

John 5.15-18
The Unmistakable Claim

Aim: to see the divine glory of Jesus' equality with the Father and to worship Him!

Scripture Reading: Colossians 1.15-17

INTRODUCTION:

Last week we studied **Psalm 63** and we looked at the soul's thirst for God. The soul is the immaterial you. It is your conscience; your heart; your thoughts; your affections and David speaks about how his soul thirst's for God. His mind was thirsting to be quenched in God. His heart was thirsting to be quenched in God.

Therefore all of David was thirsting after God. To seek Him. To find Him. To see Him. To be with Him. God created him this way. In His image to seek Him.

If you remember David also described the surrounding wilderness. It was dry and weary and had no water. Folks, look around your world today. Look at the wilderness of America and see that it is dry. It is weary. It has no water to satisfy the longing of a man's soul. The irony is our country is so drunk on that which is dry and weary and it has absolutely nothing to quench the deep down soul-thirst of every living person and yet we keep on drinking in that which is dried up, weary, tired, and lifeless.

We not only should see this in our own lives, in our world, but we should also see the slippery slope that will further come from embracing sinfulness. The sin of homosexuality will not satisfy, so there will be something else that will promise satisfaction and as a country we'll put forth legislation to approve and affirm and embrace whatever that will be.

As a king David had everything. There was nothing this man lacked in worldly goods. And yet in **Psalm 63** David speaks of the one thing that he constantly longed for and thirsted for...God Himself!

Even as we see the desolation all around us we must remain fixed on this one truth; God is our only true joy and satisfaction for our soul. Therefore we must early and earnestly seek Him!

Today in **John 5** we have one of the greatest testimonies of Jesus. Today in **John 5** Jesus will testify of His oneness with God the Father. He will testify of not only His oneness, but how that oneness is a shared deity with God.

Let's read it together...John 5.15-18

Title: The Unmistakable Claim

Aim: to see the divine glory of Jesus' equality with the Father and to worship Him!

Providential Testimony That Brought Attention To Jesus (v.15)

“The man went away, and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well.”

If you remember in **verse 14** Jesus is the One who sought **the man** out in the temple. Jesus wanted this **man** to know who He was, so that this **man** would identify Jesus to **the Jews**. Jesus wanted this, so it took place as Jesus desired. This is all a part of the sovereign, providential plan of God. Jesus didn't come to the earth to merely visit the people. He came to accomplish the work of His Father. He came so that those that are His would be saved.

So after Jesus found **the man** and apparently told him who He was **the man went away, and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well.**

What's interesting to me at this point is that **the Jews** were interrogating the **man** because he broke **the Sabbath** by carrying his pallet. But when the **man** figures out it is **Jesus** he returns to **the Jews** and what does he tell them **“it was Jesus who had made him well.”** But watch this...**the Jews** specifically asked him, “Who is the man who said to you, ‘Pick up your pallet and walk?’” They didn't ask him, “who healed you and made you well?”

The man in answering **the Jews** actually points them to the sign of his healing and **being made well** by Jesus and NOT to **the Sabbath**; he doesn't identify Jesus in regards to him "breaking" **the Sabbath** of carrying his pallet.

Now I didn't recognize this insight last time in John. I think the Holy Spirit gave me this insight in my study this last week in order for me to see that this **man** may not have been outing Jesus after all or trying to put the blame on Jesus for his **Sabbath** "breaking". He actually does just the opposite in his answer by putting their minds on the sign and the One who made him **well** and not the breaking of **the Sabbath**.

All that to say that I think I was wrong last time in saying this **man** betrayed Jesus. I think after digging in the text a little deeper this **man** didn't really answer **the Jews'** question in the way they asked it. He answered it in a way that actually pointed them to the healing and to the sign. He said, that it was Jesus who had made me well, not it was Jesus who told me to pick up my pallet and walk.

But nevertheless, **the Jews** know who the Man is now. They know that it is none other than this Jesus. They didn't fix their minds on the healing of **the man** and the miraculous sign that was flashing before them. No! They skipped over the sign because they couldn't see it. Not everyone will see the signs pointing to Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God.

