

Introduction:

- 1 John 2:1 My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an **advocate** with the Father--Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.
- 1 Timothy 2:5 For there is one God, and one **mediator** between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;
- Romans 8:34 Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also **interceding** for us.

The passage we will look at today comes at the end of when Jesus had miraculously healed a man who could not walk for 38 years of his life. Jesus healed the man on a Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath, which infuriated the religious legalist leaders of his time. This angered them not because it broke the law of God but rather the law of tradition which these people were esteeming higher than God's law. They then verbally questioned attacked and accused Jesus of breaking God's law and being a blasphemer, and basically said, "Who do you think you are?"

We saw last time that Jesus entered into a discourse with these men and told them directly who He was as He made several claims that would have shaken them to the core. He said:

1. "I am equal with God" (vv.19-20)
2. "I am the giver of life" (vv.21,26)
3. "I am the final judge" (vv.22-23)
4. "I determine everyone's destiny" (v.24)
5. "I will raise the dead" (vv.25, 28-29)
6. "I am always doing the will of God" (v.30)

Wow! Can you imagine? But Jesus doesn't stop there. If anyone here has ever been to court for a matter, you will know that you have the opportunity to bring witnesses and evidence to defend your case. Often people do not have the knowledge or experience to do this so they employ a defence lawyer who have studied the intricacies of law and can navigate through complicated statutes with accuracy and precision to represent them in court and fight for their rights. I presented to you at the beginning several verses which tell us that Jesus is an Advocate, a Mediator, an Intercessor, someone who represents us, someone who fights for us, someone who defends us.

When these religious legalists accused Him of being a Sabbath breaker and a blasphemer in **verse 18**, Jesus was not one to lift up His hands and say, "Oh, that's it, I'm finished. I've got nothing to say in my defence." No, He had plenty to say.

1. BEARING WITNESS: THE LAW

Just like in a court room setting, in our passage today, Jesus now moves into defence attorney mode as He defends Himself against the indictments of His accusers. And He calls five key witnesses who stand in His defence. He wants to bring out in the open evidence so that the public cannot ignore it nor be silenced.

Today I want you to imagine you are members of a jury. And I want you to think of yourselves as in a courtroom where the witnesses will take the stand and speak for themselves. Jesus is on trial as the defendant and as His own attorney. To begin His defence, Jesus makes a startling statement. **READ verse 31**. I think we need to know what that means and why He says it.

A. Meaning of the statement: Jesus is not saying that His claims are false, only that His testimony alone would not be valid in a court of law.

B. Reason for the statement: Jesus is speaking here to men who knew the Law inside out. According to Jewish law, even a single witness was insufficient to determine the truth of a matter (**Deut. 19:15**).

2. HEARING THE WITNESSES: THEIR TESTIMONIES

A. Witness number one: The Testimony of John the Baptist (32-35)

Jesus calls John the Baptist to the witness stand. Let's take a brief look at John's clear and simple testimony (1:29-34). When verse 35 says that the Jewish leaders "enjoyed John's light", was it because they believe Him, repented of their sins, and prepared their hearts for the coming Messiah? No. In all reality, they tolerated John, and were glad to hear that the Messiah was about to appear, but they never truly took John seriously. They never came to grips with his message. John pointed the way to God, and these Jews, who professed to be the people of God and to be seeking the way of God, just ignored his basic message of repentance. They looked at John as a novelty.

One great preacher of history once spoke a message into which he poured his heart and soul, and after the service he received the most shallow comment ever by one of his parishioners... "Ah Pastor, that was a cute sermon." To these Jews, John was cute. They said that he was a prophet, but they never heeded his divinely appointed message – thus dishonouring him and the One who sent him.

B. Witness number two: The Testimony of the Works of Jesus (v. 36)

The defence moves from verbal to visual evidence. Let's look at Exhibit A. John's Gospel provides irrefutable evidence for Christ's divinity. So far, He has turned water into the finest of wine, healed a government official's son who was on the verge of death from long distance, and here He has miraculously healed a man who was paralysed for 38 years. Who else has there ever been that has performed such things? The works testify for themselves that Jesus is the Son of God. And in the pages that follow, we will go on to see that He will miraculously feed five thousand men, He will walk on water, He will heal a blind man, and will raise a man who had been dead for four days back to life. Works of compassion and mercy that bear witness to the Son of God. **READ John 10:37-38.** But the defence does not just rest there. Instead, Jesus calls for another witness.

C. Witness number three: The Testimony of God the Father (vv.37-38)

Jesus introduces the heavenly Father by saying that He testifies in Jesus' favour. In fact, the Greek verb "testifies" indicates continual action... the Father continually testifies to the claims of Christ. At Jesus' birth, the Father announced the arrival with prophets, angels, and a miraculous guiding star. At Jesus' baptism, the Father testified: "*This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-please*" (Matt. 3:17), and later reaffirmed His own testimony at the Transfiguration (17:5), and also when the Greeks wanted to see Jesus (John 12:28). But overall, Jesus was referring to the Old Testament Scriptures where God bore witness through the prophets of His Son who He would send into the world. God the Father spoke through the prophets, but they did not hear His voice!

