

Last week I mentioned that this 5th chapter divides itself into two parts—a miracle (vv1-15) and a discourse (vv16-47)—these, as usual, go together—the miracle serves as an illustration to lead into the teaching—the teaching (discourse) can be divided into two parts—both intended to prove His identity—[1] He does the works of God, and [2] He has the witnesses of God...

With regards to His witnesses—I mentioned last week these were four—John the Baptist, His works (miracles), His Father, and the Holy Scriptures—now it might be easily and perhaps more accurate to reduce these to the Father—who is a greater witness than John—for He bears witness to Christ through the works given Him and the Word that's about Him...

Furthermore, before I come to my text—I need to remind you that our Savior is here legally providing testimony to convict the leaders of the Jewish nation of their unbelief—this will become even more apparent as we come to vv44-47—but this morning I want to return to v37 and consider with it vv38-39—as these verses describe—the Father's testimony of Christ in Scripture, and tragically, the Jews rejection of that testimony...

- I. The Jews Rejection of the Father's Testimony: Explained
- II. The Jews Rejection of the Father's Testimony: Applied

- I. The Jews Rejection of the Father's Testimony: Explained

- A. They did not hear His voice or see His form—v37

1. V37—"And the Father Himself, who sent Me, has testified of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His form..."
2. Now—if you remember last week—I suggested the first part of this verse may refer to our Savior's baptism...
3. That is—the Father bore witness of His Son with an audible voice and a visible form—at His water baptism...
4. But—to be honest the more I think about it, the less likely I think this is what our Savior meant—for the simply reason—no one but John the Baptist heard that testimony...
5. Thus—it seems strange that our Savior would rebuke the Pharisees for not hearing what they were not present for...
6. Thus—I suggest that most likely—the first phrase of v37 refers to the Father's testimony of His Son in Scripture...
7. This is confirmed by what I suggest last week with regards to the phrase—"you have never heard His voice at any time, nor seen His form..."
8. Thus—I suggest that vv37-39 form a single unit—which describes the Father's testimony of Christ in OT Scripture...
9. Although the Pharisees had this revelation—they had never actually or savingly heard His voice in that Scripture...
10. That is—they had never heard His voice or seen His form savingly—with the ears and eyes of the heart or soul...
11. Perhaps another way of saying it would be—their spiritual ears and eyes were def and blind—they did not believe...
12. Thus—from this understanding of v37—I suggest that within Holy Scripture—we HEAR and we SEE God...
13. [1] We HEAR God—that is—we hear the voice of God within Holy Scripture—God speaks to us in Scripture...
14. V37—"You have never heard His voice at any time"—though they read Scripture they never HEARD Scripture...

15. [2] We SEE God—that is—we see God with the eyes of the soul—we behold the glory of God in Jesus Christ...
16. Thus—the word "form" which literally means "the outward shape, form, or figure of something"—refers to our present knowledge of God by faith...
17. In other words—because we cannot see God who is a purely spiritual Being—we can see His shape or form in Scripture...
18. 2Cor.3:14—"But their minds were blinded. For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the OT, because the veil is taken away in Christ..."
19. All men, not merely these first century Jews, are not only spiritually deaf, but also spiritual blind to the truth...
20. Thus—what's here said of these Pharisees, is true of us all by nature—we never hear His voice or see His form...
21. Accordingly—I want to hear very briefly answer the question—HOW do we know whether or not we are hearing God's voice in Scripture...
22. Well—I trust the answer is rather simple—are you hearing Scripture testify that life is found only in Christ...
23. And here I refer to both the Old and New Testaments—can you hear and see this throughout the whole of Scripture...

B. They did not believe Him whom the Father sent—v38

1. V38—"But you do not have His word abiding in you, because whom He sent, Him you do not believe"—a FACT and REASON...
2. [1] A FACT—"but (and, also, indeed) you do not have His word abiding in you"—that is—in you by faith and love...
3. The word of God was not within their hearts—it was in their mouths—but it was not in their hearts by faith...
4. The word of God is said to be within us—when it's received by faith and cherished within the heart by love...
5. Deut.6:6—"And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart"—that is—by faith and love...
6. Isn't it fearful to think—that a person can give his whole life to study the Scripture—and fail to have it in his heart...
7. [2] A REASON—"because whom He sent, Him you do not believe"—to reject Christ is to reject the Father...
8. Christ came as the promised Prophet of Old—He came to speak the words His Father gave to Him to speak...
9. This is WHY they did not have the Father's word in their hearts—because they rejected the testimony of the Father...
10. Deut.18:15-19—"The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear, according to all you desired of the LORD your God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, 'Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, nor let me see this great fire anymore, lest I die.' 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...'"
11. Matt.17:5—"While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him..."
12. Throughout the gospel of John, as we shall see, our Savior describes Himself as sent from God, speaking the words of God...
13. This refers to the fact that Christ, as the Messiah of God, came as a Prophet of God to tell us the word of God...
14. In fact—Christ is the final and greatest Prophet of all—the NT apostles and prophets are described as sent by Him...

