

The Gospel of John

5:16-23

Welcome back to this week's study in the book of John.

Last week's study may have been hard for some of you, realizing that you do trust more in the things of this world than God, or what man teaches that you should do rather than following what the bible says.

If you have been having a struggle with any of the things mentioned in last week's study, send me an e-mail and I will pray for you.

I do have a request for all of you, that you will keep me in your prayers everyday along this website.

As a teacher of God's word I am attacked spiritually every day, and I know it's because many are growing closer to the Lord through the studies and most importantly through His word. Pray for those who come here, whether to study or are just looking for some answers.

So let's get started in this week's study.

✠ **John 5:16** *For this reason the Jews persecuted Jesus, and sought to kill Him, because He had done these things on the Sabbath.*

For what reason, you may be thinking?

Well, you have to go back to last week's study where we read of Jesus healing a man on the Sabbath day, and after Jesus healed the man He told him to, "Take up your bed and walk." Which we found out was against men's traditions but not God's.

So the Jews wanted to kill Jesus because He healed a man on the Sabbath Day and according to them, Jesus told this man to break the Sabbath Day law.

So what would give the Jews the right to kill a man or even want to kill a man for breaking the Sabbath Day law?

We would have to go back to the book of Numbers to see.

✠ **Num 15:32-36** *Now while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man gathering sticks on the Sabbath day. And those who found him gathering sticks brought him to Moses and Aaron, and to all the congregation. They put him under guard, because it had not been explained what should be done to him. Then the LORD said to Moses, "The man must surely be put to death; all the congregation shall stone him with stones outside the camp." So, as the LORD commanded Moses, all the congregation brought him outside the camp and stoned him with stones, and he died.*

This man here in the book of Numbers was working to provide for his family or even himself (if he wasn't married) and didn't trust God. But the man in the book of John, that we were reading about last week, was not working but rather just carrying away the thing that had bound him for all these years just as Jesus told him to.

Remember God was the one who made the law of keeping the Sabbath Day, and wouldn't the one who created the law know what was work and what wasn't, or what constituted breaking God's law and what didn't!
Jesus also said this about the Sabbath Day.

✠ **Mark 2:27-28** *And He said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath."*

But the Jews didn't know this because they didn't know that the Messiah was in their presence.

So Jesus answers them with:

✠ **John 5:17-18** *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.*

Strike two, at least according to the Jews. Breaking the Sabbath and making himself equal to God. That's one thing I do have to give the Jews credit for, they know how Holy God is. But we seem to take God for granted, like He's just another caricature in a book. We sometimes talk to God like we would talk to our dogs or someone we don't care about. We treat Him like a normal man and not the creator of the heavens and the earth.

I know God is awesome, but He is so much more than my little brain could ever imagine that He is. Even reading His word as He describes things He has done, like in the book of Job, or how He has conquered mighty armies with just one of His angels, or how He delicately placed each grain of sand on the seashore yet powerful enough to hold back the waves of the sea.

God holds the stars in His hands and created them all with just a thought.

The complexity of an atom and the hundreds of billions that we each contain to make up our bodies, God created and thought of the whole idea of an atom.

God picked up some dirt, breathed on it and man came alive. Try it sometime and see if you can breathe on some dirt and even make it come alive.

Yet we shake our heads at Him and even throw our fists up in the air at God asking Him "Why?"

If things don't seem to go our way, we start to doubt who He is or what He can do.

Just like the children of Israel did after God parted the Red Sea, they started to doubt God and made for themselves a golden calf to worship instead.

† **Ex 32:7-8** *And the LORD said to Moses, "Go, get down! For your people whom you brought out of the land of Egypt have corrupted themselves. They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them. They have made themselves a molded calf, and worshiped it and sacrificed to it, and said, 'This is your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!'"*

How quickly we turn our backs on God and give more glory to the things He has given us than God Himself!

