

THROUGH THE BIBLE STUDY

JOHN 4-5

Several years ago on a tour to Israel we were able to visit the ancient site of Shiloh. God was worshipped at the Tabernacle in Shiloh for 369 years. This is where Eli the Priest raised a young boy named Samuel.

Today, Shiloh is in the West Bank - under Palestinian control. Israelis consider it hostile territory. Our tour company agreed to go to Shiloh, but only in an armored bus - *in case we were greeted by flying rocks.*

Shiloh is a few miles south of [Sychar](#) or [Shechem](#). Today, this is the site of a major Palestinian city called "[Nablus](#)." The Bible refers to the region as "[Samaria](#)."

And Samaria was as difficult a destination in Jesus' day as it is today. The terrain is hilly and mountainous.

And there were hostilities then, as now - not with Palestinians, but with rival Samaritans. *I'm surprised Jesus and His disciples didn't take an armored bus.*

The preferred path from Galilee to Jerusalem was further east - down the Jordan Valley - not through the rocky region of Samaria. A pilgrim traveled through Samaria only if there was a pressing need to do so.

Which brings us to John 4. "Therefore, when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John (though Jesus Himself did not baptize, but His disciples), He left Judea and departed again to Galilee. But He needed to go through Samaria." Notice the

imperative. John tells us, **“He needed to go through Samaria.”**

Apparently, Jesus obeyed *an inner urge - a mental must*. For some reason, He knew His Father in heaven wanted Him and His crew to pass through Samaria.

Verse 5, **“So He came to a city of Samaria which is called Sychar (or Shechem), near the plot of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.”** It’s interesting, that even in Jesus’ day there was history associated with this site. It was already a stop on holy land tours.

“Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied from His journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour.” or on our clock, high noon.

Samaria sat in the mountains. Jesus had been hoofing steep terrain all morning. His dogs were tired.

He took off his sandals to rest his feet - and sent His disciples into the nearby town for coffee and bagels.

Verse 7, **“A woman of Samaria came to draw water..”**

Today, there’s friction in the area between Jews settlers and local Palestinians - but a similar animosity existed in Jesus day, between Jews and Samaritans.

When Assyria conquered Samaria seven centuries earlier, the Assyrians bred foreigners with the surviving Israelis. The Jews in Jerusalem viewed the Samaritans as mongrels - half-breeds - a completely different sect.

In fact, the Samaritans developed their own rival religion. They instituted their own priesthood. Even their own temple stood on nearby Mount Gerizim.

There was such hatred between Jews and Samaritans, the Jews prayed no Samaritan would rise in the resurrection. In 8:48, the Jews try to insult Jesus by saying, "You are a Samaritan and have a demon." In the 1st century *Jews and Samaritans* got along about as well as *Jews and Palestinians* in the 21st century.

Yet Jesus says to this woman, "Give Me a drink."

Remember it was noon. Midday in Samaria temps can hit 90-plus degrees. The women would come for water in the cool, early morning hours - never at noon.

The only reason a woman would visit the well at noontime is if she wanted to avoid the other ladies in town. Apparently, that was this woman's motivation.

As we'll learn, she'd lived an immoral life. She was frowned on by relatives and snubbed by neighbors. She had few friends. She lived in shame and isolation.

It was shocking that Jesus would speak to this woman. A *Jewish rabbi* and a *Samaritan woman* were on the opposite ends of the 1st century social ladder.

And not only were Jews biased against Samaritans, they were also prejudiced against women. One rabbi taught, "It is better the words of the Law be burned than be delivered to a woman!" This is why this lady did a double take when Jesus asked "Give me a drink."

John notes the disciples' whereabouts at the time...

"For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, "How is it that You,

being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans." Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water." "*Living water*" is swirling and flowing - it's water that's clear and clean.

It's potable or drinkable in contrast to a stale pond.

And "*living water*" is the term Jesus coined to describe the life of the Spirit. When you choose Jesus, and are born from above - refreshment is the result.

Living water is the spiritual equivalent of a cool drink on a hot day. A thirst gets slaked – an *ahhh* floods over the soul. Living water quenches the deep down thirst all humans possess. It produces spiritual satisfaction.