15. Jn.8:47—"He who is of God hears God's words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God"—His words are God's words (v43)...
- C. They did not search Scripture as a testimony of Christ—v39
1. V39—"You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me..."
 2. Now—the first thing that needs clarifying is—the verb "your search" can be translated as a statement of fact or command...
 3. In other words—our Savior could mean—"You search the Scripture" or "You should search the Scripture"...
 4. But—either way—and this is what's important—searching the Scripture is a good thing that's not forbidden...
 5. That is—the problem here is NOT that they searched the Scriptures—it was that they missed what the Scriptures are all about...
 6. The verb rendered "search" literally means—"to examine or look into"—the verb carries the idea of—diligence...
 7. In other words—it's an examination or searching that's diligent, industrious, thorough, hard-working, and detailed...
 8. Thus—our Savior means something more than merely reading the Bible—but examining or studying the Bible...
 9. In fact the NIV helpfully renders the verb—"You diligently study the Scriptures"—you painstakingly search Scripture...
 10. Now—if there was anything commendable about these Jews it was this—they spent all day studying the Scriptures...
 11. Obviously, they didn't study it rightly—they didn't study it with the eyes of faith—that behold the glory of God in Christ...
 12. But the Jews—the Scribes and Pharisees, literally spent all day memorizing, studying, and discoursing Scripture...
 13. Now—by "Scripture" is meant the OT inspired, infallible, revelation of God—given through the holy prophets...
 14. 2Tim.3:16—"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness..."
 15. Literally—"All Scripture is breathed out by God"—all Scripture is the result of God's Spirit in and through men...
 16. 2Pet.1:21—"Prophecy (Scripture) never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit..."
 17. Thus—it must be remembered—the problem here isn't with the word—the problem was a lack of faith in that word...
 18. They failed to believe what it said—it told them of Christ—but they refused to believe what it actually said...
 19. Thus—our Savior provides the final witness with regards to His true identity—the witness of His Father in OT Scripture...
 20. F.F Bruce—"The verb [rendered search] implies keen scrutiny, tracking down the message of the Scriptures. The tragedy was that these people, for all their painstaking exploration of the sacred writings, had never found the clue which would lead them to their goal. The goal at which they aimed was eternal life, but that life could be received only through him to whom the Scriptures bore witness..."
- II. The Jews Rejection of the Father's Testimony: Applied
- A. The OT Scriptures testify of Christ
1. Now—I am well-aware that almost every person present—is already thoroughly convinced of this point or truth...

2. Thus—my purpose here is largely to simply bend the nail back—and to review some categories I've taught before...
3. But before I do that—I want to take you back to 1994 and provide a brief testimony of my first aspirations of ministry...
4. Right after I became a Christian I was given a NIV Charles Ryrie Study Bible—and I read it straight through...
5. Lk.24:25-27—"Then He said to them, O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory? And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself..."
6. Lk.24:44—"Then He said to them, These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me..."
7. Thus—here I want to briefly suggest three ways in which the OT Scriptures bear witness (testify) of Christ...
8. [1] Generally—that is—everything in the OT teams up to point forward to Christ—everything anticipates His coming...
9. The entire OT storyline points to Christ—the story of redemption is not incidental (secondary) to the OT—but is central to the OT...
10. From the first promise of Christ, Gen.3:15, the rest of the OT is a single story of HOW God will fulfill that promise...
11. You see—the OT Scriptures testify of Christ—as the fulfilment of the Father's gracious promise in Genesis 3:15...
12. Why does God promise never to destroy the earth with water—because He needed it to send forth His Son...
13. Why did He preserve 8 people from destruction—because He needed a woman to bring forth the seed of the woman...
14. Why did He deliver the nation of Israel from Egyptian captivity—because Christ would come from that nation...
15. My friend—every single event, big or small, work together to bring to fulfillment the promise of God's Messiah...
16. [2] Prophetically—by this I mean—throughout OT Scripture—there are numerous promises of the coming Messiah...
17. Gen.3:15—"And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel..."
18. This is the very first promise of God, within the Holy Scriptures, of Christ—He would be born of a woman...
19. And thus—throughout the rest of OT Scripture—this promise is repeated and it's given in increased clarity...
20. 1Pet.1:10-11—"Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow..."
21. [3] Typically—that is—throughout OT Scripture we have pictures of Christ—these are events, people, and things...
22. For example, Noah's Ark, the Tabernacle/Temple, the sacrificial system, and the Levitical Priesthood—all testified of Christ...
23. Furthermore—people such as Moses, Joshua, David, Solomon, and the prophets—they too all typified Christ...
24. Jn.1:17—"For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ (Col.2:16-17; Heb.10:1)..."
25. George Hutcheson—"The scope of the scriptures, and particularly of the OT, is to point out and bear witness of Jesus Christ, of his person, nature, and offices, of his birth, life, death, sufferings, and the glory that should follow, and of the benefits that come through him..."

