

So That All Will Honor the Son
John 5:19-30
November 23rd, 2025

1. The Son does whatever the _____ does. (5:19-20)
2. The Son will give _____. (5:21, 24, 25-26, 28-29)
3. The Son will _____. (5:22, 24, 27, 29, 30)
4. So, all should _____ the Son as they honor the Father. (5:23)

Questions for Discussion/Reflection on John 5:19-30

1. How do the principles in 5:20-21 apply in regular father/son relationships? What point is Jesus making in describing His own relationship with the Father?
2. Why is it important for Christians to understand that there is a Trinitarian love between the Father and the Son? (5:20) How does that affect our view of the Trinity?
3. Using your own words, trace the line of argument in 5:19-23 following the four uses of the word “for” and culminating in the “so that” conclusion of v. 23. How does this argument relate to the accusation made by the Jewish leaders in 5:18?
4. In what way is eternal life something that we now have (5:24) and something that we look forward to in the future with our resurrection to life (5:29)? See also John 6:40, 54.
5. How does Revelation 20:4-6 and 20:11-15 describe the resurrection of life and the resurrection of judgment from John 5:29? When do those take place? Who participates in each? What is each based upon?
6. How is the Son of Man described in Daniel 7:9-14?

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Big idea: One day you will be raised from the dead to receive life or judgment based on your response to Jesus.

There are two things that Jesus has the power to do in this passage that are relevant to every one of us.

One day every one of us will be dead if Jesus doesn't return first. And one day Jesus will raise us from the dead and will judge us. We will either receive life or condemnation.

He has authority to raise from the dead and authority to judge.

The power to do both is given to Him by the Father.

No one will escape death, resurrection, and judgment.

Every powerful politician that is in the news – Zelensky, Putin, Macon, Trump, Xi Jinping

Every celebrity – Taylor Swift, Ariana Grande, Tom Cruise

Every athlete – Tom Brady, Lebron James

Every one of us

What we learn in this passage is that the Father and Son are united in these acts. That makes sense as a response to some Jewish leaders who took offense at calling God His Father and defending His work on the Sabbath by saying that the Father is working until now and He is working.

Rather than back away from that argument, He presses into it even further. What we get is some deep teaching on the inter-Trinitarian relationship between the Father and the Son.

1. The Son does whatever the **Father** does. (5:19-20)

a. Uses Father/son apprenticeship language to explain His own relationship with God the Father.

- i. Sons learn about life from watching their fathers. They do what their fathers do.
- ii. Historically, most boys grew up to do the same job as their fathers – farming, blacksmith, craftsman, military. There was no angst of trying to figure out what career to pursue.
- iii. Jesus applies this to Himself and the Father. He can do nothing of Himself but whatever the Father does, the Son does in like manner.
 1. Notice the broadness and completeness of those terms – nothing, whatever.
- iv. This fits with his rationale for healing on the sabbath – the Father is working and He is working. The Father upholds His creation even on the Sabbath, and the Son also works in creation by healing on the Sabbath.

b. Why is this the case? Why does the Son do what the Father does? Is He coerced against His will? No, but because the Father loves the Son.

- i. Likewise, the Son loves the Father and so He gladly does His will.
 1. **John 14:31** but so that the world may know that I love the Father, I do exactly as the Father commanded Me. Get up, let us go from here.
- ii. This is not the obedience of a grudging son before a terrorizing father, but rather the happy following of a son who is well-loved and takes joy in doing as his father does.

c. The theologian Fred Sanders has made an academic career out of studying and teaching on the Trinity. The roots trace back to his high school years. Here's how he describes it:

