

Healing At the Pool of Bethesda

John 5:30-47

Part 3

John 5:30 "I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

1. Jesus strongly emphasized He did not act on His own initiative, that is, by His own authority.
 - a. The KJV translates "I can of mine own self do nothing." NIV has "By myself I can do nothing."
 - b. The Greek literally has "I cannot to do anything from myself."
 - c. The meaning is not that He could do nothing, but He always acted by the Father's authority.
2. He had been sent to do the Father's will and this was exactly what He was doing. (Jn. 4:34; 6:38; 8:29).

John 4:34 Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work.

John 6:38 "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

John 8:29 "And He who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him."

3. His authority had come from the Father, and He was always obedient to Him.

Witness of Christ

John 5:31 "If I *alone* testify about Myself [with no other witness], My testimony is not true.

1. According to the Law of Moses the testimony of one person was not enough to substantiate the truth.
2. It required two or more witnesses. (Num. 35:31; Deut. 17:6; 19:15; Jn. 8:13,14).

Num. 35:31 'If anyone kills a person, the murderer shall be put to death at the evidence of witnesses, but no person shall be put to death on the testimony of one witness.

Deut. 17:6 "On the evidence of two witnesses or three witnesses, he who is to die shall be put to death; he shall not be put to death on the evidence of one witness.

Deut. 19:15 "A single witness shall not rise up against a man on account of any iniquity or any sin which he has committed; on the evidence of two or three witnesses a matter shall be confirmed.

Jn. 8:12 Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, "I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life."

Jn. 8:13 So the Pharisees said to Him, "You are testifying about Yourself; Your testimony is not true."

3. Legally His testimony was not regarded as substantiated without one or more other witnesses.

4. Jesus proceeds to present the most reliable witnesses.

God's Witness

1st Witness

John 5:32 "There is another who testifies of Me, and I know that the testimony which He gives about Me is true.

1. Jesus contends "another" testified concerning His identity.
 - a. He did not name the "another," but it is clear the "another" is God.
 - b. The context shows "another" should be viewed as "Another," that is God the Father.
2. No one could doubt the truthfulness of the Father's testimony. (Heb. 6:18).

3. John 5:34 reveals "another" refers to God, the Father.

Jn. 5:34 "But the testimony which I receive is not from man, but I say these things so that you may be saved.

4. The same truth is presented again in John 5:37.

Jn. 5:37 "And the Father who sent Me, He has testified of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time nor seen His form.

Witness of John

2nd Witness

John 5:33 "You [Jewish leaders] have sent to John, and he has testified to the truth.

1. John had made reference to the witness of John the Baptist. (Jn. 1:6-8, 15,19-36; 3:25-26).
2. John was the second witness of Jesus.
3. "The truth" here refers to Christ. (Jn. 14:6).
4. If they had believed and accepted John, they would have embraced Christ.

John 5:34"But the testimony which I receive is not from man [only], but I say these things so that you may be saved.

1. Verse 34 is likely an ellipsis meaning Jesus did not rely only on human testimony.
2. Jesus did receive the witness of men, but the witness of men was not the highest witness.
3. The highest witness is from God. (1 Jn. 5:9).

1 Jn. 5:9 If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater; for the testimony of God is this, that He has testified concerning His Son.

4. He was saying "these things" so that they might be saved.

John 5:35 "He was the lamp that was burning and was shining and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light."

1. John was a burning and shining light.
 - a. The verb "was" may mean John was dead or in prison.
 - b. His work was past.
2. He had affirmed the identity of Jesus, and guided the multitudes to Jesus "the light of the world." (Jn. 1:6-8).

Jn. 1:6 There came a man sent from God, whose name was John.

Jn. 1:7 He came as a witness, to testify about the Light, so that all might believe through him.

Jn. 1:8 He was not the Light, but he came to testify about the Light.

3. They had rejoiced "for a while in his light."
 - a. The multitudes anxiously gathered to hear the one who proclaimed the exciting news that the kingdom was near. (Matt. 3:1).
 - b. The Jewish leaders basically ignored John's call to repentance and did not submit to John's baptism.
 - c. John had refused to baptize those who did not manifest repentance. (Matt. 3:7-10).
 - d. This probably explains their temporary rejoicing.
 - 1) They were excited the kingdom was near. (Matt. 4:17).
 - 2) They rejected the mandate for them to repent and refused to believe the Messiah would die for the sins of men.
 - 3) They wanted a living, breathing king who would reign on earth on David's throne.

Witness of Jesus' Works

3rd Witness

John 5:36 "But the testimony which I have is greater than *the testimony of John*; for the works which the Father has given Me to accomplish--the very works that I do--testify about Me, that the Father has sent Me.

