

Series: John

Title: The Issue is Christ is God

Text: Jn 5: 17-30

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Subject: This Issue

Proposition: The issue fallen sinners have with Christ is that Christ is God, one with the Father—carnally religious men are especially angry at what that means.

When the Lord healed the impotent man, the Lord commanded him to take up his bed and walk here was the reaction of the Pharisees and scribes:

John 5: 10: The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry *thy* bed. 11: He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk. 12: Then asked they him, What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk? 13: And he that was healed wist not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in *that* place.

These Jews were the religious leaders—Pharisees and scribes. They did not have the love of God in their heart. Christ said that is why they sought to kill him. They had not the love of God in their heart. They had enmity against God in their heart.

Where the love of God is not in the heart, enmity reigns, and two things are prevalent:

One, the Pharisees set themselves up in Christ's seat, looking for sin in others. They perceived sin in this man when it was not sin. But they could not see the sin of legalism in themselves. Self-righteousness is so hard for a sinner to detect in himself because it is not the nature of a legal spirit to examine self but to examine others.

Two, they missed Christ and the great mercy shown in healing a man who had been impotent for 38 years. They saw what they thought was sin, they accused the man who was healed and they missed the mercy and love and power of Christ. They missed the man saying a miracle of grace had made him whole.

John 5: 11: He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk.

The man thought that if this One had power to make me whole then he has power to tell me I am free to take up my bed and walk on the sabbath day. Listen to their reply.

John 5: 12: Then asked they him, What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk?

They did not rejoice in the mercy shown this man. This was a man who laid impotent for 38 years. Yet, the only thing the Pharisee wanted to know is who is the man that usurped their authority and told this healed man to carry his bed on the sabbath day.

Now, contrast their heart, to the perfect, righteous love of Christ.

John 5: 14 Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple,

The man made whole went straight to the temple. That is where God's child will be found, giving thanks to God for mercy in Christ. And Christ came to him and found him in the temple. It is in God's house under the gospel that Christ comes to his child. Notice, the mercy and love of Christ contrasted with the Pharisee's

John 5: 14...and [the Master] said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.

The constraint Christ used was the gospel—"Behold, thou art made whole." Then Christ gave the exhortation, "sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee." The Pharisee's thought they saw the man sin and accused him. Christ knew the man's sin—all of his sin. But in love and mercy Christ used his love to constrain him to go and sin no more—"lest a worse thing come unto thee."

The sinner made whole by Christ has no heart to sin. The love of Christ constrains us. But we do. But whether we sin in thought or in deed, it is Christ renewing us in the knowledge of him and his grace toward us when we sin—it is offending him—that is the worst thing that comes upon us. It makes us behold the sins of our heart to be as bad as our sinful deeds. His love makes us behold our sinful deeds to be terrible. And Christ love makes us behold our pride in our best deeds to be worst of all. But its Christ renewing us in the knowledge and grace of Christ that makes us abhor all our sin.

It is being renewed in the love of God in Christ whose blood made us every whit whole that mortifies our sinful flesh. It is being renewed in the knowledge of God loving us freely by his electing grace in Christ that the Spirit uses to subdue our old man and renew our new man. It is being renewed in the knowledge of Christ sending his Son who laid down his life for us when we were nothing but ungodly, haters of God that makes us behold our offense. It is the very goodness of God's mercy in Christ toward us that leads us to repentance. Law did not lead us to repentance. It was the mercy, love and grace of God in Christ who lead us to repent.

So after Christ found the man in the temple.

John 5: 15: The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus, which had made him whole.

This was not malicious. This man knew Christ. He had experienced Christ's Power and Authority as God. So he was not ashamed to confess Christ to the religious leaders. He wanted them to know Christ.

Yet, hearing it was that same Jesus who had before turned over their profit-making tables in the temple and who was now usurping their authority by giving sinners liberty:

John 5: 16: And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day. 17: But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.

Christ declares to them he is God—one with God the Father. He declares that God the Father and his Son Christ Jesus accomplished the works of salvation to give his people rest through faith in Christ. God gave the sabbath day to man to rest. God gave him a day to trust God to provide all he needed. That day was to typify a believer resting in Christ by faith. The law of the day was a shadow. Christ is the substance. Believing God the Father and God the Son

have finished all the works of providing us eternal life by his righteousness the believer enters rest in Christ.