This is the water Jesus offers this woman. Verse 11, "*The woman said to Him, 'Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do You get that living water?'*" Today, Jacob's Well is covered by a church. The well is in the basement. But in 1935 the well was dredged. The excavators dug 138 feet before hitting bottom. This woman was right - *it was deep*.

She asks, "*Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, as well as his sons and his livestock?'*" Jesus lacked a dipper or bucket. As in Chapter 3 with Nicodemus, Jesus is *talking figuratively*, but the woman *takes him literally*.

Verse 13, "Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again..."

Here's a verse to write over the top of everything this world offers us... *The new house, the luxury car, the latest gadget, the fancy clothes, the pretty girl...*

Get it and you'll thirst again... It might produce a bloated, full feeling for a time, but nothing permanent gets resolved. In a short time you'll be thirsting again.

You finally get married... you'll thirst again.

You get pregnant... you'll thirst again.

You get that high-pay promotion... you'll thirst again.

How often have you said "I'll be happy when..." Then the "when" comes and you're thirsting again. Realize, "**Physical stuff can never satisfy a spiritual need.**"

The city of Marseilles, France is home to a series of sculptures by artist Bruno Catalano. They're travelers who are missing a piece of themselves. They're not all there. There's a hole in their life. And Bruno's statues could be the poster child for the whole human race.

Famous comedian Eddie Murphy once told People magazine, "I don't think there's anyone who feels like there isn't something missing in their life."

It doesn't matter *where we go, or what we do, or how much we get* it doesn't fill the hole inside - not for long.

Jesus predicted it, "*You will thirst again.*"

And Jesus goes on to say, "But whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall

give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life." The spirit of a Christian is an artesian well bubbling up with a *transcendent joy*, and *inner harmony*, and *fervent love*.

Living water wells up within a true believer. Jesus alone can quench our deep down thirst. You and I were made for God. The hole inside us is Jesus-shaped. Believe me, only He can fill our inner emptiness!

Here's another name for *living water* - "*everlasting life*." It's not just long life - it's full, and deep, and abundant life. It speaks of **quality** not just **quantity**.

And it's available to us tonight in Jesus name!

In verse 15, "The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw."

Here's the breakthrough. She's beginning to understand what Jesus is offering her. In the words of the old Sprite commercial, she's "**obeying her thirst!**"

"*Give me this water...*" she says... But there's a prerequisite she has to meet. It's called **repentance**.

Jesus explains what it means in her context...

"Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here." The woman answered and said, "I have no husband." (He knew she had no husband.) Jesus said to her, "You have well said, 'I have no husband, for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; in that you spoke truly."

Notice, Jesus didn't consider her current live-in to be her husband. Just because a man and woman live together it doesn't mean they're married in God's eyes.

Jesus says to her, *“And the one whom you now have is not your husband...”* God recognizes and honors the bonds of marriage, not the convenience of shaking up.

Jesus wants to quench this woman's thirst, but first He needs to deal with her sin. **There is no conversion without conviction.** This girl had been in more laps than a napkin. She's had lax morals, low standards.

Its interesting, Jesus addresses *self-righteousness* in Chapter 3 with Nicodemus. Now in Chapter 4 he deals with *unrighteousness*, but His remedy is the same.

Both people need a new birth - a drink of living water.

“The woman said to Him, “Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet.” It is starting to dawn on the Samaritan woman there's more to Jesus than meets the eye.

Verse 19, *“Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship.”* And this is often folk's reaction. Jesus puts His finger on a sin and we start to squirm.

We change topics. This woman even gets spiritual.

She brings up a current controversy. Jews worshipped in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah. Samaritans worshipped on Mount Gerizim... *Who was right? When people want to avoid truth they often argue theology.*

He addresses her question. "Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will **neither** on this mountain (Gerizim in Samaria), **nor** (on the Temple Mount) in Jerusalem, worship the Father.

You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews." Jesus settles this controversy, "*salvation is of the Jews.*" The Jews, not the Samaritans, were the custodians of the Scriptures and caretakers of the sacrificial system.

In essence Jesus is telling this woman, "There has been a right way and a wrong way to worship - and up to this point in history the Jews have been right. But it's all about to become a mute point. *Change is coming...*"

Verse 23, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him.

God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." With the coming of the Messiah changes will occur. Jesus is now God's Temple on earth, and He's made the temples on both mountains irrelevant. Today, God no longer dwells in houses made of stone or wood, but in believing hearts.