So they maintained their **Sabbath**-breaking-judgment against **the man** and now against Jesus.

Legalism Harasses Those Who Do Not Fall In Line (v.16)

"For this reason the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because He was doing these things on the Sabbath.

Legalism and its legalists will always harass those who do not fall in line where their rules. Remember from our study last time in **John 5** that **the Jews** had created many more extra-biblical laws and rules regarding **the Sabbath**. As a matter of fact there were 39 extra-biblical rules that they had deemed righteous for **Sabbath** keeping.

So their whole premise of this **man** “breaking” **the Sabbath** was wrong. He did nothing against God’s command to keep a **Sabbath**. He didn’t move pallets for a living, but the perverted laws of **the Jews** eventually led them to believe that anyone picking up anything and carrying it from one place to another was “breaking” **the Sabbath**. This **man** was innocent of this charge.

But now they know who told **the man** to pick up his pallet and walk. So **for this reason the Jews were persecuting Jesus**. The **persecution** here that John is describing is better understood as harassing. **The Jews** were **harassing** Jesus. It literally means that they were swiftly running after Jesus to find Him and then to belittle Him, casting insults at Him, in order to run Him off. They were seeking for him with swiftness so when they found him they would harass and insult Him and try to drive Him away.

You know there are just some people out there that actually search out things that people are doing that they deem wrong. They hunt for things in people’s lives. They seek for things that people do that are outside of their personal scruples just to belittle them and to put them down. These **Jews** were harassing and **persecuting** Jesus because they now knew who it was who told **the man** to pick up his pallet and walk.

So what was their motivation? Look at **verse 16**, “**because he was doing these things on the Sabbath.**”

This gives us the impression that Jesus had healed on **the Sabbath** more than once and probably even multiple times. We know from the other gospels that Jesus healed at least 7 times on **the Sabbath**. So because Jesus kept doing these things on **the Sabbath the Jews were persecuting Him**, harassing Him, and going after Him saying all kinds of hateful things against Him in order to drive Him away.

I get the impression of someone yelling and screaming at a stray dog that keeps coming back to the house and won’t leave. They scream and yell and try and chase the dog out of the yard.

Simply speaking Jesus was in their yard. He was wandering onto their turf and He was doing “wrongful” and “sinful” things according to their traditions. Jesus was also leading others to do “wrong” and “sinful” things on **the Sabbath**. It was **for this reason that the Jews were persecuting Jesus because he kept doing these healings on the Sabbath**.

Do you think that Jesus purposely did these things on **the Sabbath**? Folks what we are seeing in this one encounter, this one account in the gospel of John is the divine mind of Jesus, which also displays the divine mind of His Father. Each sign, every miracle is perfectly calculated so that the exact result would happen from His ministry. If you remember Jesus slipped away right after the healing so that the man would not discover who He was. But it was at this time that Jesus finds the man and reveals Himself to him. Then the man goes back and tells them that it was Jesus who had made him well.

Of course Jesus purposely did these things on **the Sabbath**. He chose this day to expose their perversion by “breaking” their manmade doctrines and precepts of men. It was in God’s plan for Jesus to frustrate these people, so that ultimately these people would do what they were predestined to do. Crucify Him!

Acts 2.23-24 “this Man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death. But God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power.

We must see this morning the absolute divine wisdom of God in the ministry of His Son Jesus. Everything was done on purpose and with intention. **The Jews** had to develop this hatred toward Jesus, so that the predetermined plan of God might be fulfilled.

So here we see the beginning of **the Jews’ persecution** and harassment of Jesus. So how would Jesus respond to their **persecution**?

The Unmistakable Claim (v.17)

“But He answered them, ‘My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working.’”

Jesus said what?!?! Did ya'll hear what this man just said to us? He said **My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working**. Yes I heard him. Who in the world does He think He is? Is He crazy? Is He mental? Surely we didn't hear Him correctly! No sir, I heard him very clearly. He said it alright!

