

**THE GLORY OF CHRIST IN SAMARIA**

John 4:1-30, 39-42

**Intro:** In John chapter 3 and here in John chapter 4 we have two of the most amazing records of salvation to be found in all of Scripture – and we know that there are some very unusual stories in the Word of God about people who were brought to Christ. Of course, when anyone is saved, it is unusual. It is miraculous. It is a testimony of the power of God and of the power of the Word of God. It is always unusual because the Bible teaches very clearly that if people are left to do what they want to do, there are none who will seek God. When the Bible tells us about people who are seeking God, or who have come to know the saving grace of God, it is always evidence that God has been working. So even with people in OT times who were Jews, it was evidence of the power of God when they turned to the Lord.

Two weeks ago we say how a leading Pharisee, a ruler of the Jews, a man named Nicodemus, sought out the Lord Jesus Christ because he had become convinced that God was with Jesus because, as he said, “No man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him” (John 3:2b). We are thinking in this present series the glory of Christ, the evidence that was to be seen in Christ that He was more than a human being. His glory is His Deity. Nicodemus did not come to the Lord convinced that the Lord was the Lord, but he had come to the place where he knew that there was something very special about Jesus, and he came to find out what it was. He must have been impressed also about what he had learned from the teaching of Jesus. Here was a man who was at the top of his profession, so to speak, and yet he was not satisfied with what he had done, nor with what he knew. What Nicodemus did not understand at that time was that he was seeing evidence of the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The situation here in John 4 is totally different. Here the Lord was dealing with a woman, and not a Jewish woman, but a Samaritan woman. She was not an example that any woman would be encouraged to follow because she had been married five times, and at the time that the Lord met her, she was living with a man to whom she was not married. It sounds like America, doesn't it? She did not approach the Lord, but He approached her. We have no evidence that she had even heard about the Lord, but He knew all about her. It was nothing short of astonishing to

her that the Lord would speak to her for two reasons: first, because He was a Jew, and she was a Samaritan; second, because our Lord was a Man, and she was a woman. She recognized that this was very strange, and she expressed this to the Lord after He had asked her for a drink of water. She said,

How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans (John 4:9).

And then later on the Lord asked her to go and call her husband. This probably served two purposes: first, the Lord wanted her to be comfortable with Him knowing that He did not have a personal interest in her in the way that an ordinary man might have in a woman; and second, He wanted her to realize that He knew all about her even though they had never met before. That's when the Lord told her that He knew she was telling him the truth when she said that she didn't have a husband. And He said right away without waiting for her to tell Him anything more, that He knew she had been married five times, and that the man she was living with then was not her husband. Obviously she was a woman who had been looking for happiness in marriage, but had gone through heartache and disappointment again and again, and finally had given up on marriage altogether. She was a woman who was very low on the social scale, one who would never have been an example for other women to follow.

Originally the Samaritans were the inhabitants of the northern kingdom of Israel, but following the captivity, and the time when the Assyrians moved other people into that territory, there was a lot of intermarriage between the Jews and other nations, and so in our Lord's day the Samaritans were despised by the Jews because they were of mixed blood. The woman was expressing the truth when she said that "the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans." In fact, in our Lord's day, Jews living in the northern part of Israel would cross over the Jordan River into what was known as Perea, and then go south east of the Jordan so that they would not have to go through Samaria.

This is what makes the Apostle John's words in verses 3 and 4 so significant:

3 He left Judaea, and departed again into Galilee.

4 And he must needs go through Samaria (John 4:3-4).

The Lord was leaving Judea and going north to Galilee. Samaria was in between Judea and Galilee, *and the Lord deliberately went through*

*Samaria.* As the Apostle John said, “He must needs go through Samaria.”

Now geographically that was true. And even a great expositor like J. C. Ryle saw nothing more in this expression than that there was not other way to get from Judea to Galilee except through Samaria. But that was not true, as I have already mentioned. Devout Jews would have gone east of Samaria to avoid going through that section of the land.

This is the verb that I have called to your attention before – “Ye must be born again,” and “He must increase, but I decrease.”

This word can mean *a necessity arising from a divine appointment*, and this is surely what it means here. In John 6:38 we have our Lord’s words with respect to His mission on earth. There it is recorded that He said,  
For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me (John 6:38).

*So I believe we can say that the Lord had to go through Samaria on this occasion because He knew that the Father had a work there for Him to do.* And that is certainly borne out by what took place in the life of this Samaritan woman. We don’t even know what her name was. But that a marvelous work was done, a word of grace, is now a matter of history.

And what makes this story even more astonishing is that when the Lord called His twelve disciples, and sent them out, He said this to them:

5b Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not:

6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matt. 10:5-6).

The Lord’s ministry on earth was primarily “to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” However, God is sovereign, and always has the right to turn from His main objective in order to fulfill other aspects of His will which were determined before the foundation of the world. God did that in OT times. He saved Jethro, and Rahab, and Ruth, and Naaman, to name a few, all of whom were Gentiles.

But now we are thinking about the glory of Christ. Here the Lord was manifesting His glory in Samaria, clearly indicating that although the Jews and the Samaritans were severely divided in many ways, yet there was one wonderful way that they could be brought together, *and that was*

*in Christ!*

— But now let us look more closely at the text of John 4. In doing so, let us notice:

**I. THE LORD'S MINISTRY TO THE SAMARITAN WOMAN  
(John 4:5-26).**

The Lord was weary with the journey. It was about 12 noon, "the sixth hour," and it must have been very hot at the time. This woman that we have been talking about came to draw water, evidently for herself and the man she was living with. So the Lord asked her for a drink.

She recognized Him as a Jew, and was surprised that He would even speak to her.

— Then our Lord spoke to her the words we find in verse 10. He, of course, was speaking of the living water of the Gospel. But she did not understand, and she asked Him the questions that are recorded in verses 11 and 12. Notice her complete lack of understanding of the words of the Lord, and in this she and Nicodemus were alike. They both tried to put a human explanation upon His words of divine truth.

The Lord continued His explanation in verses 13 and 14. (Read.)

It will help us to understand what the Lord was talking about if we look ahead into this Gospel of John to chapter 7, and read verses 37 through 39:

37 In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.  
38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.  
39 (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.) (John 7:37-39).

— This is what this woman lacked, inner peace, and spiritual resources which she could only find in Christ. And she responded immediately to the Lord thinking that He was still speaking of the kind of water that she came to get out of the well.

However, at that point the Lord told her to call her husband. This seems to have been what the Lord did to bring before this woman her sins, and how she had been seeking satisfaction in men and in sensual. She said that she didn't have a husband, which was the truth. But then the Lord revealed that He knew what her past history was.

Today people have become more brazen about their sins, even boasting about them. Sometimes I think that the word "shameless" describes what our generation is concerning sin. We act like sin is not sin, and that is the reason people hate that word. But the human heart today is just like it was 2,000 years ago, and 4,000 years before that. It is God Who defines sin, and it is God before whom everyone is going to be judged some day. We can also say that it is only a realization of our sins that will make any of us seek a place of refuge. That place, and the only place there is, is in Christ.

