurrection of the dead. Second, it refers to those who are dead in trespasses and sins. We still notice the power of Christ’s words to bring newness of life to those who are dead in sin.

Later in the Book of Revelation, Jesus said, “Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with me,” (Revelation 3:31). Jesus is talking about His authority to resurrect the dead and give life to those who are dead in sin, then He makes an amazing statement about this.

John 5:26-27 NKJV For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself, and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man.

Jesus Christ is equal in self-existence with the Father. This is a very critical statement in relation to the divinity of Christ. When Jesus was preparing His disciples for His death, He spoke about His self-existence.

John 10:18 NKJV No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father.”

This is a testimony of Christ's unity and equality with the Father. He is self-existent.

John 5:26-27 NKJV For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself, and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man.

This verse is significant for all who put their hope and trust in Christ. The Self-existent One has authority to execute judgment.

What does that mean? All authority and power has been given to Jesus Christ. In verse 27, Jesus says He is the Son of Man. Jesus is saying clearly that He is the Son of God. He came into this world as a man to become the Substitute for sinners. Although He was rejected, suffered, and was crucified, Jesus Christ arose in victory over death and the grave. When He comes the second time, He will be the Judge of the whole world.

This man Jesus Christ is claiming equality with God the Father. This was difficult for them to receive. They have relied on the authority of the High Priest and the Sanhedrin for many generations and Jesus was putting Himself above their authority. He is challenging their understanding of the Truth. He is claiming greater understanding of God's Word than the Scribes, Pharisees and teachers of the Law. He is claiming greater authority and power than Moses.

By doing what He did on the Sabbath, Jesus was challenging everything they had understood and practiced. From Christ's perspective, they did not understand the fundamentals of the law or the Sabbath.

What was the purpose of the Sabbath? Initially, God established the Sabbath as a day of rest.

Genesis 2:2-3 NLT On the seventh day God had finished his work of creation, so he rested from all his work. And God blessed the seventh day and declared it holy, because it was the day when he rested from all his work of creation.

When God gave His Law, He required them to remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.

Exodus 20:9-10 NKJV Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. In it you shall do no work:

Traditions took over where God stopped. They imposed their own definitions for what God intended when He said the Sabbath day was God's day. Jesus' understanding about the Sabbath was different from their traditional view.

Mark 2:27 NKJV And He said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath."

Throughout Jesus' ministry, He intentionally healed and helped people on the Sabbath. He used the Sabbath to set people free from their bondage and sin. God gave the Sabbath as a day for rest, renewal, worship, and joy.

Jesus did many wonderful things on the Sabbath.

- **John 5:1-15** - Jesus healed the lame man at the Pool on the Sabbath.
- **John 9** - He healed a blind man on the Sabbath.
- **Mark 2:23-28** - His disciples picked heads of grain and ate them on the Sabbath.
- **Mark 3:1-5** - He healed a shriveled hand on the Sabbath.
- **Luke 13:10-17** - the woman that was bent over with a spirit of infirmity for 18 years was healed on the Sabbath.
- **Luke 14:1-6** - Jesus healed a man with dropsy on the Sabbath.

Jesus was demonstrating His authority and power.

Mark 3:4 NKJV Then He said to them, “Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?” But they kept silent.

John 5:16-17 NKJV For this reason the Jews persecuted Jesus, and sought to kill Him, because He had done these things on the Sabbath. ¹⁷But Jesus answered them, “**My Father has been working until now, and I have been working.**”

In Genesis 2, the Torah says that God rested on the seventh day from His work of creation. Now, Jesus is contradicting everything they said and practiced. He said the Father never stopped working. God is working to sustain the universe and is giving life.

Jesus was saying, “It is not wrong for His Son to do works of grace and mercy on the Sabbath.” Jesus is declaring His unity and equality with the Father. He was not independent of the Father and was not in opposition to the Father. His activity was not self-initiated, but was a direct result of being sent and directed from the Father. His every activity and work originated in the heart and mind of the Father. The Two always work together and maintain a relationship of continuous love. Jesus has a full disclosure of the Father’s works. Later Jesus told His disciples, “He who has seen Me has seen the Father,” (John 14:9).

His actions and words inflamed the Jews and stirred up their wrath. Since they felt their judgment was superior to His, they refused to accept Jesus as the Son of God. Jesus’ unity with His Father is so complete that the honor of God is tied to Jesus Christ, the Son. To reject or dishonor God the Son is to reject and dishonor God the Father.

Jesus can change a person’s destiny. Those who hear His word and believe can have eternal life right now. Those who die will hear His voice and come out of the grave. Jesus can do something life-altering in you today.

Let Jesus challenge your tradition. Let Him in and He will demonstrate the glory of the Father. He will set the captive soul free. He will bind up the broken heart. He will heal your sick body. He will raise your dead body.