Jesus told these interrogating **Jews** that **My Father is working until now**. It is true, back in **Genesis 1** that God ceased to work His work of creation on the seventh day. Why did God cease on the seventh day? John MacArthur says, "because His work of creation was completed." God created and it was completed and He ceased His work of creating on the seventh day. God did not cease or rest because He was tired.

Isaiah 40.28 "the Everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth does not become weary or tired."

God ceased to work on the seventh day "to set a divine example for man to rest one day out of each week." (MacArthur) This seventh day rest was instituted for man not for God.

Mark 2.27 "Jesus said to them, 'the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath.'"

So **the Jews** would have clearly known about the Genesis account of creation and how God ceased from His work on the seventh day.

But what does Jesus actually tell them in **verse 17**? Jesus tells **the Jews** that **My Father is working until now**. Remember they are accusing Jesus and **persecuting** Him for "breaking" their **Sabbath** laws. Jesus then says to them **My Father is working until now**. Now **the Jews** most likely understood what Jesus meant here. They knew that although God ceased from His work of creation on the seventh day that He did not cease from **working** the works of mercy, the works of providence, nor the works of governing the world.

J.C. Ryle says "Were God to rest from such work, the whole frame of nature would stand still." In essence what is being said is that outside of creating the world in six days, God has NEVER stopped working.

Let's go back to **verse 17**. Jesus says that **My Father is working** and He's **working until now**...even on **this Sabbath** day. Since creation **My Father** has never ceased to work His works of providence and governing His creation. He hasn't ceased even **until now**. Most likely **the Jews** would have understood this and even agreed with it; because there was rabbinic understanding that God did not cease to work even on **the Sabbath**.

But then Jesus says this in **verse 17**...**“and I Myself am working.”**

Here is the unmistakable claim of Jesus to **the Jews**.

Jesus first in **verse 17** calls the **Father, My Father**. This was way out bounds for anyone to call God the **Father, My Father**. It was appropriate to call Him our **Father**, but never **My Father**. Jesus calls Him **My Father** to show these people His unique **Father-Son** relationship with the **Father**. He is **My Father**. Jesus claims the **Father** as personally His; therefore He is personally the **Father's Son**. These are words that are way out of bounds for anyone to use and so **the Jews** would have immediately known what Jesus was saying.

And the other part of Jesus' unmistakable claim in **verse 17**...**“and I Myself am working.”**

Right here in these 5 little words Jesus makes the unmistakable claim of Oneness with God His **Father**. If God is **working until now**, even on **this Sabbath** and He has never ceased to work since creation then I want you to know that **I Myself am working** too. If **My Father** works until now you need to know then that **I Myself am working** until now.

I too am **working** works of mercy in this man's life by healing him on **the Sabbath**, because **I** and the **Father** are one. Jesus unmistakably makes the claim of full deity and equality with God. This is why Jesus says that He is Lord of **the Sabbath**. There is only One who is Lord of **the Sabbath** and that is God Himself. Jesus says that I am Lord of **the Sabbath** because I am God.

Verse 17...My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working. Because **My Father** is Lord of **the Sabbath** therefore I too am Lord of **the Sabbath**. I am one with God **the Father**. God the **Father** and God the Son are both **working!**

So what does it mean for Jesus to claim equality with God? What does it mean for Jesus to say that He is deity?

The Doctrine Of Christ

The biblical teaching on the doctrine of Christ can be summarized by saying that “Jesus Christ was fully God and fully man in one person, and will be so forever.” (Grudem)

The New Testament is filled with verses of Scripture that testify of the deity of Jesus.

Colossians 1.19 “For it was the Father’s good pleasure for ALL the fullness of deity to dwell in Him.

Colossians 2.9 “For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form.”

Hebrews 1.3 “For He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power.”

Revelation 1.8 “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “Who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”

John 20.28 “Thomas answered and said to Him, “My Lord and my God!”

Titus 2.13 “looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus.”

2 Peter 1.1 “To those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours, by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ.”

John 10.30 “I and the Father are one.”

When Jesus testifies of His equality with God to **the Jews** in **John 5.17** in essence Jesus is saying that He is God. There is a godly oneness, a godly union, and a godly essence with the **Father** and Jesus.