At this point the Samaritan woman was ready to say that our Lord must be a prophet – and He is! But He is more than a prophet! However, will you notice that at this point in the conversation this woman began to talk about *worship*? But she was not thinking in terms of the One she should worship. She was thinking about the place of worship, and the ceremonies that people place such a strong emphasis upon. There have always been multitudes, uncounted multitudes of people, who think that in going to church, singing the hymns, and listening to a message, that somehow that is going to ease their conscience concerning the things that they have been doing which they know are wrong. But even then there is little or no consciousness of God.

And then the Lord told her something which I am sure she had never heard before. While the Jews and the Samaritans carried on a long and unsettled debate about *where* was the right *place* to worship, He taught her a little theology saying that God was seeking worshipers, but that the important thing about true worship, in fact the only kind of worship which is pleasing to God, is worship in spirit and in truth. Images are absolutely forbidden because God is Spirit. He cannot be likened to anything on earth or in heaven above. But the worship that comes from our hearts that is a faithful expression of what is in our hearts, is the worship that is pleasing to God.

And then the woman said a very interesting thing. She had some under-

standing at least of the Messiah and what He would do when He would come. So it must have been that what the Lord had been saying to her was in accord with what she had been taught about the coming Messiah. And then it was that the Lord plainly said to her, “I that speak unto thee am He” (John 4:26).

At this point we have:

## **II. THE RETURN OF THE DISCIPLES FROM THE CITY (John 4:27).**

Verse 8 tells that the disciples had gone into the city to buy food. At this point they came back. They were amazed that the Lord was talking to this woman, but they did not question Him about what He was doing, nor what they had been talking about.

## **III. WHAT THE WOMAN DID (John 4:28-30).**

It was the omniscience of the Lord that had impressed this woman, and at least made her very impressed that Jesus might be the Messiah, the Christ.

She told the men of the city, and they left the city to see Jesus..

I am going to skip over verses 31 through 38 because they have to do with our Lord’s ministry to His disciples. To read what happened to the men of Samaria, let us drop down to verse 39.

## **IV. A MIGHTY WORK OF GOD IN SAMARIA (John 4:39-42).**

Many of the men believed because of the testimony of the woman. And then they asked the Lord to stay with them, and so He stayed for two days and taught them. And many more believed.

Then notice what they told the woman at the end of the two days. Their faith rested upon what the Lord Himself had told them, and they knew with absolute certainty that Jesus was the Messiah, the Savior of the world.

**Concl:** No record has been left us of what the Lord said to those Samaritans as the Lord ministered to them for two days. But it is

— evident that a mighty work of God was done in those days. Perhaps the Lord did with them what He did later after His resurrection with the two disciples on the road from Jerusalem to Emmaus when “beginning at Moses and all the prophets He expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning Himself” (Luke 24:27).

As we look back over this whole incident in the life of our Lord, we see that it was our Lord’s knowledge of this woman’s past life that caused her to realize that there was something special about the Lord. The rays of His glory were beginning to reach her heart. But it must also have been that knowing what her past life had been like, He nevertheless offered to give her that water which would cause her never to thirst again. And her heart, which had never been satisfied nor quieted from the guilt that lay so heavily upon her by those trips to the mountain and going through those empty forms of worship, responded fully to the Lord when He pointed out to her that true worshipers are not concerned about the place of worship, but about what is going on in their hearts.

— We have in the woman of Samaria another candidate for the title, *chief of sinners*. But along with that we have such overwhelming evidence that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, came into this world to save sinners just like she was – and through her testimony to see many more Samaritans saved who were brought to believe in Jesus, the Christ, the Savior of the world.

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**THE GLORY OF CHRIST'S WORD**

John 4:43-54

**Intro:** We are considering together in this series the evidence, or at least some of the evidence, in the Gospel of John, that Jesus of Nazareth was truly God in human flesh. And while I have not limited myself to the miracles that are recorded in John's Gospel, yet John himself recorded at the end of chapter 20 that the miracles which our Lord performed were chosen because of the way they testified to His Deity. Let me read those two verses to you again even though I have referred to them before in this series, and I would imagine that most of you knew about them before I started this series. But this is what the Apostle John had to say about this Gospel which bears his name:

30 And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:

31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name (John 20:30-31).

The word translated "signs" is the same word in the Greek which is translated "miracles" in John 2:11 concerning the miracle of changing the water into wine, and it is the same word that we have in our text for today in John 4:54. Why the translators of the KJV were not consistent in using either *signs* or *miracles*, instead of moving from one translation to the other, I do not know. It is obvious that they were miracles, that is, supernatural acts which the Lord performed while He was here on earth, but also that they were *signs* – events which identified and distinguished the Lord Jesus Christ as being different from all other men, and infinitely superior to all others!

We see evidence of this meaning of "signs," or "miracles," in the words by which Nicodemus explained why he had sought the Lord out by night. Let me read you the words to which I am referring. Beginning with John 3:1 we have these words:

1 There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:

2 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him (John 3:1-2).



Here again is that same word, *miracles* or *signs*, when Nicodemus said, “For no man can do these miracles which thou doest, except God be with him.” He was not ready to say that Jesus of Nazareth was God, but he had seen enough to make him know that he never seen, or heard, or known of a person like our Lord.

Let me give you an illustration that applies to all of us.

One major way we identify ourselves is by our signatures. If you write a check to a clerk or salesperson who does not know you, one way they identify you is by asking you for a credit card, and they will turn it over to see if the name you have written on the check is like the signature on the back of your credit card. They have other ways of doing it today, but that is one way with which we are all familiar.

Your finger prints are one of your signs. Your DNA is another.

Speaking of signatures, the Apostle Paul used his signature as a sign that his epistles were really from him. In writing his second epistle to the church at Thessalonica, he referred to some letter that they had received which supposedly was from him. In 2 Thess. 2:1-2 you will find these words:

- 1 Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him,
- 2 That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand (2 Thess. 2:1-2).

Somebody had written to them, evidently pretending to be the Apostle Paul, saying that they were already in the day of the Lord – which, of course, was not true. And this is very likely why Paul closed this epistle with the words which we find in 2 Thess. 3:17. Let me read it to you:

The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle: so I write (2 Thess. 3:17).

The word “token” is this same word we are discussing, meaning a sign. It was Paul’s signature that would identify his letters as genuine.

So taking this all back to the miracles our Lord performed, *these were signs of the Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ*. Or to state it another way, *these were signs of the GLORY of our Lord Jesus Christ*.

Now let us return to our text in John 4.

— We learned last week of the amazing work that the Lord had done in the hearts of many Samaritans. After two days with them, our Lord and His disciples continued on their way to Galilee. This was the section of Israel where the Lord had grown up. And He had told His disciples that “a prophet hath no honor in his own country” (John 4:44), referring to Nazareth. But an amazing change had taken place, and that is explained in verse 45. (Read.) Notice that we have here another reference to the miracles which the Lord had performed. Here instead of rejection there was acceptance and faith. God was at work even among the Galileans just as He had been at work among the Samaritans. Exactly where this was, that is, in what city, we are not told. It may have been that the general attitude of the Galileans had changed, and that there was evidence of this change in more than one city.