1. The works of Jesus were powerful evidence of His Deity.
2. These works were even a greater testimony to His Deity than the witness of John.
 - a. Jesus used the word "works" to describe His miracles. (Jn. 5:20; 7:3,21; 10:25,32, 37, 38; 14:10, 11; 15:24).
 - b. John described the miracles of Jesus as "signs."
3. God would not have done these signs through an imposter.
4. Nicodemus recognized this fact. (Jn. 3:1-2). He had heard or witnessed or both some of the signs of Jesus. (Jn. 2:23).

5. Jesus had given them strong evidence that He was from God, but rather than accept His works they hated both the Father and the Son. (Jn. 15:24).

John 15:24 "If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would not have sin; but now they have both seen and hated Me and My Father as well.

6. His words and works were the words and works of the Father. (Jn. 14:10).

John 14:10 "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works.

Witness of the Father

A Second Time Jesus Appealed To His First Witness

John 5:37 "And the Father who sent Me, He has testified of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time nor seen His form.

1. God did testify of Jesus through the Old Testament Scriptures, John the Baptist, the baptism of Jesus, the miracles of Jesus, the transfiguration, etc.
2. They had refused to hear the voice of God "at any time."
 - a. Moses heard God's voice. (Exod. 33:11).
 - b. They had refused to hearken to God's words spoken through Moses and refused to hear and obey God's words spoken through Him.
 - c. If they had heard God's voice at any time, they would have received Christ. (Jn. 17:14).

John 17:14 "I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

3. They had never "seen His form."
 - a. No one has seen God as He is (Jn. 1:18), but Abraham and Moses did see God in a form. (Gen. 18:1, 22: 19:1; Exod. 33:20-23).
 - b. Jesus had both seen and heard the Father having been with Him in heaven.
4. They were rejecting the One who had seen God and had been sent as His spokesman.

John 5:38 "You do not have His word abiding in you, for you do not believe Him whom He sent.

1. It was clear God's word was not abiding in them.
2. They manifested this by rejecting the One whom God had sent.
3. They kept rejecting Christ despite all the evidence God gave Jesus was His Son.

Witness of the Scriptures

4th Witness

John 5:39 You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me;

1. In the original Greek “Search” can be imperative “Search” or indicative “you search” and either translation makes sense.
 - a. They did search the Old Testament scriptures.
 - b. They were persuaded the scriptures would lead to eternal life.
 - c. The problem was they searched the scriptures with eyes that were blinded by their preconceived ideas and in light of human traditions.
2. The context favors “you search” because Jesus was making His argument on the basis of their use of the Scriptures.
3. The word “think” is used in the sense of being fully persuaded.
 - a. See 1 Cor. 7:40; 10:12; Jas. 1:26.
 - b. These are examples of “think” being used with the idea of being “fully persuaded.”
4. They were pretending to be persuaded that the Scriptures were the word of God, but rejected what God had prophesied about His Son.
5. They had rejected God’s word in many other ways and also sought to void God’s commandments by their traditions. (Matt. 15:3-9).

John 5:40 and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life.

1. It is tragic that men who claimed to believe the Scriptures reject the One of whom they prophesied and refused to come to Him.
2. These men, and others like them, loved the darkness rather than the light. (Jn. 3:19).
3. They loved being the center of attention and receiving glory from men.

John 5:41 "I do not receive glory from men;

1. Jesus was unlike the Jewish leaders who loved the glory and praise of men. (Jn. 5:44; 12:43, 44; Matt. 6:1).
2. Jesus always diligently sought the glory of the Father. (Jn. 7:18; 12:28; 17:4).

Jn. 7:18 "He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who is seeking the glory of the One who sent Him, He is true, and there is no unrighteousness in Him

Jn. 12:28 "Father, glorify Your name." Then a voice came out of heaven: "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."

Jn. 17:4 "I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do.

3. Paul and the other apostles did not seek the glory of men. (1 Thess. 2:6; Gal. 6:14).

1 Thess. 2:6 nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, even though as apostles of Christ we might have asserted our authority.

Gal. 6:14 But may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

4. Today we should be seeking God's glory. (Matt. 5:16; 1 Cor. 10:31).

John 5:42 but I know you [Jewish leaders], that you do not have the love of God in yourselves.

1. The Bible speaks of God's amazing love. (Rom. 5:8; 1 Jn. 3:1; 4:9, 10, 16, 19; Jn. 15:9).
2. These Jewish leaders did not love God or His Son.
3. They claimed to love God, but rejected His beloved Son and thus rejected God. (Lk. 10:16). See Jn. 5:23.
4. They claimed to love God, but were rejecting His commandments. (1 Jn. 5:3).

John 5:43 "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.