On our trips to Jerusalem I always visit the Wailing Wall, the last remnant of the Jewish Temple. And I've seen devout Jews kiss the stones. It's their sacred site.

Yet while standing at the Wall I always hear the Holy Spirit speaking this verse to my heart, "**True worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth.**" Logistics no longer matter. True worship is a matter of the heart.

For Jesus said “**God is spirit.**” God lacks physical restraints. He has no properties that confine Him to a single location. God is everywhere, at all times.

Jesus is telling this Samaritan woman to stop limiting God to a mountain top, or a temple, *or a church building for that matter.* He’s no longer found in **brick and mortar**, but in “**Spirit and truth.**” The true God is **understood biblically** and **experienced spiritually.**

No matter your location or surroundings all you need to connect to God is an *open Bible* and *open heart.* Real worship occurs *by the Spirit - through the Word.*

In verse 25 the lady responds to Jesus, “**The woman said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When He comes, He will tell us all things." Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am He."**

Jesus clearly claims to be the Messiah of Israel.

“**And at this point His disciples came** (they make it back with their *bagels* and *bigotry*), **and they marveled that He talked with a woman; yet no one said, "What do You seek?" or, "Why are You talking with her?"**

Yet that’s what they thought... By now the disciples were used to Jesus’ love for people - even unlovely people. His willingness to reach out was no surprise.

Verse 28, “**The woman then left her waterpot, went her way into the city, and said to the men, “Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?" Then they went out of the city and came to Him.**” This is fascinating

- exposure to the townspeople was the very thing she had tried to avoid by coming to the well at noon. Now she seeks it out.

Apparently, shame no longer torments this woman. She's gone from *outcast* to *broadcast*. Jesus knew her sin, but didn't condemn her. She's trusting His mercies.

It seems a single slurp of living water gave her an unexpected boldness. Once she has God's forgiveness she's oblivious to her past. She's now caught up in the love of Jesus - all that matters is sharing Him.

Verse 31 “In the meantime His disciples urged Him, saying, “Rabbi, eat.” But He said to them, “I have food to eat of which you do not know.” Therefore the disciples said to one another, “Has anyone brought Him anything to eat?” Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.” Again, Jesus talks *figuratively*, yet His disciples interpret Him *literally*... Jesus fed on the will of God.

Normally when I think of “**soul food**” I envision *turnip greens, black-eyed peas, collards, chicken gizzards, pigs’ feet*... But real soul food is to hear and do God’s will. Spiritual nourishment comes from syncing to God.

Verse 35, “Do you not say, 'There are still four months and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!” Apparently, this incident occurred four months before the actual harvest.

But Jesus is concerned about a harvest of souls, of which this thirsty Samaritan woman was a part.

He cared not just for Jews, but for Samaritans - even a burned out woman who had loved and lost five times.

And this harvest continues... with folks like this woman who know they've sinned, yet long to start over.

In verse 36 Jesus comments on this soul harvest and some principles that govern our participation.

“And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together. For in this the saying is true: 'One sows and another reaps.'” Sometimes we **sow** seeds of truth, and plant thoughts in fertile minds.

Other times we **reap** decisions and are there when folks commit. However we participate we can rejoice.

Jesus says to His disciples. “I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have entered into their labors.” He’s speaking of John the Baptist. John had already sowed the seed.

Perhaps the Samaritan woman had been previously influenced by John... Some sow, while others reap.

Verse 39, “And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, “He told me all that I ever did.” A survey revealed that 85% of Christians are converted by the influence of a close friend or a family member.

The Samaritans could tell this was a changed woman and they believed her testimony about Jesus.

Realize, at this point in her life, this Samaritan woman knew little about the Gospel - even less about theology - but the people of the area were attracted to her testimony. It's been said, "One witness with enthusiasm is better than 99 persons with knowledge."

"So when the Samaritans had come to Him, they urged Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days. And many more believed because of His own word." Again, Jesus loved the Samaritans - enough to *hang out* and *straighten out* their confused theology.

"Then they said to the woman, "Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard Him and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world." They didn't just take the woman's word. The Samaritans believed in Jesus themselves.

"Now after the two days He departed from there and went to Galilee. For Jesus Himself testified that a prophet has no honor in his own country."