READ vv. 37-38. Now hang on just a minute! Do you know that Jesus was saying this to the Pharisee and the Scribes? The Pharisees were people who prayed seven times a day and went to worship 3 times a day. And Jesus says that they've never heard the Father's voice nor seen His form – how can that be? You know as well as I do that you can traffic in un-lived truth. You can do business and yet not believe in your goods. You can attend this or any church all the days of your life, and you can learn and memorise the books of the Bible... and still be no closer to God, except by mere exposure of God's people and God's Word.

Here's the point: Jesus issued an indictment for them to hear that was long overdue. Somehow there was never made a bridge from the theory of inspired documents to the practice of inspired living. One man once said, "*It's not a problem of Orthodoxy, it's a problem of Orthopraxy!*" That's why I believe so much in not the ministry of the Word, but in the ministry of God who makes the Word of God alive!

D. Witness number four: The Testimony of the Scriptures (vv.39-44)

These rigid Jewish leaders couldn't see the Messiah because God's Word was not truly abiding in them – therefore, God's Son was not the object of their faith. The Old Testament Scriptures megaphoned the news of the coming Messiah, yet these Jews turned a deaf ear to it all. **READ Luke 24:27, 44.** One man put it this way: *You can cut the Scriptures anywhere, and it bleeds with the blood of the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world.* From the beginning to the end of the Bible, **Jesus is there in every book of the Bible.**

The Word of God is intended to produce a clearer focus of Jesus, not a fancy vocabulary. For a lawyer involved in the legal maze, it's easy to become entrenched in the intricacies of the law and yet never develop a heart for justice and what is right. For a doctor, it's easy to become swept up in the swirl of state-of-the-art medicine and never develop a heart of compassion. For the minister or serious student of the Scriptures, it's easy to become enraptured with exegesis instead of Jesus, carrying on a love affair with the printed page rather than with the person of Christ. The Bible was given not simply as a legal document or a self-help book but as a love letter. And if that letter doesn't draw us irresistibly toward Christ, then it's possible that we, like those Jews, do not have His Word abiding in us. Those Jews poured over and over the Scriptures, but they missed the entire point of its message and did not have the love of God in their hearts.

Another way I have seen this is that I have known Christians that are more interested in becoming Bible students rather than disciples of Christ. They have become deeply interested in studying the road but not in actually following it to Christ. I have seen them underline their Bibles, memorise it, paraphrase it, and quote it. They will take its words apart and put them back together again... but we will do well to remember that it is not this actual book that will save your soul, but rather the One to whom this book points toward. It is not the Bible that saves, it is Jesus Christ who saves. I am not saying to toss your Bible aside and somehow mystically commune with Christ. Rather, I am declaring that His Word is the way we come to know Him. His Word reveals His heart, His plan, His purpose and design for living. In it, He explains how we can have a relationship with Him, so it is essential that we do study and know it. But we need to remember that His Book is not an end in itself. Our study of Scripture should always point us toward Christ. **Do YOU see Christ when you study the Word? Do HEAR His voice when you study the Word? If not, WHY?** It is interesting to note that Jesus points out why they are unable to see the forest because of the trees, or to put it another way, why they simply cannot and are unwilling to believe. The answer is good old fashion stinky and smelly pride. They loved to receive honour from others, but did not seek the honour that comes from the only God. And as Charles Spurgeon once wrote, *"When a man feels that he ought to be honoured, he is in extreme danger."*

E. Witness number five: The Testimony of Moses (vv.45-47)

And finally in this courtroom, Jesus now turns the tables and points an indicting finger at His accusers. He really has an ace up His sleeve when He brings Moses into light. Why Moses though? Because, like Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Moses was one of the founding fathers of Judaism. He spearheaded the Exodus, delivered God's Law to the people, and was looked up to with reverence. To be able to quote Moses was the "in" thing amongst the Pharisees and these religious groups. But the question before us is when did Moses ever write of Christ considering he lived 1400 years beforehand? **READ Deut. 18:15-19.** How can we be sure that Jesus was the prophet referred to by Moses? **READ Acts 3:18-23.**

For these legalists, Moses, on whom their hopes were set, would accuse them before God. At the end of the day, they did not believe what Moses said, nor what he wrote because they did not want to believe in Jesus' testimony.

3. THE VERDICT: A SERIOUS CHOICE

And now, you the jury have a decision to make. The witnesses have been carefully chosen. Each has taken the stand. The evidence has been judiciously presented. The defence now rests. As a member of the jury, you must deliberate. You must weigh the evidence. It's a sobering decision, for the verdict you reach about Christ is a serious one. It is, quite literally, a matter life or death – your life or death. Quite frankly, my mind is made up based on the evidence present forth in this book and for me, Jesus is the Christ. He is who He says He is, He is the only way to heaven.