— Verse 46 tells us that the Lord returned to Cana where He had performed the miracle we considered in John 2. When the miracle that He performed in this chapter is called “the second miracle,” it probably means that it was the second miracle *in Galilee* because we read in verse 45 that He done works in Jerusalem. And I think we are safe in assuming that those things that He did were miracles.

But now we come to the account of:

#### **I. A CERTAIN NOBLEMAN’S REQUEST (John 4:46-49).**

— We are not told whether this man was a Jew or a Gentile, but John’s silence on this point would seem to indicate that he was a Jew. But he was a Jew in government service, probably high in Herod’s government. The word “nobleman” in Greek is similar to the Greek word for a king or a kingdom. So he was a prominent man, and a man with political power. But there are many things that government cannot do. There are many things which money cannot buy. When President Kennedy was shot, money and political prominence and power were unable to reverse the damage which had been done. This man came to the Lord because he knew that there was no one else who could help him, and that if a miracle were not performed, his son would die! And it seems that this boy was too sick to be brought to Jesus, and so the father felt that Jesus must go to him.

Notice the word “besought.” This father knew that the Lord was his only hope, and so his request was made as an urgent cry for help. It is apparent that he felt that time was running out for his son.

The Lord’s response to this man seems quite hard. I am speaking of verse 48. And the Lord addressed him in the plural, meaning that there were others who had come with him – and that is not surprising because men of his position were not inclined to travel alone. “Ye” in the KJV usually indicates that there is a plural. So it was like the Lord was saying, “You all will not believe unless you see signs and wonders.” It appears from this that the nobleman had been skeptical about the reports that were coming out of Judea, and that his associates felt the same way that he did. *But the Lord has special ways of bringing people to Himself, and what He used in the case of this nobleman was his son!* And it is not unreasonable at all to expect that every other source of help had been exhausted before this proud, self-sufficient nobleman came pleading with the Lord to help him.

Cana was in the hill country; Capernaum was on the shores of the Sea of Galilee. So that is why the nobleman said, “Sir, come down ere my child die.” He now had set aside every objection he may have raised previously as to the reports that he had heard about the works of the Lord. But he had no idea what the Lord was about to do. He could only think that the Lord would have to go to his child in order to heal him. The Lord was going to teach him something very different.

## II. THE LORD’S RESPONSE (John 4:50).

William Hendriksen, in his commentary on John, estimated that it was sixteen miles from Cana to Capernaum. It was that far, or maybe a little farther. The Lord did not agree to go with the nobleman, but He simply spoke the words: “Go thy way, thy son liveth.”

Now we are thinking of the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. He simply spoke the words, and the nobleman “believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way.”

Now from this statement I want to call your attention to two important facts. The first has to do with the power of the word of the Lord. At the beginning of John’s Gospel, we are told this about our Lord:

All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made (John 1:3).

How did the Lord make the heavens and the earth? How did He make the sun, the moon, the stars? How did He fill the earth with all kinds of vegetation and all kinds of living creatures, ending with His masterpiece: the man and the woman? He did it the same way that he healed this nobleman's son; He simply spoke the word, and it was done. At least eight times in Genesis 1 where we have the account of creation, no less than 8 times as we go from one phase of creation to another, and from the first day through the sixth day, we have those powerful words, "And God said."

In Psalm 33, the Psalmist, probably David, directed by the Holy Spirit in his writing tells us this:

6 By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.

7 He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses.

8 Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him.

9 For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast (Psa. 33:6-9).

Let me add to that what we read in Heb. 11:3:

Through faith we understand that the worlds [lit., the ages] were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

And then let me take you back to the opening verses of the book of Hebrews, chapter 1, verses 1-4:

1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by 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 on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

4 Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they (Heb. 1:1-4).

And then who could forget Heb. 4:12 when we are talking about the power of the Word of God?

— For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart (Heb. 4:12).

And one more passage which shows what was going on in the heart of that nobleman: 1 Peter 1:22-25:

22 Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:

23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

24 For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away:

25 But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.

— Do you see that when the Lord said, “Go thy way; thy son liveth,” that what followed showed that it was the Creator of heaven and earth, standing before that distraught father, who just said the words, and almost twenty miles away the fever suddenly left that boy who had been at death’s door! The Lord Who made that boy had no trouble at all making him well! Oh, how we need to tremble before the Word of the living God, the Word of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! There is no power in all the universe like the power of the Word of the Triune God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

But let me point out a second thing that we need to notice.

The Lord spoke the words, “Go thy way; thy son liveth.” And then the Apostle John followed the Lord’s words with this result: “And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and went his way.”

Do you want an illustration of Rom. 10:17? You may be saying in your mind, “What is Romans 10:17?” This is what Rom. 10:17:

So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.

— The Lord spoke the Word, and immediately without asking for further proof, this father believed, he was convinced that his son was healed, and he turned and went away. You see, when God is at work in the hearts of people, there is no argument with the Word. The Word produces faith.

But now we have one more point.

### **III. THE FINAL RESULTS (John 4:51-54).**

I want to point out two things, two wonderful things, in the final verses of this chapter. The first is:

#### **A. The father's faith was confirmed (vv. 51-53a).**

While the father was returning home, his servants met him on the way. They could not wait to tell him the good news. "Thy son liveth." And the nobleman asked when he started to get better. The servants responded with even better news than that. They said that it was at one in the afternoon that "the fever left him!" And the father knew that it was exactly at one o'clock the preceding day that the Lord had said, "Go thy way; thy son liveth."

Notice the steps in the way the father's faith grew. First he came to the Lord asking for help. The Lord told him that his son would live. And then the father's faith was confirmed when he heard the report from his servants.

#### **B. The father and his whole family believed (v. 53b, 54).**

But what does it mean in the latter part of verse 53 that "himself believed, and his whole house"? It means that through this trying experience *the whole family was saved!* This is a tremendous story of God at work – God working in the heart of that skeptical, proud, self-sufficient father, bring him to the Lord because of the deadly illness which had afflicted his son. Then the father hearing those words from the Lord Jesus, which we can see at the end of the passage not only meant that the son would not die of that disease, but it also meant that he would inherit salvation by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Concl:** What a marvelous account of the grace of God! And so the miracle that this nobleman's family experienced was not just deliverance from physical death, but deliverance from eternal death through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. We can expect to meet that family some day. The father will tell us how he was brought to Christ, and we can tell him how we were brought to Christ. And we will join together in

thanking the Lord for His wonderful grace in forgiving us of our sins.

Will you be there? Perhaps someone is here today because of problems that you, or someone dear to you is facing. We don't know what the outcome will be in our trials, but we can be sure that the Lord has a purpose in what He is doing with us. And we know that His Word cannot fail. It is eternally true. It is powerful. It is transforming. In some way, in the salvation of every person who knows the Lord, the Word of God has been the instrument God has used to bring us to Himself. It may be that He is drawing someone in this service to Himself. If so, you may have already trusted Christ for the salvation of your soul. God's Word carries with it its own convicting power and its life-giving power. Our Lord Jesus Himself said,

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life (John 5:24).

