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Question on Jesus and the Spirit

“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father.” (John 14:12)

Recap

- We saw Jesus addressing the religious leaders who were critical of Him for (as they saw it) blasphemy and violating the Sabbath.
- Jesus said, “My Father has been working until now, and I have, too...”
- He claimed a unique relationship with God, and to be able to give life.
- Jesus says all will hear His voice and come forth from their graves. He will render perfect, righteous judgment.
- God’s design is for everyone to honor the Son as they honor the Father!

The Witness of John (John 5:31-35)

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

- Jesus will offer several different persons or things who testify to Him.
- The Law of Moses required two or three witnesses.
- The first witness Jesus references is John the Baptist. Jesus says John bore witness of the truth.
 - John said more than once that Jesus was the Lamb of God.
 - John also said that Jesus had existed before him.
 - He said Jesus would baptize people in the Holy Spirit.
 - John said Jesus had the Holy Spirit without measure.
 - He said that Jesus must increase, and he must decrease.
 - He bore explicit testimony that Jesus was the Son of God!
- Jesus was pointing them to John’s testimony about Him in hopes that some might be swayed by what He’s saying.
- If you credited John’s ministry, you should also have placed your trust in Jesus.
- Jesus gives beautiful testimony about John (v. 35), calling him a burning and shining lamp. John burned with passion for Christ and shined God’s light.
- Remember, John was not the light; he was a lamp.
- Notice the rebuke here, that they were willing for a time to rejoice in his light. What happens when we fail to receive and welcome the truth?
- “...receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.” (Jas. 1:21)

The Witness of The Works (John 5:36)

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

- The Father’s works are a greater witness. These works were good and gracious.
- Some claimed He cast out demons through the prince of demons, but these works showed the *goodness of God*. They were a picture of the coming Messianic Age:

*Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
And the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.
Then the lame shall leap like a deer,
And the tongue of the dumb sing.
For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness,
And streams in the desert.*

(Isa. 35:5-6)

- Jesus said *freely you have received, freely give* — and when He said that He wasn’t talking about money; He was talking about ministering to people in the supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit. (Matt. 10:8)
- *Every good and perfect gift is from above, the Bible says, and comes down from the Father of lights.* (Jas. 1:17)

The Witness of The Father (John 5:37)

37 And the Father Himself, who sent Me, has testified of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His form.

- Jesus warns against presumptuously assuming they know God’s mind. They don’t really know God’s voice, nor are they familiar with Him in an intimate way.

- First, He says they don't know His Voice. On a later occasion, when Jesus raised Lazarus, the Father spoke. However, people heard that as thunder. Why?
- He also says they've never seen God's form. Israel's God was only seen in a veiled way: "You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live." (Exod. 33:20)

The Witness of The Word (John 5:38-40)

38 But you do not have His word abiding in you, because whom He sent, Him you do not believe. 39 You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. 40 But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.

- They don't have God's Word abiding in them, because they don't believe the One He sent. What can we deduce from this?
 - Failure to believe in Jesus means we haven't understood the Word of God.
 - Failure to receive Jesus, and the truth about Jesus, will push out of our hearts what light we did have.
 - The Word is a perfect expression of God's mind, and the two are not in conflict. We don't interpret God's Word in such a way that we deny it!
 - We can do violence to the Word of God when we want to ensure that we can walk away from it "safely."
 - People are usually not **unable** to believe but **unwilling** to believe.
- The Scriptures in every way imaginable, but Jesus, as always, puts His finger on the problem (v. 39): *in them [meaning, in the Scriptures] you think you have eternal life.* The Scriptures are not the **source** of life... but Jesus is!

- Do we use the Scriptures properly? God’s desire was that they might use the Scriptures as a window to see Christ.
- Jesus said the Scriptures testify of Him. God gave hundreds of direct prophetic predictions and dozens of types and symbols to teach us about the Coming One.
- The problem was that they would not come to Him to receive that promised life!

Honor And Glory (John 5:41-44)

41 “I do not receive honor from men. 42 But I know you, that you do not have the love of God in you. 43 I have come in My Father’s name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive. 44 How can you believe, who receive honor from one another, and do not seek the honor that comes from the only God?

- Jesus wasn’t concerned about receiving **their** honor, but He was concerned that they honor **God**. If they did have God’s love, they would have received Him.
- Terrifying words in verse 43: if someone else comes in his own name, they would receive **that** one, although they had not received the true Messiah.
 - Some see in verse 43 a reference to the Antichrist, but if anything, Jesus could have been speaking about the Bar Kochba Rebellion (~135 AD).
 - Bar Kochba was a self-proclaimed Jewish military leader who even had a famous rabbi proclaim him as the Messiah. In many ways the outcome was worse than the destruction that took place in AD 70.
- What cuts us off from believing? What hinders us from receiving life from God? Seeking honor from man, instead of seeking it from God!

If we are displaying our spirituality to impress men, still seeking honor from others, still living to appear righteous or special or "anointed" before people, can we honestly say we have been walking near to the living God? We know we are relating correctly to God when our hunger for His glory causes us to forsake the praise of men. Does not all glory fade in the light of His glory? Even as Jesus challenged the genuineness of the Pharisees' faith, so He challenges us: "How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another?" (Francis Frangipane)

Failure To Receive The Truth (John 5:45-47)

45 Do not think that I shall accuse you to the Father; there is one who accuses you—Moses, in whom you trust. 46 For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me. 47 But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"

- *The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear... And the LORD said to me: "What they have spoken is good. I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him." (Deut. 18:15-19)*
- *But he said to him, "If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead." (Lk. 16:29-30)*
- **How tragic not to believe the witnesses that God gives concerning the Son!**