- i. In the year that I became a Christian, I was a teenager with what I suppose must be a pretty predictable set of problems. I was fearful about an uncertain future, deeply lonely and unconvinced I was lovable, embarrassed about my obvious shortcomings, and so on. I guess a lot of young people have some version of these feelings: a little bored, a little scared, a little ashamed. As I started going to church and reading the Bible, I gradually began to understand things better. Underneath my felt needs I began to recognize my real needs: reconciliation with God, forgiveness of sin, and power to live for Christ. God met me where I was and took me somewhere better than I knew. The things I didn't even know were problems (my refusal to give glory to God) were solved in a way that also happened to solve many of the things I did know were problems (insomnia, defensiveness, risky behavior).
 - ii. Something similar happened in my understanding of who God is, and this is where the theology really starts to kick in. Because God had moved into my life and solved my spiritual problems at their root, I recognized just how much I benefitted from his grace. In a lot of ways, I began to relate to God as my problem solver, my provider, my teacher. In one sense, this was fine: we finite and fallen creatures are always needy, never self-sufficient. So of course God gets our attention and attracts our gratitude as the one who meets our needs. But after a few months of rejoicing in God's wonderful availability to me, and of growing in prayer and Bible study, I noticed that something was wrong. Somehow it was still just me at the center of the whole project, and God was orbiting my needs like some gracious satellite. That couldn't be right. As I read and re-read the Bible, it became clear to me that I needed to be decentralized from my own life story and situation. God had to be the center.
 - iii. I kept some notes back then, and one heading under which I started writing down relevant Bible passages was "Notes for a Gospel Outside of Me." What I meant by that, though I was groping in the dark and barely had words for it at the time, was that I knew I needed God to be central. My relation to God needed to become theocentric rather than me-centric. And if that was going to happen, I would have to recognize that God's own divine life had a lot going on in it, up above my head, without reference to me in the first place. Of course I wanted God to have something to do with me eventually, but what I was dying to find was a way of grasping how God's own eternal life and liveliness was independent of me.
 - iv. ... God's love for me was not the central thing. God's love in itself was the one great thing, and it had its own secure foundation, without which there would be no love for me to be invited into or rescued by. ...The Trinity met my need for a God whose life was about more than just meeting my needs. This was the foundation for a gospel that certainly reached down and saved me, but that was securely anchored in something about as far outside of me as it was possible to get.
- d. A passage like this fits exactly what Sanders was saying – The Father loves the Son, the Father shows the Son all the things He is doing, the Son does whatever the Father does.
- i. Of course He heals – He recreates damaged tissue and nerves – and He isn't restricted by the Sabbath because the Father is always working and so He is working.
 - ii. And there will be greater works even than these to come – raising the dead (v. 21)
2. The Son will give life. (5:21, 24, 25-26, 28-29)
- a. The first example of something that the Father does and therefore the Son does also is to raise the dead and give them life. Notice the "for" construction. (v. 21)

- i. OT assumed it was a prerogative belonging to God alone to raise the dead
 - 1. **2 Kings 5:7** When the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his clothes and said, "Am I God, to kill and to make alive,
 - ii. Jesus will demonstrate His power to give life in John 11 when He raises Lazarus from the dead.
 - iii. However, the emphasis throughout this section is not merely a miracle like the raising of Lazarus, but the future resurrection from the dead to either eternal life or eternal judgment.
 - iv. Notice that the Son gives life to whom He wishes.
 - 1. Just as he will later say in 15:16, "you did not choose me but I chose you."
 - 2. The saving initiative begins with God, not with ourselves. It's His gracious choice of us that precedes our willing choice of Him.
 - 3. And yet v. 24 immediately also emphasizes our belief. The Bible does not pit God's choice and our belief against one another.
- b. This life is given to those who hear and believe. (v. 24)
- i. This person "has eternal life" – not will have eternal life.
 - ii. **John 17:1b-3** "Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You, ² even as You gave Him authority over all flesh, that to all whom You have given Him, He may give eternal life. ³ "This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.
 - iii. We enjoy and experience this eternal life now. We have already passed out of death and into life. The "not guilty" gavel has already come down and we do not come into judgment because our judgment has been taken by Christ.
 - iv. Even as we go through sickness and loss and death of people we care about and affliction, this is already true of us – we have been rescued from judgment and given new life.
- c. Just as the Father has life in Himself, He gave to the Son to have life in Himself (vv. 25-26)
- i. This is different than all of us. Our life is a contingent life. It is not a life that is in ourselves.
 - ii. But from all eternity past the Father has given the Son to have life in Himself.
 - iii. We call this the "eternal generation of the Son."
 - iv. There was never a time when the Son was not because He was "in the beginning with God" (John 1:1-2). He is the same "yesterday, today, and forever" (Heb. 13:8).
 - v. The Jewish leaders were upset that Jesus made Himself equal with God (v. 19), but He doesn't back away from that claim. In fact, He develops it even further.
- d. There will be a future resurrection of all the dead to either life or judgment (vv. 28-29)
- i. The language echoes Daniel 12:1-2
 - 1. **Daniel 12:1-2** "Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands *guard* over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued. ² "Many of those who

sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace *and* everlasting contempt.

ii. By His voice Jesus will raise everyone who has ever died.