Conclusion

What I don't want you to do is rush to judgement. What I don't want you to do is to ignore the evidence you have heard today. John the Baptist, the miraculous works of Jesus, God the Father, the Scriptures, and even Moses declare to you very loudly that He deserves your faith. I plead with you today, give Him your heart if you have not already done so. Put it off no longer.

Let us pray.

Jesus in Every Book of the Bible

- In **Genesis**, Jesus Christ is the Seed of the woman
- In **Exodus**, He is the Passover Lamb
- In **Leviticus**, He is our Great High Priest
- In **Numbers**, He is the Pillar of Cloud by Day and the Pillar of Fire by Night
- In **Deuteronomy**, He is the Prophet like unto Moses
- In **Joshua**, He is the Commander of the Lord's army
- In **Judges**, He is our Judge and Deliverer
- In **Ruth**, He is our Kinsman Redeemer
- In **I & II Samuel**, He is our Ebenezer Stone of Help
- In **Kings and Chronicles**, He is our Eternal King and the Seed of David
- In **Ezra**, He is our faithful Scribe and Restorer
- In **Nehemiah**, He is the Rebuilder of the Broken-Down Walls of Human Life
- In **Esther**, He is our Mordecai, our Advocate
- In **Job**, He is our Ever-Living Redeemer
- In **Psalms**, He is our Shepherd
- In **Proverbs**, He is our Wisdom
- In **Ecclesiastes**, He is our Meaning for Life
- In **Song of Solomon**, He is our Loving Bridegroom
- In **Isaiah**, He is our Prince of Peace
- In **Jeremiah**, He is our Righteous Branch
- In **Lamentations**, He is our Weeping Prophet
- In **Ezekiel**, He is our Watchman on the Wall
- In **Daniel**, He is the Fourth Man in the "Fiery Furnace"
- In **Hosea**, He is our Faithful Husband
- In **Joel**, He is the Outpurer of the Holy Spirit
- In **Amos**, He is our Burden-Bearer
- In **Obadiah**, He is our Judge and Saviour
- In **Jonah**, He is the Great Missionary sent by God
- In **Micah**, He is the Ruler of the World from Bethlehem
- In **Nahum**, He is our Stronghold in the Day of Trouble
- In **Habakkuk**, He is the Lord in His Holy Temple
- In **Zephaniah**, He is Lord Mighty to save
- In **Haggai**, He is the Desire of Nations
- In **Zechariah**, He is the Branch of David; the One Pierced for Us
- In **Malachi**, He is the Sun of Righteousness Rising with Healing in His Wings

- In **Matthew**, He is the King of the Jews, the Messiah, the Christ
- In **Mark**, He is the Servant and the Miracle Worker
- In **Luke**, He is the Son of Man who has Walked in your Shoes and Feels What You Feel
- In **John**, He is the Son of God, the Living Word; the Way, the Truth and the Life
- In **Acts**, He is the Saviour of the World; the Ascended Lord
- In **Romans**, He is our Justifier and the Righteousness of God
- In **I & II Corinthians**, He is our All-Sufficient Giver of Grace
- In **Galatians**, He is our Redeemer from the Curse of the Law
- In **Ephesians**, He is the Head of the Church
- In **Philippians**, He is the Joy of our life

- In **Colossians**, He is our Completeness and the Glue that Holds our World Together
- In **I & II Thessalonians**, He is our Soon and Coming King
- In **I & II Timothy**, He is our Mediator between God and Man
- In **Philemon**, He is the One Who Paid Our Debts
- In **Titus**, He is our Blessed Hope
- In **Hebrews**, He is the Author and Finisher of our Faith
- In **James**, He is our Great Physician
- In **I & II Peter**, He is our Chief Shepherd and Chief Cornerstone
- In **I, II & III John**, He is God in the Flesh
- In **Jude**, He is the Foundation of our Faith and our Eternal Security
- In **Revelation**, He is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the One Who is Coming Again!

- He is the First and Last, the Beginning and the End!
- He is the keeper of Creation and the Creator of all!
- He is the Architect of the universe and the Manager of all times.
- He always was, He always is, and He always will be...
- Unmoved, Unchanged, Undefeated, but never Undone!

- He was bruised and brought healing!
- He was pierced and eased pain!
- He was persecuted and brought freedom!
- He was dead and brought life!
- He is risen and brings power!
- He reigns and brings Peace!

- The world can't understand Him,
- The armies can't defeat Him,
- The schools can't explain Him, and
- The leaders can't ignore Him.

- Herod couldn't kill Him,
- The Pharisees couldn't confuse Him, and
- The grave couldn't hold Him!
- Nero couldn't crush Him,
- Hitler couldn't silence Him,
- Other religions can't replace Him, and
- The world can't explain Him away!

- He is light, love, longevity, and Lord.
- He is Goodness, Kindness, Gentleness, and God.
- He is Holy, Righteous, mighty, powerful, and pure.
- His ways are right, His word is eternal,
- His will is unchanging, and His mind is on us.

- He is my Redeemer, He is my Saviour,
- He is my guide, and He is my peace!
- He is my Joy, He is my comfort,
- He is my Lord, and He rules my life!