**THE GLORY OF GOD IN CHRIST**

2 Corinthians 4:3-7

**Intro:** Today in speaking again about “the glory of Christ,” I am departing from the Gospel of John, but only temporarily, to continue this same subject from Paul’s second epistle to the Corinthians. And yet the subject for today is one which we also had in the Gospel of John, chapter 1. As I have emphasized each Sunday since I started this series, in speaking of “the glory of Christ” I am speaking about the Deity of Christ.

We have looked at some of the evidence in John’s Gospel that show that Jesus Christ, the Man, was truly God in human flesh. He had the same divine nature when He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and then born as the virgin Mary’s Son, that He had in all eternity before the foundation of the world. But the part that I want to deal with more in detail today is the statement which we have in John 1:14, and which is stated in other words, but the same truth, in 2 Cor. 4:6. The Apostle John’s statement was this:

14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth (John 1:14).

The part of the verse that I am referring to is the middle statement which is in a parenthesis in the KJV: “And we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father.”

This means that the glory of Jesus Christ was identical to the glory of God the Father. *And this means that Jesus Christ not only was exactly like God in His divine nature, but that He came as a revelation of God the Father!* I have pointed this out before. As we begin reading in the Old Testament at the book of Genesis, and continue reading on to the book of Malachi, we come to many, many ways in which God revealed Himself in Old Testament times. But when we gather all of them together, we are to understand that, as wonderful as those revelations are, *they do not give us a complete revelation of God. Nobody in Old Testament times ever saw God!* And so to complete the revelation God sent His only begotten Son!

When the Lord was with His disciples in the Upper Room just before He went out to Gethsemane where He was arrested and taken by His enemies and later crucified, this conversation took place between our Lord and Thomas and Philip. The words are familiar, and I am sure that most of



you will remember them. After the Lord told them that He was going to prepare a place for them, He said (and now I will read the conversation that He had with Thomas and Philip) – the Lord is speaking:

4 And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.

5 Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?

6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

7 If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.

8 Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us.

9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?

10 Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

11 Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake (John 14:4-11).

The Lord's words concerning the Father, were, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father" (v. 9). Thus the Lord was not only claiming Deity, but He was claiming that His Deity and the Father's Deity were the same. But at the same time He was claiming that He had come to reveal the Father. Nothing that the disciples saw in Christ was any different from the revelations that God had given before, but the revelation was completed in the coming of Christ.

I have been using the words *reveal* or *revealed*, and the word *revelation* in speaking of God and of Christ, and it is important that we understand what that word means in the Bible. I think it is understandable to say that *God reveals that which cannot be known in any other way*. Man has made many scientific discoveries, and most true scientists will say that they believe they are only beginning to know what is to be known. And I have no doubt that many discoveries will yet be made if the Lord sees fit to bless us in that way. But the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 1:21 said that "the world by wisdom knew not God." God is not discovered by scientific investigation. Paul said in Rom. 1:20 in creation we have evidence of a Creator, but most people, I think we could even say, even most

— scientists, are spiritually blind and would rather believe in a ridiculous theory of evolution instead of recognizing in creation the handiwork of a mighty, infinitely wise God.

Now I repeat: God was in no way obligated to reveal Himself to us. He was in no way obligated to show us what our real, our deepest need is. But He has revealed Himself in the Word. When you pick up your Bible, think of the word *grace*. *Your Bible is a gift from God. There you have the truth. In ways that are actually beyond our ability to understand, God revealed the truth men of God in the past, and then directed them as to the very words they were to use in writing the truth, so that they were protected from making mistakes. And so we can rightly speak of our Bibles as the Word of the living God!*

But let me add this: the same Holy Spirit that revealed the truth to those who wrote the Scriptures, reveals what they have written so that we can understand it. He is the Author of Scripture, and He is the Teacher.

— Now let me return to what I said a few minutes ago. We can gather together all that is revealed of God in the Old Testament (and much of that has to do with Christ), but to complete the revelation God sent His Son to earth as a Man. In Christ we have God revealed as God was pleased to make Himself known. To know Christ is to know God, and we can't know God fully unless we know Christ.

The Jews understood what the Lord was saying when He claimed that God was His Father. The Jewish leaders hated the Lord because they felt He broke the Sabbath (which He never did), but in John 5:16 through 18 we have these words concerning what took place after the Lord healed a man on the Sabbath:

16 And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day.

17 But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.

18 Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God (John 5:16-18).

— That He was "equal with God" was exactly what the Lord was seeking to teach those Jews, but their hearts were hard and their minds were closed to the revelation that the Lord gave to them.

Now let us turn to the text which I announced for today in 2 Corinthians 4.

One of the strongest evidences we have that the Bible, all of it, is the Word of God, is the amazing harmony there is in the teaching of the Bible from the first book to the last book. If things seem to be contradictory, it is because we don't know as much about it as we need to know. God has revealed the truth in a progressive manner, but it all fits together perfectly. Here in 2 Corinthians 4 we see that the Apostle Paul taught that Jesus Christ was the very Person that the Lord Himself claimed to be – Deity in human flesh.

### **I. “THE GLORIOUS GOSPEL OF CHRIST (2 Cor.4:4).**

In verse 4 Paul spoke of “the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, Who is the image of God.” He is the ideal representative of God because they are one in nature, and as such He is uniquely a manifestation of God. The glory of the Gospel is Christ, and without Him there is no Gospel.

### **II. “THE GLORY OF GOD IN THE FACE OF JESUS CHRIST” (2 Cor. 4:6).**

In verse 6 we read God has shined in the hearts of the redeemed “to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” “Face” has reference to His appearance, His presence, or even His Person.

This means that no one can claim to be saved who does not believe in the absolute Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ. There we see God glorified in His Son.

Verse 4 indicates that the Devil, who is the god of this world has blinded the minds of unbelievers to keep them from understanding the truth about the Lord Jesus Christ. And he has done a very, very good job. He had blinded the Jews of our Lord's day to this all-important truth. But when a man like Nicodemus, or a woman like the Samaritan woman of John 4, sees and understands the Gospel, it is because God has shined the truth into their hearts. And that applies to all of us who know the Lord. We, too, would think of Jesus as only a man, if it were not for the sovereign intervention of God in bringing the Gospel to us. Nothing other than this, and nothing less than this, can be considered the Gospel.

But then the Apostle Paul raised an interesting question.

### **III. WHY IS SUCH A GLORIOUS MESSAGE BEING PRO-CLAIMED BY SUCH WEAK INSTRUMENTS? (2 Cor. 4:7-12).**

Perhaps you have heard it said that we cannot really claim to understand any doctrine of Scripture unless the effect of that doctrine can be seen in us and in the way we live. We are not to study the Bible like a person gathering information from a textbook. The Bible is a living book. It has been instrumental in our salvation. We grow as Christians as we feed on it. In it we learn what we are to be, how we are to live, even how we are to speak. The Bible teaches us about our relationships with each other, but also about our relationships with people who do not know the Lord. The Bible encourages the greatest humility, a humility patterned after the humility manifested by the Lord Jesus in coming to the earth as a Man, in His obedience to His Father in heaven which took Him all of the way to the Cross.