1. Whether buried at sea, in a tomb, in a coffin, in an urn, ashes scattered in the river; whether powerful or obscure and unknown, believer or atheist; every one of us in this room.
2. Revelation 20 describes this resurrection.
 - a. Those who will receive life are resurrected and are with Christ during His 1,000 year millennial reign
 - b. Those who will receive judgment are resurrected at the end of the 1,000 years and those whose names are not in the book of life are thrown into the lake of fire for judgment.

iii. Those who have done good will receive life; those who commit evil will receive judgment.

1. Wait, is that salvation by works?
 - a. No, He has just said that life is given to those who hear and believe in Jesus.
 - b. **John 6:40** For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day."
 - c. We can do nothing – no good deeds – apart from Him
 - d. **John 15:5** "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.
 - e. John Piper, "This doesn't mean that we are justified by our good works, or that God is on our side because of our good works, or that we are united to Christ by our good works. It means the reverse: If you are justified by faith, your faith will produce good works, and if God is on your side, he will empower you to do good works, and if you are united to Christ you will bear the fruit of good works."

e. The other verses develop the other theme that shows why this new life given by Christ is so necessary and vital.

3. The Son will ***judge***. (5:22, 24, 27, 29, 30)

a. The Father has given all judgment to the Son (v. 22)

i. Judgment will depend on whether one has responded to the gracious mercy of the Son (v. 24)

b. He gave authority to the Son to execute judgment (v. 27)

i. BECAUSE He is the Son of man

ii. **Daniel 7:13-14** "I kept looking in the night visions, And behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, And He came up to the Ancient of Days And was presented before Him. ¹⁴ "And to Him was given dominion, Glory and a kingdom, That all the peoples, nations and *men of every* language Might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one Which will not be destroyed.

- iii. He is the Son of Man who fulfills this predictive passage in Daniel.
- c. This judgment will be after the future resurrection (v. 29)
- d. His judgment is just because it is consistent with the Father (v. 30)
 - i. They were judging Him based on their view of the Sabbath and His violation of it. He turns it around and says, "it is actually I who will judge you, and my judgment will be just."
- e. We want to prepare for things that are certainties.
 - i. I've seen the statistic that says there is a 0.0296% chance that your child will become a professional athlete. *There is a 100% chance that your child will stand before Jesus.*
 - 1. I haven't double-checked the math but the point is exactly right. Youth sports can be great for shaping character, family fun, and getting rid of all that extra money you have lying around. But what matters most is whether they are ready to stand before Jesus. Will they meet Him as Savior or judge?
 - 2. If we are rigorous about getting them onto the right team, the right travel club, the right gear, never miss practice or tournaments but casual about getting them to church, reading the Bible at home, talking about Jesus as if He is real and affects our everyday life, then our actions don't actually match our stated priorities.
- 4. So, all should **honor** the Son as they honor the Father. (5:23)
 - a. Judgment has been given to the Son, so that all will honor the Son even as they honor the Father.
 - b. They were seeking to kill Him because He made Himself equal with God. This would have exploded their categories all the more.
 - c. The NT repeats a similar idea many times
 - i. **1 John 2:23** Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father; the one who confesses the Son has the Father also.
 - ii. **Luke 10:16** "The one who listens to you listens to Me, and the one who rejects you rejects Me; and he who rejects Me rejects the One who sent Me."
 - iii. **John 15:23** "He who hates Me hates My Father also."
 - d. This would actually still be controversial in many circles today.
 - i. Cannot have God without Jesus, cannot love God and not love Jesus
 - ii. It is not a generic faith in God that is required but a specific faith in Jesus as the one who reveals the Father to us.
 - iii. Who is ruled out by this? Who is failing to honor the Son?
 - 1. In the immediate context, a Jewish person who is rejecting Jesus as the Messiah
 - 2. A Muslim who views Jesus as a prophet but not God
 - 3. A Hindu who believes in a plethora of gods
 - 4. The vaguely spiritual person who believes in a higher power of some kind

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