"When He came to Galilee, the Galileans received Him, having seen all the things He did in Jerusalem at the feast; for they also had gone to the feast. So Jesus came again to Cana of Galilee where He had made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman whose son was sick at Capernaum." About 20 miles away.

"When (the nobleman) heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee, he went to Him and implored Him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death." It never dawned on him that all Jesus had to do was speak the

word in Cana, and his servant in Capernaum would be healed. Time and distance and space was inconsequential to the eternal Son of God.

Verse 48, "Then Jesus said to him, "Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will by no means believe." By this point, Jesus was frustrated with the Jews' infatuation with miracles. They always clamored for miraculous signs. They lusted after the spectacular.

They were more interested in *a circus* than *a Christ*.

But this nobleman was only interested in his son. "The nobleman said to Him, "Sir, come down before my child dies!" *Hurry Jesus*, Capernaum is a long walk.

Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your son lives."

So the man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him, and he went his way. And as he was now going down, his servants met him and told him, saying, "Your son lives!" (Here the plot thickens.) Then he inquired of them the hour when he got better. And they said to him, "Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him."

Verse 53, "So the father knew that it was at the same hour in which Jesus said to him, "Your son lives." And he himself believed, and his whole household.

This again is the second sign Jesus did when He had come out of Judea into Galilee." When He instantly turned water to wine Jesus showed power over **time**. He did in an instant what occurs in nature over years.

Now He heals a boy from a distance. It revealed His power over **space**... *Jesus is Lord of time and space!*

Chapter 5, “After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.” John doesn’t tell us which feast. “Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, which is called in Hebrew, Bethesda, having five porches.” “Bethesda” is “house of grace.”

The sheep gate was inside the northeast wall of the city of Jerusalem. The area consisted of two pools build over a hot springs. The pools were surrounded by a colonnade and were the site of a public bath. *But a spiritual phenomenon had changed the pools use...*

“In these (five porches) lay a great multitude of sick people, blind, lame, paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at a certain time into the pool and stirred up the water; then whoever stepped in first, after the stirring of the water, was made well of whatever disease he had.”

Whenever a chronically ill person was released by the doctors - *when all that could be done had been done* - they came to the pools. What the Romans built for relaxation became an infirmary for the hopeless...

And there must've been truth to their expectations.

Healings had to occur. *How else did the pool gain its reputation?* John speaks as if this was more than a legend. It was rare, but at times the angel was present.

Verse 5, “Now a certain man was there who had an infirmity 38 years.” He may’ve suffered from polio at an early age. He’d been crippled long enough to forget what *it was like to*

chase his kids around the house, or take a walk with his wife, or push a plough over a field.

“When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he already had been in that condition a long time, He said to him, “Do you want to be made well?” The sick man answered Him, “Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, another steps down before me.” He doesn’t even answer the question; instead he makes excuses.

Apparently, it’s possible to get so use to a plague or an infirmity that we become reluctant to turn it loose.

Think of the alcoholic. He's destroying his life, but the *stronghold of his habit* is greater than his *desire to change*. After 38 years it’s easy to lie down and give in.

You can capitulate to your condition, and give up the dream of a different kind of life. This man by the pool blamed everyone else for beating him out of his miracle, but the real problem was he had lost faith!

He was waiting on the waters to be stirred... Well, Jesus comes along and stirs up this man’s idle faith!

“Jesus said to him, “Rise, take up your bed and walk.” And immediately the man was made well, took up his bed, and walked.” Here’s a man, bedridden for 38 years, yet Jesus tells him to get up and walk.

Understand all God’s miracles begin with impossible commands. This is always God's way. He asks us to believe the unbelievable... and as soon as we do He’ll release the power in us to effect the change.

In a micro-millisecond - between the time this man's faith prompted the nerve impulse from his brain to his legs - God supplied the strength he previously lacked.

The lame man who needed help just to crawl into the pool, now puts his faith in Jesus, and suddenly this once crippled man is able to walk all the way home!

It's also interesting to note, there were other needy folks scattered around the pool that day, but Jesus didn't heal any of them. He healed **only one**. And the question is "*why?*"... The answer, "*we don't know.*"

When we talk about healing we come face to face with God's sovereignty. God heals one person and allows the other more godly and holy person to die.

Why? The bottom line is that healing is God's prerogative. **We** have no right to question His purpose.