We are earthen vessels, aren't we? And we learn from the first chapter of 1 Corinthians, that God Who could have chosen to save all of the high and mighty of the world, has not saved many who are wise, nor mighty, nor noble. But instead He has chosen the foolish, the weak, the base, the despised, and those who in themselves aren't anything! I belong in that latter category. Do you?

But why has the Lord done what He has done in committing the spread of this glorious Gospel into our hands? Paul said in 1 Corinthians 1 that He has done this for two reasons:

- 1) So that "no flesh should glory in His presence" (1 Cor. 1:29).
- 2) So that "he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord" (1 Cor. 1:31).

What does 2 Cor. 4 have to say on this subject? Why has the Lord chosen to spread His Gospel, the Gospel of His glorious Son, through earthen vessels? Why didn't He choose angels? It seems that they would have done a much better job than any of us has done.

Look with me for the answer at verses 8 through 12 of 2 Cor. 4.

We have had a fairly easy time of it compared with those early Christians. But to a lesser degree we all experience the same problems. "We are

troubled,” Paul said. This means that often things seem to close in on him. But it was never to the point where he was “distressed” – not cramped to the point that there is nothing that we can do. “We are perplexed” – meaning to be at a loss to know what to do. “But not in despair” – meaning never completely hopeless. “Persecuted” – the main meaning of which is to be pursued, sometimes by people, sometimes by troubles of various kinds. “But not forsaken.” This ought to remind us of Paul’s words in his last epistle: 2 Tim. 4:16-17. So it never got easier for Paul to serve the Lord. This is what he said:

16 At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge.

17 Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion (2 Tim 4:16-17).

The Lord was always faithful to Paul.

And then Paul continued, “cast down,” used figuratively here of a wrestler who is thrown down and pinned to the floor, but “not destroyed” – that is, he did not lose.

Do you remember what the Lord told His disciples about what they could expect from the world? Cf. John 15:18-21:

18 If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.

19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

20 Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

21 But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

Just think: We go into the world with “the glorious Gospel of Christ,” but people don’t want it. And their resistance sometimes is fierce. That is when we need to ask ourselves, “What is the Lord seeking to teach me in this?” And Paul gave us one answer which he stated both in verse 10, and verse 11. *This always gives us an opportunity to display the power of the*

*living Christ. You see, when the Lord saves us, He comes to live in us. And if we are really trusting Him in all of the trials that come upon us, our response will be what His was. What was the Lord's response when the opposition against Him was at its worst – when He was hanging on the Cross? It was then that He prayed, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34).*

**Concl:** We all have our trials and testings. Through them, whatever they may be, our Lord is preparing us for heaven and for glory. He is working in us to make us like Himself. Sometimes the battle gets fierce, and we may fear that we are losing the fight. But think how the Apostle Paul would sing out if we joined together in singing that old Gospel song,

'Tis so sweet to trust in Jesus, just to take Him at His Word,  
Just to rest upon His promise, just to know, "Thus saith the Lord."

But can we tell the Lord what is said in the last verse and chorus?

I'm so glad I learned to trust Thee, Precious Jesus, Savior, Friend;  
And I know that Thou art with me, Wilt be with me to the end.

Jesus, Jesus, how I trust Him! How I've proved Him o'er and o'er!  
Jesus, Jesus, precious Jesus! O for grace to trust Him more!

The glory of Christ is seen in the Gospel. And it is through that Gospel that our glorious Lord not only redeems us, but comes to live in us that we might share His glory. He works through all of the experiences of our lives to make us like He is. We need to pray daily that we will be submissive to Him however hard the path might be. He is always faithful, and will not fail us nor forsake us.

**THE FATHER AND THE SON AT WORK**

John 5:1-19

**Intro:** It is interesting to note that at John chapter 5 there is a change in the way in which the Lord Jesus Christ is presented. Up to this point the Apostle John has been presenting the Lord from the standpoint of those who saw Him and heard Him, and what they thought about Him. But at this point and going through chapter 10, as an expositor by the name of H. W. Clark has pointed out, there is a marked emphasis upon what the Lord Jesus had to say about Himself.

For example, in John 1 we learn what John the Baptist said about the Lord. And this is followed with what those early apostles had to say about Him. In chapter 3 we learn what Nicodemus had learned about the Lord, and why he came to the Lord to learn more. In chapter 4 we have the testimony of that woman of Samaria, and then later the testimony of the men of Samaria who came to hear the Lord for themselves.

It is true that in these chapters we have some teaching of the Lord, and some things that He had to say about Himself and what He had come to the earth to do, but when we get down to verse 19 of chapter 5 we have the words of the Lord in which He spoke of His relationship with the Father in a way that is new to the Gospel of John.

But there is another thing that changes as we come to John 5. We see the strength of the opposition that the Lord began to face, opposition from “the Jews,” an expression which speaks of the scribes, Pharisees, Levites, and priests, and ultimately the Sanhedrin. Verse 18 of chapter 5 tells us that “the Jews sought to kill Him for two reasons:

- 1) He had healed a man on the Sabbath, which they said was work, and so in their minds He had broken the Sabbath. In addition He had told the man whom He had healed to pick up his bed, and leave.

But there was also a second reason, and this was because:

- 2) He had “said also that God was His Father.”

If these charges were true, then He deserved to die. But they were not true. Their hearts were hardened against the truth. They were filled with envy because of the way people were coming to the Lord. He was healing the sick and performing other miracles which “the Jews” could not do, and so, as Pilate recognized later, they were moved with envy, and

determined to do away with the Lord. See what Pilate knew in Matthew 27:18 and in Mark 15:10. The Jews were jealous of Him, and so they sought to do away with Him – and ultimately, as we all know, they were successful. But we see the beginning of this in John 5, and the reasons for their intense hatred of the Lord.

As we come to John 5, the Apostle has recorded two carefully chosen miracles, turning the water into wine at the marriage in Cana in chapter 2, and the healing of the nobleman's son at the end of chapter 4. Both of these miracles were performed by the Lord in Cana of Galilee, but the boy who was healed was, in the case of the second miracle, 15 or 20 miles away in Capernaum.

It is true that John the Baptist spoke about the relationship between the Father and Christ. See John 3:25-36. (Read.) But the difference in chapter 5 is that Christ is the One Who spoke about His relationship with the Father.

And so the Apostle John, after giving us three examples of the amazing works of the Lord, shifts the focus at verse 19 of chapter 5, and quoting from the Lord Jesus Himself, turned the attention of his readers to the Person of Christ. The Apostle John obviously felt that the works of the Lord should cause people to think and wonder about Who He was. This is what we mean by His Person.

Now it is not my purpose today to get into verses 19 and following, but I asked Mr. Ryan to read that verse so we would all see the theme of the Lord's words which follow.

