

Jesus' Son of God Defense – Part 3
John 5:31-40

You would think Jesus, as the Son of God, would not need to defend Himself at all, and there is a sense, that He does not need to!

As I have communicated in previous sermons:

- 1. He has life-giving power!*
- 2. He has power to judge!*
- 3. Here, He will provide witnesses!*

For Himself He needed to do NONE of these things! He could have proven Himself immediately by righteously judging and destroying all His enemies, yet He does not do that!

He provides witness, as He wants His hearers to believe, not just His hearers, but through John's Gospel, us, His readers. Let us consider today, Jesus' witnesses:

I. Witness #1 John the Baptist –

³¹ “If I bear witness of Myself, My witness is not true. ³² There is another who bears witness of Me, and I know that the witness which He witnesses of Me is true. ³³ You have sent to John, and he has borne witness to the truth. ³⁴ Yet I do not receive testimony from man, but I say these things that you may be saved. ³⁵ He was the burning and shining lamp, and you were willing for a time to rejoice in his light. John 5:31–35 (NKJV)

1. What does Jesus mean in verse :31 - ³¹ “If I bear witness of Myself, My witness is not true.

A. He is referring to Himself here as a Man, and as a Man speaking to men, and according to law, their law, God's law, every matter was to be established by two or three witnesses.

B. Jesus is agreeing to that rule, but He is also ready to provide the witnesses!

2. John was a witness they had questioned, see John 1, he bore witness to Jesus as the Christ –

⁶ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷ This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe. ⁸ He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. John 1:6–8 (NKJV)

¹⁹ Now this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” ²⁰ He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, “I am not the Christ.” ²¹ And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the Prophet?” And he answered, “No.” ²² Then they said to him, “Who are you, that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?” ²³ He said: “I am ‘The voice of one crying in the wilderness: “Make straight the way of the LORD,” ’ as the prophet Isaiah said.” ²⁴ Now those who were sent were from the Pharisees. ²⁵ And they asked him, saying, “Why then do you baptize

if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?” ²⁶ John answered them, saying, “I baptize with water, but there stands One among you whom you do not know. ²⁷ It is He who, coming after me, is preferred before me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose.” John 1:19–27 (NKJV)

²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! ³⁰ This is He of whom I said, ‘After me comes a Man who is preferred before me, for He was before me.’ ³¹ I did not know Him; but that He should be revealed to Israel, therefore I came baptizing with water.” ³² And John bore witness, saying, “I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him. ³³ I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ ³⁴ And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God.” John 1:29–34 (NKJV)

3. *The Jews sending men out to question John was showing respect to him and his ministry – John 5:33* ³³ **You have sent to John, and he has borne witness to the truth.**
4. *They listened to John for a time, they rejoiced in his, John the Baptist’s light, but Jesus, Who John the Baptist called “the Son of God” they want to kill!*

II. Witness #2 Works –

³⁶ **But I have a greater witness than John’s; for the works which the Father has given Me to finish—the very works that I do—bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me.** John 5:36 (NKJV)

1. *Works here is a reference to miracles, like His healing of the man he just healed, who had been 38 years infirm. But all His works, even non-miraculous, bore witness to the fact He was and is, God’s Son –*

1 God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, **2** has in these last days spoken to us by *His* Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; **3** who being the brightness of *His* glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, **4** having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. Hebrews 1:1–4 (NKJV)

2. *Note in Hebrews 1, Jesus is called God’s Son, and the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person*

And the one work mentioned in Hebrews 1, is He had by Himself purged our sins, this He did on the cross.

