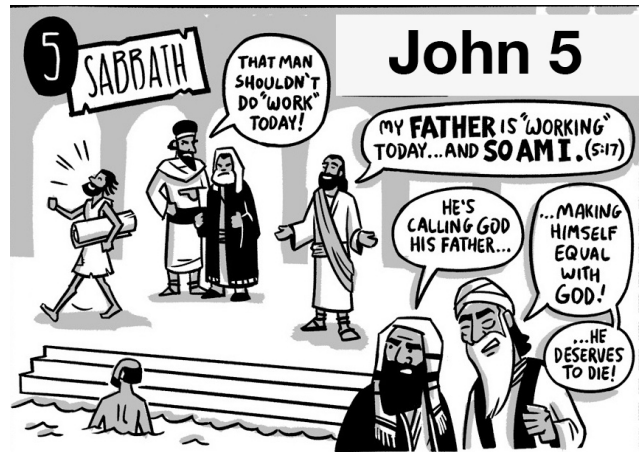


Gospel of John Study Notes

John 5b – Jesus Goes to Trial

This chapter focuses on the Sabbath, more specifically, Jesus' violation of the Sabbath by healing a man and telling him to violate a rule as well. The apparently blatant disregard for the Law draws the attention of Jewish leadership as they begin to compile their case against Jesus.

The first part of chapter 5 provides a single healing event that appears to benefit one person, but we learn more is at stake. In the second part, John uses the event to capture Jesus' discourse that includes the Trinity, the final judgment, the End Times and more. All in a handful of verses! It's no wonder that we see no response from the Jewish leaders – they're scrambling trying to understand what was just said. And so must we. Today's focus is on John 5:19-47 – Jesus' words of defense.



Jesus Responds to the Jewish Leaders

- Jesus describes the relationship between the Father and the Son
 - The Son can do nothing without the Father
 - The Father loves the Son and shows him what to do
 - Both Father and Son give life
- Very truly:
 - Eternal life awaits those who believe
 - Even the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God
 - Those who have done good will rise to life
 - Those who have done evil will rise to death
- Jesus' judgment is pure, he sees without bias
- Witnesses for Jesus' Case:
 - God (John 5:32, 5:36-37)
 - John the Baptist (John 5:33-35)
 - His own works (John 5:36)
 - Scripture (John 5:39-40)
 - Moses (John 5:46-47)

"I do not accept glory from human beings, but I know you. I know that you do not have the love of God in your hearts." – John 5:41-42

From the NIV Application Commentary:

The final impact of his defense in 5:31–40 leaves the impression that Jesus’ hearers bear some responsibility for what God has done. If they cannot see the Father’s work in their midst, if they cannot understand a sign when they see it, if they repudiated John the Baptist and read the Bible with closed hearts, something must be profoundly wrong.¹

One of the most profound observations from the NIVAC is this:

The love religious life, but they have forgotten how to love God.²

The Canal – from the NIVAC³

Karl Barth provides a harrowing description of this sickness in his famous 1919 commentary on Romans. Barth thinks about people who live in a wilderness alongside a canal. The canal was there to bring them water and life, and it was with great effort and cost that the project was built for their place in time. Great sacrifices were made, and many died as the canal was cut through mountain and desert. But the great irony is that the canal has become dry, and while its walls still convey evidence of the coursing of water, there is nothing there that can give life to anyone. Nevertheless, the people continue to service it, to defend it, to name their children after its architects and engineers; but it is only an historic thing.

A canal meant to convey something— water and life— now has become static, an end instead of a means. Something for the museum. People tell stories about it instead of drinking from it. The older ones treasure the stories most; the younger ones have to be initiated deliberately, but each generation seems to lose a fraction of the true vision of the canal as time goes on. And no one has a memory of what water in the canal really looks like.

Barth’s warning to the Swiss and German church following World War I is a word we should heed today. The possibility always exists that my life, my church, my tradition, my denomination, even my Bible will become relics of religious curiosity instead of living instruments of God. Men and women will be ordained, earn Ph.D.’s, and launch magazines, publishing houses, colleges, and seminaries with solid evangelical commitments, and it will all be for nothing. Empty canals. There are specialists who can cite Scripture and verse, who can measure orthodoxy with exacting precision, who can identify the religious speck in someone’s eye from a great distance, but in whom love for God does not exist ([John 5:42](#)).

¹ Wilkins, Michael J.; Garland, David E.; Bock, Darrell L.; Burge, Gary M.; Fernando, Ajith. NIVAC Bundle 6: Gospels, Acts (The NIV Application Commentary). Zondervan Academic. Kindle Edition.

² *ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

John 5:16-47

New International Version

The Authority of the Son

¹⁶ So, because Jesus was doing these things on the Sabbath, the Jewish leaders began to persecute him. ¹⁷ In his defense Jesus said to them, “My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I too am working.” ¹⁸ For this reason they tried all the more to kill him; not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.

¹⁹ Jesus gave them this answer: “Very truly I tell you, 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, and he will show him even greater works than these, so that you will be amazed. 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. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him.

²⁴ “Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life. ²⁵ Very truly I tell you, 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 also 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 what is good will rise to live, and those who have done what is 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 true. ³² There is another who testifies in my favor, and I know that his testimony about me is true.

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 works that the Father has given me to finish—the very works that I am doing—testify 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 study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about me, ⁴⁰ yet you refuse to come to me to have life.

⁴¹ "I do not accept glory from human beings, 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 since you accept glory from one another but do not seek the glory 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?"