Notice the last line of verse 9, "**And that day was the Sabbath.**" Jesus could've healed this lame man six other days of the week, but He chose Shabbat.

In verse 8 when Jesus tells the lame man "**Take up your bed and walk**" He uses an interesting Greek word for "*walk.*" It means "*to walk around, take a stroll.*"

Jesus wanted the man to show off his new wheels.

Apparently, Jesus wanted all eyes to see this miracle and to take notice that it was done on the Sabbath.

Verse 10 tells us Jesus got the attention He desired. "**The Jews therefore said to him who was cured, "It is the Sabbath; it is not lawful for you to carry your bed."**

According to the Talmud, the rabbinical commentary on the law, 39 tasks were prohibited on the Sabbath.

Here is religion in a nutshell. A miracle gets ignored, while the guy who was healed is criticized for carrying a bedroll on the wrong day. Legalism is sad and silly.

In a person's zeal to keep the rules they can become irrational, even contradictory. A legalist often keeps a rule that's in conflict with that rule's real intention.

One night, I stopped by Dominos for a pizza. It was about 11 PM. I tried to order, but the clerk told me they stopped taking walk-ups at 10 PM. He said I'd have to go home and place my order. *That was strange, but ok.*

I figured it would be safer and easier for a delivery-man if I called in my order, and they just brought it to my car in the parking lot. *Why drive 20 minutes?*

But again they said "no." These guys were a stickler for the rules... *only **home deliveries** after 10 PM.*

So here's what happened, I called in my order from the parking lot, and a deliveryman followed me home to hand me my pizza at my door. It was crazy - but it's the kind of lunacy the Sabbath regulations produced.

The Jews questioned the formerly lame man, and he reported what happened, "He answered them, "He who made me well said to me, 'Take up your bed and walk.' "Then they asked him, "Who is the Man who said to you, 'Take up your bed and walk'?" But the one who was healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, a multitude being in that place."

“Afterward Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, “See, you have been made well. Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you.” Interestingly, Jesus returns to finish what He started in this man's life.

He didn't heal his lame legs so those legs could return to sin. The man's healing was only the first step in His cleansing. Jesus tells this man to *“sin no more.”*

Verse 15, “The man departed and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well. For this reason the Jews persecuted Jesus, and sought to kill Him, because He had done these things on the Sabbath.”

“But Jesus answered them, “My Father has been working until now, and I have been working.” Since the Father works on the Sabbath, so does the Son. If a family business is open Saturdays, all the family works.

When God created the heavens and earth He did so in six days - and on the seventh day He rested.

But man's sin shattered the Father's Sabbath rest, and ever since He's been working relentlessly to redeem and restore fallen people. In healing on the Sabbath, Jesus was simply following His Father's lead.

“Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.” Remember the Jewish mindset... The son of an animal is an animal... the son of a human is a human... thus the Son of God is God. For Jesus to refer to God as His Father, He was claiming to be God.

And from here to the end of the chapter Jesus testifies to His deity. "Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner."

Jesus was no lone wolf. In all He did, He acted in conjunction with God. He always did His Father's will.

Verse 20 "For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself does; and He will show Him greater works than these, that you may marvel.

For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to them, even so the Son gives life to whom He will."

The strongest proof for Jesus' deity was His mastery over death. The Son holds the key to eternal life!

The Jewish rabbis taught that Yahweh held three great keys - the key to open the heavens and to give rain - the key to open the womb and give conception - and the key to open the grave and raise the dead.

Three times in Jesus' ministry He raised the dead.

In doing so, He proved He was sovereign over life and death - ultimately, even His own life and death.

He says in verse 22, "For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son, that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father."

In Genesis 18:25 Yahweh is called the "Judge of all the earth." But apparently the Father delegated this authority to

His Son. And in assuming the authority to judge all men, Jesus was claiming equality with God.

Verse 23 is a stronger statement still, “He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.” The Father shares His honor and glory with the Son. To disrespect one, is to disrespect the other.

How often do we hear a person claim to be to “good with God” - *they love God - yet reject Jesus?* According to Scripture this is impossible. Despite what a person says, you don’t love the Father if you reject His Son.

Verse 24, “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.” The world we live in is a walking graveyard, full of moving, breathing corpses.