B. The OT Scriptures must be searched for Christ

1. Let me begin by reminding you—that the word "search" means more than to merely read—but to examine...
2. Furthermore—regardless if the phrase "search the Scriptures" is a statement (you search the Scriptures) or a command (search the Scriptures)—the point is the same...
3. Searching the Scriptures is something is commendable—it's a good thing—to Scriptures should be searched...
4. [1] Accurately—by this I mean—we must search for Christ accurately and not in a hyper allegorical manner...
5. Within church history there has been a form of bible interpretation—that has usually been called—allegory...
6. This view believes that within every Scripture there is a surface and a hidden meaning—a simple and deeper meaning...
7. Thus—the interpreter had to dig deeper than the surface and simple meaning—and find the hidden and deeper meaning...
8. But—brethren, obviously this is NOT what I am here advocating—we must not attempt to put Christ into the OT—but simply recognize Him where He already is...
9. Our Savior Himself tells us—the OT Scripture bore witness of Him—generally, prophetically, and typically...
10. [2] Diligently—that is—we must intentionally, carefully and thoroughly—examine and search the Scripture for Christ...
11. In other words—we are to go beyond merely breezing through our Bibles—to merely satisfy our conscience...
12. But—we must search the Scriptures—we must study the Scriptures—we must think deeply upon Holy Scripture...
13. Prov.2:4-5—"If you seek her as silver, and search for her as *for* hidden treasures; then you will understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God..."
14. [3] Lovingly—that is—we must search after Him because we love Him—and long to hear His voice and see His form...
15. Now—before I go further—let me remind you that it's rather mysterious how the living and written word relate...
16. Obviously—Christ isn't to be equated with the black and red letters printed on pages that are bound as a book...
17. But—because Scripture is God-breathed it can not be separated from God—God and His holy word are one...
18. Thus—how do Christians commune with Christ—how do they hear from Christ—but in and through His word...
19. Now—here I want to provide one simple and yet grand motive for every Christian to search the Scriptures to HEAR the voice and SEE the form of their Beloved...
20. Motive—we should seek to HEAR His voice and SEE His form in Scripture—because He rejoices to hear our voice and see our face through prayer and fellowship in His word...
21. Song.2:14—"O my dove, in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the cliff, let me see your face, let me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely..."
22. These are the words of the Groom to His Bride—He's expressing His desire to hear her voice and see her form...
23. Now—what does this mean—but Christ desires to have intimate, self-disclosing fellowship with His people...
24. We should seek to find Him, because there is a true sense in which He desires to hear and see us—His Bride...
25. And—how does Christ hear our voice and see our face—but by fellowship with Him through the word and prayer...

26. Perhaps I can put it like this—Christ desires that Christians seek Him because He loves them and desires to spend time with them...
27. My friends—have you ever thought in these terms—Christ, as our Groom, loves His Bride and longs to hear her voice and see her face...
28. Dear brethren—why should you and I, as Christ's people, search the Scriptures for our Savior, but He longs to fellowship with us...
29. I am not sure I'm even able to explain this point—how can I possibly explain the fact that Christ longs to meet with us...
30. Yes—we hear much about Christians love for Christ—but brethren, we must also hear about His love for us...

C. The OT Scriptures must be searched for Christ in whom is eternal life

1. By this I mean—there is eternal life found in Christ, and Christ is found throughout the whole of the OT Scripture...
2. Another way of saying this would be—NO person ever had eternal life—without believing in Jesus Christ...
3. No one loves the Father who rejects the Son—the Father and the Son are one—to receive one is to receive the other...
4. Now—let me clarify something that I've already said—we mustn't misunderstand what our Savior is saying...
5. He is not denying that the word of God contains life—but He is denying that life can be found outside of Him (Jn.5:24; 6:63)...
6. In other words—eternal life is found ONLY in Christ, and Christ is ONLY found within the Holy Scriptures...
7. Thus—I want to especially speak to you who have yet to find this eternal life—look in the Holy Scriptures...
8. But—my dear friends—look into the Holy Scriptures for Christ—for life that's eternal—is only found in Him...