I pray that this year God would become so awesome in your life, that you can't deny Who He is, the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End, The I AM!!!

So the Jews knew how awesome God is, but they didn't know God personally, and the only way they, or we can know God personally is through His Son Jesus.

✠ **John 5:19-23** *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. 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. For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to them, even so the Son gives life to whom He will. 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 Jews were so quick to mention God and point out that Jesus was supposedly breaking God's law. But they did not honor the Son, who is Jesus and Who was in their midst. Yes, Jesus was (and is) God, but He was also a man, and He was obedient to God and what God told Him to do. Jesus imitated (in a sense) what God does. Did you read it in verse 19-21?

I remember when I was a little boy and my dad would cut the grass. He would have his power mower running, and as he walked ahead a path was laid from the cut grass. I had a toy lawnmower and would follow right behind him wanting to be like my dad.

We should be the same way as Christians and children of God. We read what God has done for those in need; we should do the same things also. We want to be like Jesus with all of the glory being bestowed upon us, but we tend to forget that Jesus came as a servant and served others. Yes, be an imitator of God, and be a servant, not a leader looking for glory.

Jesus even taught us this.

† **Mark 10:43-45** *"Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."*

I'll give my time as long as it doesn't interfere with what I want to do. There is no dying to self in that type of service. Suppose a servant were to say, "I can't serve you dinner because I am watching this TV show. I'll do it after it's over." That servant would be fired on the spot, or in the old days or in other countries, they would be simply killed!

What has been holding you back from doing what God wants you to do?

I've told you before that there are many things I want to do, such as adding a study for the youth (teens) as well as for the children (toddlers), which will be a cross between Veggie Tales and Rug Rats.

I have also started to write three books that are not finished nor have I worked on them for a while.

Plus, I have another idea for a Worship website and I personally haven't played keyboards for over a year.

The answer to why I have all these things and none of them are completed is excuses. I have made so many excuses that if I would spend the time I spent making excuses on these things, a lot of them would be finished.

But this year I have prayed and asked the Lord to remove the excuses and that I would do those things He wants me to do.

So is this my New Year's resolution? No, because the bible says:

† ***Ecc 5:4-6 (NLT) So when you make a promise to God, don't delay in following through, for God takes no pleasure in fools. Keep all the promises you make to him. It is better to say nothing than to promise something that you don't follow through on. In such cases, your mouth is making you sin. And don't defend yourself by telling the Temple messenger that the promise you made was a mistake. That would make God angry, and he might wipe out everything you have achieved.***

But your New Year's resolution(s) may not have been made to God but yourself.

How many years have you made this/these same vow(s)? Do people believe you when you say it anymore? We make ourselves look foolish by making resolutions and not following through on them. It is better to pray, God give me the strength to do this or not do that this next year; and if it's a sin you are asking God to remove from you, also ask that it won't come back.

Wisdom comes from asking for help when you know you can't do it yourself (You know because you have tried over and over every year). Foolishness comes from trying to take it on yourself.

† ***Heb 2:18 For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.***

Allow Jesus to aid, or help you out this year with the things you know you need to change in your life as well as the things He has laid upon your heart to accomplish for His glory.

I'm not sure how we got off into this, but I'm sure some of you need to hear it, as I do as well!

Let's back to the verses we were studying.

✠ **John 5:20-21** *"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. For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to them, even so the Son gives life to whom He will."*

Jesus just healed a man who was sick or lame for 38 years, and Jesus says that He will do greater things than this healing. What is greater than this? Jesus gives us a hint what that will be, did you see it?

"For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to them, even so the Son gives life to whom He will."

We know of several instances where Jesus raised people from the dead, but the most popular is Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead. Why, because he was dead for four days before Jesus brought him back to life.

✠ **John 11:39** *Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, "Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days."*

We will get more into this when we get to chapter 11.