1. The "Father's name" occurs frequently in John's gospel. (Jn. 5:43; 10:25; 12:28; 17:6, 11, 12, 26).
2. They were rejecting the One who came by the authority of the Father. (Jn. 1:11; 3:11, 32; 12:37).
3. They were fulfilling the prophecy made in Isaiah 53:3. See Jn. 1:11.
4. They would receive one who had no authority from the Father, but came by his own authority.
5. They would readily listen to false messiahs who preached what they wanted to hear. (Mk. 13:6, 21, 22).

Mk. 13:6 "Many will come in My name, saying, 'I am He!' and will mislead many."

Mk. 13:21 "And then if anyone says to you, 'Behold, here is the Christ'; or, 'Behold, He is there'; do not believe him; Mk. 13:22 for false Christs and false prophets will arise, and will show signs and wonders, in order to lead astray, if possible, the elect."

John 5:44 "How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another and you do not seek the glory that is from the one and only God?"

1. Their belief was hindered by their constant seeking of one another's glory. (Matt. 6:1; Jn. 12:42,43).

Matt. 6:1 "Beware of practicing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them; otherwise you have no reward with your Father who is in heaven.

Jn. 12:42 Nevertheless many even of the rulers believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they were not confessing Him, for fear that they would be put out of the synagogue;

Jn. 12:43 for they loved the approval of men rather than the approval of God.

2. Seeking one another's glory was far more important to them than seeking the glory of the "one and only God."
3. They honored Jesus with their lips, but their heart was far from Him. (Matt. 15:7, 8).

John 5:45 "Do not think that I [am the only One who] will accuse you before the Father; the one who accuses you is Moses, in whom you have set your hope.

1. Jesus was not the only One who would accuse them “before the Father.”
 - a. Jesus will accuse men of neglecting His followers in that last day. (Matt. 25:41-46).
 - b. Jesus will accuse and condemn those who called Him “Lord, lord” but refused to do God’s will. (Matt. 7:21-23).

Matt 7:21 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven {will enter.}

Matt 7:22 "Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?'

Matt 7:23 "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.'

2. Moses would also accuse them of sin because they were rejecting the One of whom Moses wrote.
3. Moses would not be their advocate before the Father, but would be their accuser before God because they were rejecting his teaching concerning the Messiah.
4. The words “have set your hope” are in the perfect tense in the Greek that is a past action with abiding results.
5. Their hope in Moses was a present hope, and not simply a past state of mind.

John 5:46 "For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me, for he wrote about Me.

1. Moses had prophesied the coming of Jesus.
2. Moses had spoken of Christ in Genesis 49:10.

Gen. 49:10 "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes, And to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.

3. Moses spoke of the great prophet to come - the One who men must hearken. (Deut. 18:15-19).

Deut. 18:15 "The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen, you shall listen to him.

Deut. 18:16 "This is according to all that you asked of the LORD your God in Horeb on the day of the assembly, saying, 'Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, let me not see this great fire anymore, or I will die.'

Deut. 18:17 "The LORD said to me, 'They have spoken well.

Deut. 18:18 'I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him.

Deut. 18:19 'It shall come about that whoever will not listen to My words which he shall speak in My name, I Myself will require it of him.

John 5:47 "But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"

1. The writings of Moses prophesied the coming of Jesus, but if they did not really believe his writings they would not believe the words of the One of whom Moses wrote.

2. They were also rejecting the words of David, Isaiah, Micah and others who spoke of the coming Messiah.

3. Jesus recognizes Moses as the author of the Pentateuch just as John the Baptist did. (Jn. 1:17).

John 1:17 For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ.

- a. Moses did not write every word of the Pentateuch, but he was the primary author of the first 5 books of the Old Testament.
- b. He did not write Numbers 12:3 praising himself.

Num. 12:3 (Now the man Moses was very humble, more than any man who was on the face of the earth.) See “meek” ASV.

1) It was wrong for one to praise himself. (Prov. 27:2).

Prov 27:2 Let another praise you, and not your own mouth; A stranger, and not your own lips.

2) It is not known who wrote these words about Moses.

c. He obviously did not record his own death. (Deut. 34:5-12).

Deut. 34:5 So Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD.

Deut. 34:6 And He buried him in the valley in the land of Moab, opposite Beth-peor; but no man knows his burial place to this day.

Deut. 34:7 Although Moses was one hundred and twenty years old when he died, his eye was not dim, nor his vigor abated.

Deut. 34:8 So the sons of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days; then the days of weeping and mourning for Moses came to an end.

Deut. 34:9 Now Joshua the son of Nun was filled with the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him; and the sons of Israel listened to him and did as the LORD had commanded Moses.

Deut. 34:10 Since that time no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face,

Deut. 34:11 for all the signs and wonders which the LORD sent him to perform in the land of Egypt against Pharaoh, all his servants, and all his land,

Deut. 34:12 and for all the mighty power and for all the great terror which Moses performed in the sight of all Israel.

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