Today I want us to learn what we can from this third miracle which the Lord performed. This miracle was not done in Galilee, but in Jerusalem, which was in Judea.

Let us notice first:

# **I. THE SCENE WHERE THE MIRACLE WAS PERFORMED (John 5:1-4).**

The Lord had gone to Jerusalem to observe one of the Feasts of the Jews. We are not told which Feast it was, and so that apparently is not impor-



tant for us to know. It shows how the Lord observed the Law when He was here on earth. The pool that is mentioned here was near the sheep market. It was called Bethesda, which means *house of mercy*. There were five covered areas there, very likely held up by pillars, which provided shelter for those sick people who hoped to get into the pool when the waters were troubled so they could be healed. But evidently only one at a time could be healed. The place was filled with blind, crippled, and people with shriveled up members of their bodies. It was the kind of a scene that most people would turn away from, or avoid all together. The odor must have been more than most people could bear. But the sick were there in the hope that they might be made well.

When we think of a scene like this, and how repulsive it must have been, it should remind us of the true nature of sin. We all know, or should know, that if there had been no sin, there would have been no disease and no death.

Bishop J. C. Ryle wrote many years ago,

No greater proof can be shown of man's inbred unbelief, than his carelessness about sin. "Fools," says the wise man [Solomon], "make a mock at sin." (Prov. xiv. 9). Thousands delight in things which are positively evil, and run greedily after that which is downright poison. They love that which God abhors, and dislike that which God loves. They are like the madman, who loves his enemies and hates his friends. Their eyes are blinded. Surely if men would only look at hospitals and infirmaries, and think what havoc sin has made on this earth, they would never take pleasure in sin as they do (*Expository Thoughts on the Gospels, John*, pp. 267, 268).

Perhaps your Bible indicates in the margin that from the word "waiting" in verse 3, and all through verse 4, we have words that are not in the best MSS. *But they are in some to varying degrees*. I don't profess to be a textual critic, but there certainly is nothing there that does not fit in with the rest of the text, and particularly with verse 7. Revelation 16:5 speaks of "the angel of the waters," and some expositors point to that verse as a possible confirmation of what we read here. We don't know exactly how the waters were "troubled," but the fact that people were healed is beyond question. The Lord did many things in those days which were not done before nor afterwards, but which were evidences of His goodness upon

people who were in great need.

Now we come to our second point.

## II. THE MIRACLE (John 5:5-9).

There was a man there who was afflicted with some kind of a disease which had left him unable to walk, and practically unable to move himself at all. And he had been like this for thirty-eight years! Think of what a miserable life he had lived. We are not told how old he was at the time that the Lord laid His eyes upon him, nor are we told anything about his family. It seems that we have some reason to believe that no one was really concerned about him or that person would have been with him to help him get into the water. How long he had been there, we don't know. How many times he had seen the water troubled, and had tried to be the first one in the water, we don't know. But the picture that the Apostle John has given us in this chapter speaks of a man who was not only helpless, but all but hopeless.

It seems that on most occasions when the Lord was healing people, that He healed everyone. But this time it was different. He paid particular attention to this one man, and He knew that that man had been that way for a long time. Now from what we learned about the glory of the Lord in connection with the Samaritan woman, this helps us to understand what the Apostle John's words in verse 6, the first part, mean. They mean that the Lord knew how long that man had been in that condition, and, as we will see in just a moment, *the Lord knew exactly why He was in that condition!*

And then the Lord spoke to the man, asking him a question: "Wilt thou be made whole?"

It might seem strange to us that the Lord would ask such a question of a man in that condition, but it is very likely that after thirty-eight years he had given up all hope that he would ever be well again. He needed a man to help him, and he had none! And what is important for us to notice is that he knew that he couldn't help himself. He had tried, perhaps many times, and it had always ended in failure. So not being able to do it himself, and having no one to help him, it is easy to see that he was hopeless about his condition.

But then the Lord spoke those wonderful words that we find in verse 8.

Note that the Lord did not say, “Well, I will be glad to help you get into the pool the very next time that the waters are troubled.” No, the Lord Jesus Christ just spoke the word: “Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.” The Lord told him to do three things that he had not been able to do for thirty-eight years! To get up, to pick up his pallet, and walk.

Sometimes when a person has been bedridden even for several days, it is practically impossible to get out of bed unassisted, it is unthinkable that such a person could carry anything, and walking is out of the question. All of that would take time, and lots of it. But this man, at the command of the Lord Jesus, suddenly got up, picked up the mattress he had been on, and he “walked”! This was really three miracles in one. Imagine how he must have felt when after being totally weak for thirty-eight years, he suddenly felt a surge of strength go through his whole body, and, as John tells us here, “immediately the man was made whole.”

Doesn't this remind you of the miracle that the Apostles Peter and John performed in Acts 3 on the man who had never walked. He was carried every day to the gate of the temple, not hoping to be healed, but hoping to receive money from the people going into the temple. Peter and John came along. They told the man to look at them. He looked expecting to receive something from them, but not even thinking that he was going to get what they gave to him. And when Peter started to speak, I am sure that the man was disappointed with the first words he heard from Peter. But then his disappointment turned to joy unspeakable. Do you remember Peter's words?

6 Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.

7 And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.

8 And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God (Acts 3:6-8).

Here was a man who had never walked, not only walking, and leaping, and praising God! You see, the Lord did not heal by degrees. He healed instantaneously, and permanently!

Now we come to a third point in this story.

### **III. THE OPPOSITION (John 5:10-16).**

There were incidents like this repeatedly during the ministry of our Lord here on earth. The men who supposedly were the spiritual leaders of the people of Israel, and who should have rejoiced the most at what the Lord was doing, completely ignored the miracle, and accused the man of violating the Law by carrying his bed on the Sabbath Day. Talk about being totally insensitive to the blessing of the Lord, these “Jews” were the worst!

The man who had been healed did not know who the Lord was, but he told the Jews that the one who had healed him, told him to pick his bed up, and walk.

Then an interesting thing happened. The Apostle John said in verse 14, “Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple.” We don’t know if the man was looking for Jesus, but the Lord was looking for him, to take care of some unfinished business. This is not a story of man looking for God, but twice we see that God the Son was looking for the man. And both times He found him; first when he was absolutely without strength and health, and secondly, after he had been healed.

But notice what the Lord said to him. (Read v. 14.)

You see from this verse that the Lord had been dealing with this man for more than thirty-eight years. And the Lord had judged the man for his sin, hoping that the man would realize the reason for his sickness, and that he would repent of his sin and turn to the Lord. But the man didn’t do that. Instead he tried to overcome the judgment of God, but he couldn’t do it. So what happened? The Lord sought him. And when the Lord healed him physically, I believe that we are to understand that the Lord healed him spiritually as well – that he was saved! And he told him to go and sin no more. That is only possible to one who knows the saving grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let me ask you a question because I think that there is a word of encouragement here for all of us. Do you think that there was some godly father or mother, or both, who had been praying for thirty-eight years that their

son would turn from his sin, and turn to the Lord, and be saved? I would not be a bit surprised if something like that were behind this story and this miracle. If you are praying for someone to be saved, and have been praying for years, don't give up! That one you are praying for may not give any evidence even yet of seeking the Lord, but the Lord may be seeking him, or her. God's purposes in salvation are without a single exception going to be carried out to the full.