Later on in the third century there arose a big debate, to say the least, regarding the doctrine of the Trinity. On May 20, 325 a council was established to determine the true nature of the Trinity. “The church was countering the Arian idea that Jesus was God’s first and noblest creature by affirming that He was of the same “substance” or “essence” as the Father. Thus there is one God, not two; the distinction between the Father and the Son is within the divine unity, and the Son is God in the same sense as the Father is.” (J.I. Packer)

The Nicene Creed

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made.

Who, for us men for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried; and the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father; and He shall come again, with glory, to judge the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made.

“of one substance,” which translates the Greek *homo-ousios*. This means that what God is in his essence, Jesus Christ the Son of God is also.” (unknown) What God is in divine Jesus Christ the Son of God is also. So when Jesus tells **the Jews** that **My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working**...there is no mistaking what Jesus means. He is calling Himself God! Equal with God the **Father!**

Well how do we really know that Jesus was making this claim of equality with God the **Father**?

The Reaction Of The Jews (v.18)

“For this reason therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God.”

A.W. Pink says “Jesus had done what Abraham, Moses, David, and Daniel never dreamed of doing. He placed Himself on the same level with the Father. His traducers were quick to recognize that He had “made Himself equal with God,” and they were right.”

Augustine said, “Behold the Jews understood what the Arians would not understand.”

Jesus’ claim was unmistakable not only because Scripture testifies to it, but also because of the reaction of **the Jews** when He said this. **They sought all the more to kill Him. To kill Him.** In their depraved minds Jesus broke their Sabbath law and He made **Himself equal with God** and they sought **all the more to kill Him.**

All the more literally means to kill in any way whatever. They were now hell bent on killing Jesus anyway possible at whatever cost. He must be killed!

The Apostle John is writing this encounter down because he wants His readers to understand the true nature of Jesus. He wants them to understand that Jesus and the **Father** are one in essence. They are both divine. They are both one in substance and in nature. Jesus is the exact representation of the **Father’s** nature. They are both divine. They are both perfect.

This is the teaching from John inspired by the Holy Spirit regarding Jesus Christ.

John's Second Epistle

2 John 9 “Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son.”

Jesus was emphatic in the gospels that no one can have the **Father** if they reject the Son. The Apostle John duplicates that message in **2 John**. If you do not abide in the teaching regarding Jesus, you do not have God. Period!

In today's passage in **John 5** abiding, which is remaining and not leaving or walking away from the teaching regarding Jesus would mean that you must abide, you must remain to the teaching regarding Jesus' deity and oneness with the **Father**.

To walk away from Jesus' deity and equality with **the Father** is to walk away from **the Father**. It is to walk away from God. But those who abide, those who remain to the teaching regarding Jesus, have both **the Father** and the Son.

Today you must have higher and more elevated thoughts regarding Jesus and the teaching of Jesus.

Is Jesus God? Is Jesus equal with the Father? Is Jesus one with the Father in essence and in nature? Is He Lord of the Sabbath? Does He have the divine right to work the works of His Father? Does all the fullness of deity dwell in Him in bodily form?

It is time for you to make your mind think the thoughts of God.

It is time for you to take seriously what it means for you to grow in the grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

It is time for you take the teachings regarding Jesus and to see Him for who He is. He is God in the flesh and to behold Him and to see Him high and lifted up and to be captivated with His deity. To be captivated with His majesty. To be captivated with His splendor. To be captivated

with His radiance and His exact representation of the nature of God. To be captivated as you see the glory of the gospel of Jesus Christ who is the image of God.

It's time folks for you to behold Jesus and to see His divine attributes. To learn of Him. To know Him in His power. To know Him in His glory. To know Him in the power of His resurrection and then let that knowledge then lead you to want to know Him deeper and greater even as far as knowing Him in the fellowship of His sufferings.

Jesus is Almighty God! He is maker of heaven and earth. He is the Alpha and the Omega. The Beginning and the End. He is coming one day in power and in glory. And when you see Him you will be like Him! And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as Jesus is pure!

Oh, church. Come Lord Jesus come!