III. Witness #3 God the Father –

³⁷ **And the Father Himself, who sent Me, has testified of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His form. ³⁸ But you do not have His word abiding in you, because whom He sent, Him you do not believe.** John 5:37–38 (NKJV)

¹⁶ When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. ¹⁷ And suddenly a voice *came* from heaven, saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” Matthew 3:16–17 (NKJV)

27 “Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? ‘Father, save Me from this hour’? But for this purpose I came to this hour. 28 Father, glorify Your name.” Then a voice came from heaven, saying, “I have both glorified it and will glorify it again.” 29 Therefore the people who stood by and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, “An angel has spoken to Him.” 30 Jesus answered and said, “This voice did not come because of Me, but for your sake. 31 Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. John 12:27–31 (NKJV)

IMPORTANT QUESTION -

What passage of Scripture comes immediately after Matthew 3:17 –

7 And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” Matthew 3:17 (NKJV)

ANSWER –

4 Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. 2 And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry. 3 Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, “If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.” Matthew 4:1–3 (NKJV)

My point, shortly after God the Father, proclaims Jesus’ Sonship / the Devil, Satan questions Jesus’ sonship!

37 And the Father Himself, who sent Me, has testified of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His form. 38 But you do not have His word abiding in you, because whom He sent, Him you do not believe. John 5:37–38 (NKJV)

Doubting God, about believing Jesus is His Son, means you are believing the Devil!

IV. Witness #4 The Bible –

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

1. *Here is something both sad and scary, the people who were rejecting Jesus were students of God’s Word -*

39 You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life;...

“Certainly there is ample external evidence that supports this reading of Jewish motivation: e.g. Hillel affirms that the more study of the law, the more life, and that if a man gains for himself words of the law he has gained for himself life in the world to come (*Pirke Aboth* 2:7).

By contrast, Jesus insists that there is nothing intrinsically life-giving about studying the Scriptures, if one fails to discern their true content and purpose.” Donald Carson

2. *The point of the Old Testament Scriptures were to point to Jesus Christ –*

A. Every lamb sacrificed for sin pointed to Jesus as the Lamb of God –

29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! John 1:29 (NKJV)

B. The Passover Lamb(s) whose blood protected Israel from the Angel of Death point to Jesus Who is our Passover –

7 Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. 1 Corinthians 5:7 (NKJV)

- C. *As Abraham was willing to offer up Isaac, so God the Father gave His only begotten Son / as the serpent was raised in the wilderness, so the Son of Man (Jesus) would be lifted on the cross –*

¹⁰ And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. ¹¹ But the Angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, “Abraham, Abraham!” So he said, “Here I am.” ¹² And He said, “Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me.” ¹³ Then Abraham lifted his eyes and looked, and there behind *him* was a ram caught in a thicket by its horns. So Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up for a burnt offering instead of his son. Genesis 22:10–13 (NKJV)

⁵ And the people spoke against God and against Moses: “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For *there is* no food and no water, and our soul loathes this worthless bread.” ⁶ So the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and many of the people of Israel died. ⁷ Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, “We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD and against you; pray to the LORD that He take away the serpents from us.” So Moses prayed for the people. ⁸ Then the LORD said to Moses, “Make a fiery *serpent*, and set it on a pole; and it shall be that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, shall live.” ⁹ So Moses made a bronze serpent, and put it on a pole; and so it was, if a serpent had bitten anyone, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived. Numbers 21:5–9 (NKJV)

¹⁴ **And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up,** ¹⁵ **that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.** ¹⁶ **For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.** ¹⁷ **For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.** John 3:14–17 (NKJV)

3. *The Bible is a great valuable book, but you have to understand and apply it's teaching to gain its benefits -*

... and these are they which testify of Me. ⁴⁰ **But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.** John 5:39–40 (NKJV)

- A. *The law should make us see our sin, our NEED for Jesus –*

¹⁶ And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace. ¹⁷ For the law was given through Moses, *but* grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared *Him*. John 1:16–18 (NKJV)

- B. *The law shows us our problem: sin, and points to the solution, God's Son, Jesus Christ!*

4. *The further problem –* ⁴⁰ **But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.** John 5: 40 (NKJV)

- A. *Not willing, our will, will not save us!*
B. *We need to realize our unwillingness!*

5. *The Word of God is a true witness -*

¹⁷ **So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.** Romans 10:17 (NKJV)

If you look at the context of Romans 10:17, you will see they heard, but did not come ... by John 6 we will see them come, but not really or rightly COME. This is a sad and scary truth, there are people who might seem to be Christians, who in reality are not. People who deceive themselves!