But another message in this miracle is that it ought to be a warning to all of us not to play with sin. Not all sickness is due to sin which we have committed, *but sometimes it is!* How carefully we need to live each day, hating what the Lord hates (which includes all sin), and loving what He loves – that which is holy and just and good.

Well, the man did not know the hearts of the Jews, and so he went right away to tell them that Jesus had made him whole. But instead of wanting to know the Lord, they hated Him and wanted to kill Him.

The final three verses of my text have to do with:

#### **IV. THE LORD AND HIS ENEMIES (John 5:17-19).**

They evidently found the Lord, and charged Him with breaking the Sabbath, not knowing that He would give them something else either to believe, or to use for a second accusation against Him.

Here we come to fresh light which is to be thrown upon the miracles of our Lord. And this is profound truth having to do with the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Read verse 17.)

What did the Lord mean? He meant that He and the Father had worked together to reach that man who had been suffering because of his sin for thirty-eight years. And together they had healed him, and saved him.

But this only added to their hatred, and gave them a second charge to bring against the Lord as they sought his death. They knew that in claiming to be the Son of God, He was claiming to be equal with God, He was claiming Deity.

And then although verse 19 introduces the message which the Lord gave

to those Jewish leaders, I have added it to my text so that you can see why I gave this message the title, "The Father and the Son at Work." The Son of God came in the flesh, but the Father was with Him, and the Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, never did anything but what the Father was showing Him what to do, and was working with Him.

**Concl:** That is the reason that you and I should not only thank the Lord Jesus Christ for saving us, but we also need to thank the Father for saving us.

Let me conclude by reading to you what the Apostle Paul had to say on this subject in 2 Cor. 5:17-21:

17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

18 And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;

19 To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

20 Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

**THE FOURFOLD WITNESS OF CHRIST'S GLORY**

John 5:30-47

**Intro:** I trust that in these messages on the glory of Christ, all of us have been made to marvel more and more at our Lord Jesus Christ Himself. If the creation of man was the great masterpiece of our Creator, then surely the Person of Christ is the Masterpiece of all masterpieces among men. There never has been a person on earth who could even begin to approach our Lord Jesus Christ in His greatness and His glory. We can understand after reading the words of the Lord Jesus in the all four of the Gospels, why it was that the officers who had been sent by the Pharisees and chief priests to arrest the Lord Jesus, came back saying, "Never man spake like this man" (John 7:46). And we can understand why although the Lord said of John the Baptist, that there had never been born of women anyone who was greater than he (see Matt. 11:11), yet John said of the Lord Jesus, that he, John, was not worthy to untie the Lord's sandals. See John 1:27. And to add yet another testimony to the greatness and glory of our Lord, remember the Roman centurion who came to the Lord on behalf of one of his servants who, as he said, "lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented" (Matt. 8:6). And the Lord said that He would go home with the centurion to heal his servant. But the centurion responded by saying,

Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof:  
but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed (Matt. 8:8).

This was a Roman officer in charge of one hundred men, a Gentile, saying to our Lord, a Jew Who was under the authority of Caesar, saying that he wasn't worthy to have the Lord come into his home. He believed that the Lord only needed to say the word, and his servant would be healed.

*When we feel like these people did, and can express our unworthiness of the Lord like they did, then we are beginning to understand something of His glory.*

You know, in a church like our church, where we are devoted to the teaching and preaching of the Word of God, it is easy for us to occupy ourselves with the gathering of information, learning about people and nations and ancient times, even learning the doctrines of Scripture, and yet in all of our learning to lose sight of the Lord as a living Person Who

is with us day after day, a Person Who wants us to know Him, and love Him, and trust Him – our Savior Who speaks personally to us through His precious Word.

On my birthday in June our oldest son, Dwight, Jr., gave me two CDs of Hale and Wilder, two men with marvelous voices, who used to go around the country in their off seasons, and they sang mainly the old hymns of the faith. Lucille and I have a CD player in our Mercury, and I can't tell you how we have been blessed listening to those two men sing songs that minister to the heart. And one of the hymns they sing that has meant so much to me, and I know it means a lot to Lucille too, has been this hymn:

Jesus, I am resting, resting In the joy of what Thou art;  
I am finding out the greatness of Thy loving heart.  
Thou hast bid me gaze upon Thee, As Thy beauty fills my soul,  
For by Thy transforming power, Thou hast made me whole.

O how great Thy lovingkindness, Vaster, broader than the sea!  
O how marvelous Thy goodness Lavished all on me!  
Yes, I rest in Thee, Beloved, Know what wealth of grace is thine,  
Know Thy certainty of promise And have made it mine.

Simply trusting Thee, Lord Jesus, I behold Thee as Thou art,  
And Thy love, so pure, so changeless, Satisfies my heart;  
Satisfies its deepest longings, Meets, supplies its every need,  
Compasseth me round with blessings: Thine is love indeed.

Ever lift Thy face upon me As I work and wait for Thee;  
Resting 'neath Thy smile, Lord Jesus, Earth's dark shadows flee.  
Brightness of my Father's glory, Sunshine of my Father's face,  
Keep me ever trusting, resting, Fill me with Thy grace

And then the refrain repeats the first two lines of the first verse:

Jesus, I am resting, resting In the joy of what Thou art;  
I am finding out the greatness Of Thy loving heart.

Those words were written by a lady over a hundred years ago – in 1876. I don't know anything about her. Her name looks like she was French. But I would love to have known her because anybody who can write



words like those words, has something to teach us all.

It has been over fifty years since I was in Dallas Seminary, but, as you can tell from hearing me week after week, many things that I heard in those years, brief comments made by our professors, have stayed in my mind and heart all through the years. And one comment from one of my teachers was this: “Men, remember that Dallas Seminary is one place where you can get away from the Lord.” And then he went on to say that this can happen when the Bible just becomes a textbook, when praying becomes a mere formality that is expected of us as future ministers, and when the Lord Jesus, even though He is our Savior, becomes more a Person Who walked on the earth in the past, instead of a present, personal, living Lord and Friend Who delights in our fellowship day by day, Who wants us to walk with Him and talk with Him and love Him and trust Him. Then our service can be pleasing to Him.

It was probably not more than four or five years before the Apostle Paul was martyred that he wrote to the believers at Philippi from his confinement in Rome. In that epistle he told them what most certainly must have been the primary objective of his life: “That I may know Him . . .” (Phil. 3:10 ff.). It was not that he didn’t know the Lord, but he always longed to know the Lord better and better.

Such ought to be the fruit of our study of the glory of Christ.

This past week I was listening to a tape of a message given by Dr. John MacArthur. In it he said that whenever he signs his name, as in autographing a book, the verse he always used was 2 Cor. 3:18:

But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

And he said he did it to remind himself of the purpose of his salvation. We are being made like our Savior, and that takes place the more we look for the Lord as He is revealed in the Word.