People are *alive physically, but dead spiritually.*

It’s when a person takes seriously the Words of Jesus, and believe in Him, that they connect to God. Through Jesus we pass from spiritual death into life.

Jesus says, “Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live.

For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself, and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man.” Daniel 7:13 refers to the Messiah as the “Son of Man.” And here Jesus claims to be Him.

God created life, and the Father gave Jesus the authority to judge humans, and distribute eternal life.

That makes Jesus life's only authorized dealer! If you want eternal life there's no where else to go, but Jesus.

In verse 28 Jesus says only what God could say, "Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth - those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation." Realize, humans who have lived and died still exist as disembodied spirits.

But one day our flesh and bone bodies - whether buried or cremated will be resurrected and reunited with our spirits. Even the dismembered bodies, or bodies that were somehow blown to pieces, and lost to our loved ones - God still has the power to gather up the molecules and do His miracle of resurrection.

One day, everybody that has ever lived will rise at the command of Jesus and be assigned their eternal destination... Some people are *resurrected to life in heaven* - while others are *resurrected to life in hell*.

Jesus says in verse 30, "I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me." Jesus humbled Himself. His every thought, act, instinct was synced to God's will.

In fact, He says in verse 31, "If I bear witness of Myself, My witness is not true." Here Jesus appeals to Jewish law. In a

Jewish Court a single testimony was inadmissible. It took two or three witnesses to validate a claim. Jesus is telling His audience don't just take His word for it. Jesus has overwhelming collaboration.

In the rest of the chapter Jesus places five witnesses on the stand who all confirm His claim to be God...

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

John the Baptist testified Jesus was the Messiah.

Here's another witness in the case for Jesus - **His miracles** testified of His deity. Verse 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."

Though modern scholars have had a field day casting doubt on the legitimacy of Jesus' miracles, it's interesting no one alive at the time ever denied their authenticity. His enemies said He worked His miracles by sorcery and demonic power, but they couldn't deny that the miracles happened - there were too many eye-witnesses who saw the miracles actually occur.

Even, the Jewish historian, Flavius Josephus - a man who was definitely not a Christian - wrote that Jesus was known as "a doer of startling deeds."

Verse 37 highlights a third witness. "And the Father Himself, who sent Me, has testified of Me." The Father in heaven testified of Jesus on two occasions - at both His baptism and on the Mount of Transfiguration.

In both cases He spoke from heaven and declared, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Jesus explains why the Jews didn't hear His voice, "You have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His form. But you do not have His word abiding in you, because whom He sent, Him you do not believe."

It's interesting, we want hearing to be the requisite for believing, but the opposite is true. God makes believing the prerequisite for hearing. God's voice is heard by the *believing heart*, not a *skeptical heart*.

The fourth witness is the **Scripture**. Verse 39, "You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me."

The OT was chalked full of types and idioms pointing to Jesus. It contains over 300 direct prophecies fulfilled by Him. The Jews thought they knew the Scripture.

They "search" the text, Jesus says. The word "search" means to sniff out like a hound dog. Some of the scribes were such thorough sniffers they counted out every word of the Law - they examined down to the very letters - *yet they missed God's clear meaning*.

Jesus says to the Jews in verse 40, "But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life. I do not receive honor from men. But I know you, that you do not have the love of God in you. 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."

This has been the sad history of the Hebrew people.

The Jews have been duped by false prophet after false prophet - from Bar Kochba in the 2nd century AD to Menachem Schneerson in the 1990s...

Bible commentator John Phillips writes, "The Jews never had a false Christ until they rejected the real Christ. Then they had a whole series of pseudo-messiahs who deceived them by the thousand."

In verse 44 Jesus asks "How can you believe, who receive honor from one another, and do not seek the honor that comes from the only God?"

Do not think that I shall accuse you to the Father; there is one who accuses you - Moses, in whom you trust. For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?" Here is the fifth witness Jesus bring to testify of His deity - **Moses**.

In Deuteronomy 18 Moses wrote of the Messiah as a prophet like himself. Jesus says Moses spoke of Him.

The Jews cherished Moses - yet Jesus says Moses will stand up in the judgment and condemn them for not

recognizing the One of whom he wrote. If the Jews believed in Moses they should've believed in Him!

Again the five-fold witness of Jesus: **John, His miracles, the Father, the Scriptures, and Moses.**