

“Who’s on Trial?” (Jn. 5:16-47)

1. Trinity (16-23)

a. Judiciary (16-18 cf. 31-47 on point 3)

- i. R. C. Sproul noted that the Greek term Jesus used “answered” (17) is exceedingly rare and not conveyed in English. “It is found only in the context of trials and courtrooms, when a formal defense is given against charges that are made.” Jesus thus is speaking in terms of judicial defense.
- ii. Let me just say this at the start. In order to continually oppose Jesus, one must ignore, distort, or oppose God’s Law, facts, logic, evidence, and the Father above!
- iii. As Jesus presents His argument, He does so by the Law of Moses (Decalogue) which commands no false witness (9th Commandment) and Deut. 17:6 which demands at least two witnesses in order to testify. Furthermore, if one or both were to be found bearing false witness the penalty of the accused would fall on them.
- iv. After being confronted over Sabbath rule breaking, Jesus stated that He and the Father have been working and have the prerogative to do so. If a mat can be carried with a man on it on Sabbath, how much more a healed man carry an empty mat?
- v. He claimed to be equal to God (18).

b. Equality (19-23)

- i. Shared Actions (19) Perfect harmony of works w/ the Father.
- ii. Shared Love (20a)
- iii. Shared Knowledge (20b)
- iv. Shared Power (20c-21)
- v. Shared Authority (22)
- vi. Shared Honor (23) God will not share His glory with another. He doesn’t! He is triune and thus The Father’s glory is that of the Son’s (Isa. 42:8; 48:11 cf. Rev. 5:12-14). Also consider “First and the Last,” (Isa. 44:6 cf. Rev. 1:17).

2. Authority (24-30)

- a. Jesus’ Word is equal to the Word of God (24).
- b. Jesus’ Word offers eternal life (24-25).
- c. Jesus’ power to quicken spirits. Note: we are spiritually dead (zombies) until we hear (receive) the Word of Christ (25).
- d. Jesus is eternal life (26).
- e. Jesus’ Judgment as the Son of Man (Dan. 7:13-14). Sharing throne of God’s dominion (27).
- f. Jesus has the power of spiritual resurrection (25 cf. Eph. 2:1,5,6; Col. 2:13 cf. Rev. 20:4e, 6) and the physical resurrection (28-29 cf. 11:43-44).
- g. Jesus’ Judgment is perfect (30).

3. Testimony (31-47)

a. Paradoxically

- i. Jesus’ testimony w/ multiple witnesses is not given for His vindication but for their (our) reconciliation. **They were** and **we are** on trial and we are all guilty of sin. What we determine about Jesus’ person and work will determine His ruling for He is just and must of His own nature do justly.
- ii. Don’t misunderstand, you don’t determine your salvation; Jesus has! Bumper Sticker theology “God said it, I believe it, that settles it!” not exactly true. “God said and did it, which settles it!” is true! Those guilty of sin will receive just judgment and those who cling to the atoning work of Christ have their sins paid for, and thus God’s justice is done on the Cross.

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b. Multiplicity

- i. Jesus and the Father (31-32) Though Jesus and the Father confer and they are the supreme witnesses, He proceeds to point to those who testify of Him. Because we are sinners, verification of witnesses is necessary in the Law. Nevertheless, Jn. 8:14-18!
- ii. John (33-35) John was given as a witness for their sake. What is important to consider is that John, not Jesus, had the esteem and popularity of that time. Thus when John kept pointing to Jesus as greater than himself, he thus offered credence and credibility to Jesus’ person.
- iii. Works (36) Jesus offered signs, miracles, logic, divine wisdom, and righteous works as testimony to who He is.
- iv. Father (37) We know at Jesus’ baptism (Mat. 3:17) and afterward (Mat. 17:5) that the Father audibly affirmed Jesus’ person and righteousness.
- v. Scripture (38-44)
  1. Vv. 38-39 They misunderstood. How tragic to be scholars and teachers of the Scriptures and miss the overarching message?
  2. V. 40 They looked for salvation in all the right places yet did not allow what they found to soften their hardened hearts of pride, insecurity, and jealousy.
  3. V. 41 Can sinful man honor God? Did sinful man honor God?
  4. Vv. 42-43 Tragically, men are more apt to believe deception rather than truth.
  5. V. 44 reveals that their self-importance drives them to seek self-honor rather than obeying the greatest commandment.
- vi. Moses’ Testimony in Scripture (45-47)
  1. Obviously, Moses is found in and thus a part of the Scripture to which Jesus points.
  2. Moses represented the Law and both major sects of Jews acknowledged, in particular, his credibility. Thus Jesus points to Moses who pointed to Him viz. Deut. 18:15,18.
- vii. Daniel’s Testimony in Scripture (back to v. 27 & Dan. 7). Among a line of prophets, the esteemed Moses prophesied directly about Jesus. Daniel’s conveyed vision (Dan 7:9-14) encompasses this entire narrative of Jesus’ relationship in the trinity, divine authority, and testimony:
  - a. Trinity: The son of man comes on the clouds (= divinity v. 13) and approaches the Ancient of Days who is seated on the throne of judgment (9-10). This is God approaching God!
  - b. Authority: The son of man is given authority, dominion, and the kingdom which is everlasting.
  - c. Testimony: The son of man is prophesied in the context of a succession of empires which can be verified beginning with Babylon and ending in Greco Roman Empire having the Medo and Medo-Persian empires in between. This lends credence to the witness of Daniel’s prophesy of the Son of Man to come – who would usher in and bring His Kingdom to fruition and fulfillment.
  - d. Additionally: Jesus clearly expounded on Daniel’s prophesy of the resurrection (vv. 28-29 cf. Dan. 12:2).

Jesus is not on trial, the world is.

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Although Jesus knew their hearts were hardened toward Him, He offered them, His disciples, and now us evidence for who He is. He was not on trial but they were. The mother of all questions came from Jesus: “Who do you say that I am?” Jesus offered us evidence not for His sake but for ours. The Father has predestined that whoever shall repent and cling to His living Word, shall be redeemed. Is Jesus the pinnacle of a long line of prophets? Is He the son of God/Son of Man? If Jesus is the prophesied superior prophet, priest, and king, you and I had better acknowledge such if we hope to enjoy His reconciliation, resurrection, and reign! To refuse to believe the divinely inspired Prophets who foretold of His person and work, Jesus’ words and signs, and those who left all to follow Him and sacrificed all to die for Him – is to be willfully and fatally ignorant.