As we look into the latter part of John 5 today, let me remind you of the change that takes place in this Gospel at this passage.

In the first four chapters of John’s Gospel we are mainly listening to what others said about the Lord. But at this point we begin to read what the

Lord said about Himself.

— I asked Mr. Dave Mathison to begin reading at verse 30 because that is where I want to emphasize what the Lord said about Himself. But from verse 19 we see the intimate relationship that existed between the Father and the Son, and the complete confidence that the Father had in His Son.

In verses 19 and 20 we see not only that the Son did what He saw the Father do, but the Father loves the Son and will show Him greater works that people may marvel. Among these were the raising of the dead (v. 21). Judgment (vv. 22-23). The giving of eternal life (vv. 24-26). And finally a reference to judgment again in vv. 27-29. So the eternal destiny of all is in the hands the Lord.

But to confirm the position that He had in His relationship with the Father, in the power of resurrection, in judgment, and in giving eternal life, we actually have five witnesses to the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the first as verse 31 shows, but He disqualifies Himself. And so as powerful as that is, at this point we will set the Lord's claim aside, and look at the other four.

— The first that our Lord mentioned was the witness of John the Baptist (vv. 32-35) which in itself is not conclusive, but the Lord reminded them that they had accepted His testimony.

The last three are the most powerful witnesses:

2) His works (v. 36).

3) The Father Himself (vv. 37-38).

4) The Scriptures (v. 39). And this is emphasized toward the end of this message, in verses 45 through 47 – our Lord's comments about Moses.

And yet in spite of all of the powerful witnesses that the Lord could produce, the people will not believe. In fact, if someone else came in his own name without any of the testimonials that the Lord could cite, they would accept him, but reject the Lord. This shows their spiritual blindness, and the hardness of their hearts.

But let us begin with the Lord, and ask the question:

— **I. WHY DID THE LORD DISQUALIFY HIMSELF (John 5:30-31).**

Verse 31 has given some people difficulty in determining what the Lord meant. He certainly did not mean that His claim to be the Son of God was a lie, was not true. But He meant that such a claim by itself would not stand up in court. People throughout history have made outlandish claims for themselves. There have been many throughout history who claimed that they were the Messiah. That can be a starting point in court, but without other evidence such a claim would be not acceptable. And yet some people are so gullible that they will accept a person's claim even though he has no evidence to support what he claims for himself.

In this connection we need to notice John 8:12-14 in support of the fact that the Lord always told the truth about Himself:

12 Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

13 The Pharisees therefore said unto him, Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true.

14 Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go (John 8:12-14).

So what the Lord said in John 5: should not give us any trouble. But now let us go on to:

## **II. THE FOUR WITNESSES OF CHRIST'S GLORY (John 5:32-47).**

### **A. The first witness: John the Baptist (John 5:32-35).**

We have already considered from the Apostle John's Gospel what John the Baptist said about Christ. He said that he was "the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord," which Isaiah had predicted of the one who would come before the Messiah. See John 1:23.

John the Baptist had also said that the Lord was "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29, 36). This was predicted in Isaiah 53.

But also when the Spirit of God descended on the Lord in the form of a dove, we read of John the Baptist in John 1:34, “And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.”

But the Lord said the same thing about John the Baptist’s testimony that He had said about His own. That testimony by itself would not be sufficient. Most people who want to make a great deal of themselves, can find those who will support them whether or not a claim is true. We see this in politics all of the time. So although John the Baptist’s testimony was absolutely true, and although the Jews had accepted his testimony for a time, yet that in itself was not enough for the Lord. Yet the testimony of John the Baptist stands!

**B. The second witness: the works of Christ (John 5:36).**

Here our Lord was speaking about His miracles. These were what drew Nicodemus to Christ. And read in John 9 what the man who was born blind had to say about the Lord Who had given him sight. He did not know that the Lord was the Son of God, but he at least gave this testimony recorded for us in John 9:33: “If this man were not of God, he could do nothing.”

And the miracles that the Lord performed were the very evidence that the Apostle John had chosen to show that “Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing they might have life through His Name” (John 20:31).

Nobody ever taught like the Lord did, and no one ever performed the miracles that He did. Thus, His works, His miracles, give strong witness to the glory of Christ, that is, to His Deity.

**C. The third witness: the Father (John 5:37-38).**

Three times it is recorded in the Gospels that the Father spoke from heaven – at the Lord’s baptism (Matt. 3:17), on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matt. 17:5), and in answer to our Lord’s prayer in John 12. (See verses 27 through 29.)

It has been argued by some expositors that none but Peter, James, and John heard the Father speak from heaven. That was true on the Mount of

Transfiguration. But it seems that many people were around when the Father spoke at our Lord's baptism. The Lord did say in our text for today, "Ye have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His shape" (John 5:37b), but it evidently was well-known that the Father had spoken from heaven. So even though the Jews to whom the Lord was speaking in John 5 had not heard His voice, it was well confirmed that the Father had spoken.

**D. The fourth witness: the Scriptures (John 5:39, 45-47).**

This is the abiding testimony – the Word of God, the Scriptures, the written and abiding record. The Bible is a revelation from God, and a revelation *of* God, but it is also a revelation of Christ.

The outstanding evidence of this is what our Lord did with two of His disciples with whom He walked on the road to Emmaus following His resurrection. After they shared with Him the hope that they had in Jesus, and then about His crucifixion, followed by the report the angels gave to the women that He was alive, this is what the Lord said, and then what He did:

25 Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken:

26 Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?

27 And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself (Luke 24:25-27).

And then those two disciples went back to Jerusalem to tell the eleven remaining apostles what had happened to them. Then suddenly the Lord appeared to them all. They were terrified at His appearance, but He showed them His hands and His feet, ate before them, and then we read these words:

44 And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.

45 Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures (Luke 24:44-45).

**Concl:** And yet in spite of all of the evidence, people still refuse to believe that Jesus is the Christ, and that He came to give Himself

as a sacrifice for sinners. This shows the spiritual blindness of the human heart. And so we learn that no one will understand, and no one will believe, until the Holy Spirit brings to them the conviction of sin and the understanding that Jesus Christ is the Savior, the only Savior, and the perfect Savior

You and I who believe have no problem with the claims that the Lord made for Himself. We believe that He was and continues to be the eternal Son of God. Our faith is strengthened by the testimony of John. And it is made stronger yet as we read of the miracles that the Lord Jesus performed. We believe them just like we had been there. Add to this the testimony of the Father from heaven, and every lingering doubt is removed. But when we see Christ in the Old Testament, the story of His life in the Gospels, and the doctrine of Christ all through the New Testament, our faith in the Deity of Christ, in the glory of Christ, cannot be shaken.

Let us thank the Lord continually that thank the Lord for all of the evidence in Scripture that our Lord is truly the Son of God.

How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,  
Is laid for your faith in His excellent Word!  
What more can He say than to you He hath said,  
You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?