But Jesus is talking of more than physical raising from the dead *even so the Son gives life to whom He will.*

If you are a Christian you have life, eternal life, which you didn't have before; and Who gave it to you? None other than Jesus, by laying down His life so you can have eternal life.

✠ **John 10:15-18** *"As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd. Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. 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."*

✠ **John 5:39-40** *You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.*

✠ **John 10:10** *The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.*

Once again we will get more into these verses when we get to the chapters.

Maybe you are a Christian and you have very little and wonder when this abundant life will happen. The abundant life we have is so much more than our short time here on this earth. When you accepted Jesus as your Lord and Savior, eternal life with the Lord started that very moment. Before then you were destined for hell for all eternity separated from the Lord.

We shouldn't be looking for abundance of material possession, but an abundant life in Jesus. That means joy, no matter what is happening, even if it is tragic. Our comfort comes in having Jesus in our lives. If you don't know this joy, then maybe you don't know the one Who gives eternal life abundantly, and that is Jesus! But you can.

"Ok wait a minute. I have heard this over and over all my life. You are now going to say that I need to say a prayer and be saved, right?"

I have no magic words to change you or your heart. Yes, you may have heard this over and over all your life, and I guess the question to you would be, why haven't you done it? Maybe you don't want to give up certain things in your life or even your lifestyle or friends. Maybe you enjoy living with that girl or guy even though you are not married. Maybe you enjoy your drugs or alcohol. Maybe you just don't believe any of what I say or more important what the bible says.

Let me give you a little example of eternity and what you have decided you want for eternity.

Let's say you live to be 60 or 70 years old and for those 60-70 years you party hardy with sex, drugs, alcohol and what have you. But after that 60-70 years is over eternity is just beginning.

Think of the earth and an ant. Let's say you placed an ant on the ground right in front of you and let it start walking, wanting it to go around the world. It would probably take that 60-70 years of your life for that ant to leave the spot you placed it on and for it to walk around the earth one time and reach that same spot.

That was just your life span.

Now let's say we want this same ant (he or she will live a very, very long time) to walk around the earth until it wears down the path it's walking down to the center of the earth. Do you realize how long that would take? Hundreds of millions, if not billions of years. But eternity has still only just begun.

You see, you have decided to live a sinful life for the time it would take an ant to walk around the earth knowing that after that time is up this is what you will experience for ALL ETERNITY:

† **Matt 13:49-51** *"So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, and cast them into the furnace of fire.*

There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth." Jesus said to them, "Have you understood all these things?" They said to Him, "Yes, Lord."

Do you understand your decision to reject Jesus, and the request for you to pray a prayer to save you from the eternity you are headed for of ***wailing and gnashing of teeth!***
Jesus also said:

† ***Mark 9:43-44 If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed, rather than having two hands, to go to hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched-- where 'Their worm does not die, And the fire is not quenched.'***

'Their worm does not die, And the fire is not quenched.' This also is your destiny for all eternity. Jesus is not saying to physically cut off your hand, but rather to get rid of the sin that is in your life so you can have eternal life with Him in heaven.

"But won't I have to give up a lot of things to do this?"

Yes, the bible does say to repent, which mean to turn from your sins. But also you would have to give up loneliness, fearing, doubts, being used by others, eating hot worm sandwiches with no water to wash it down, etc.

Sure you will want to give up your sins and lifestyle you are now living, but in return Jesus said: ***I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.***

How abundant is your life right now?

I won't give you a prayer to pray, but if you want one you can go to the "God's Gift" link and pray that prayer.

But I think I would rather have you talk to God from your own heart. Tell Him your fears, doubts, frustrations, desires and that you don't understand all of this, but that you want to.

If you truly seek God from your heart, you will find Him.

† ***Jer 29:12-13 Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.***

Is this God speaking to you right now? These are His words, not mine.

Well, that's it for this week. Next week we will continue on with the conversation between Jesus and the Jews in chapter 5.

May God richly bless you this year with His blessing and wisdom and not the worlds!