The whole point of Hebrews was to teach Jewish believers to turn from the law and rest in Christ alone. Hebrews 4 is saying Israel entered not into Canaan because of unbelief. Therefore, do not make the mistake they made. Enter Christ's rest by faith. He that believeth on Christ "has entered into the rest of Christ our Sabbath by faith, he has ceased from his own works, as God did from his."

But because the Pharisee's hearts were enmity against God and focused on the sins of others, they missed Christ entirely. Yet, they understood clearly that Christ declared he is God, equal with God the Father.

John 5: 18: Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.

This threatened *their* authority and their works and *they would not have Christ reign over them*. Christ declared he is God—the Lawgiver, the fulfiller of the Law, the Healer of his people, the only one who gives his people rest—the true Sabbath. This threatened their rule, their position, their high opinion of themselves and counted their law-keeping as nothing but sin. They understood him to say the very thing Arians in our day deny—that Christ is God. In John 10 Christ refers back to this day in our text when he told them he is the Christ and they believe not.

John 10: 22: And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter. 23: And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch. 24: Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. 25: Jesus answered them, I TOLD YOU and YE BELIEVED NOT: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. 26: But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.

Then Christ declares to them what he is able to make his elect do since he is God.

John 10: 27: My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 28: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any *man* pluck them out of my hand. 29: My Father, which gave *them* me, is greater than all; and no *man* is able to pluck *them* out of my Father's hand. 30: I and *my* Father are one.

Christ is God, the Lord of his people, with all power over them who is able to speak life and heal them, able to teach, correct, turn, keep and never lose one. The impotent man had experienced Christ's power so he was not ashamed to confess Christ before men. If the Pharisee believed Christ is God the Lord and Master of his sheep then they would have rejoiced in Christ's mercy and believed him. But they sought to kill Christ instead.

John 10: 31: Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him. 32: Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me? 33: The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.

The Pharisee is not opposed to good works, especially when they get to enforce them. But the legalist is in the fault-finding business as if they are the judge. Therefore, they said, "*for a*

good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.” When they judged this of Christ they condemned themselves because it is what they were doing! They being men were trying to put themselves in the judgment seat as if they were God.

John 5: 18: Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.

Be sure to get this. The issue with the carnal mind is not good works. He will be religious and do many works. The issue is enmity against God. The carnal mind will not and cannot submit to Christ as God, as Lord, as Master, as one with the Father. It is because the carnal man will not step down out of Christ’s judgment seat and take his place in the dust as a vile, helpless sinner. For then he would have to stop examining others and yoking and binding others as if he is the judge. Christ is saying to them what he said through the apostle Paul,

Romans 14: 4: Who art thou that judgest another man’s servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand...8 For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord’s. 9: For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living. 10: But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. 11 For it is written, *As I live*, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God [to Christ who is God] 12: So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

Look back at John 5. Is that not what Christ declared to them?

John 5: 19: Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise

God the Father and God the Son are one—what one does the other does.

John 5: 20: For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel. 21: For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth *them*; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. 22: For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: 23: That all *men* should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.

As God the Father is judge, so Christ the Son is judge. What one does they both do because they are one.

John 5: 24: Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

That is the judgment of Christ who bore the sins of his people, gave us faith and keeps us until the day that he declares before all—we are righteous in and by him.

John 5: 25: Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. 26: For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; 27: And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. 28: Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all [believers and unbelievers] that are in the graves shall hear his voice, 29: And shall come forth; they that have done good [resting in Christ alone by faith], unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil [rejecting Christ for their work], unto the resurrection of damnation.

The issue is not convincing a man Christ is the Sabbath—though he certainly is. The issue is the Spirit of God must convince him that Christ is God. With his Father, Christ worked all the works whereby he settled his own judgment, honored his own law and made his people the righteousness of God. He as God speaks life and faith into his child. Christ as God is our Master and Keeper. He shows us mercy and keeps us walking by faith all our days by his power and love because Christ has settled our judgment one time on the cross.

We must bow to our Master to make our brethren stand. We must believe Christ alone is able. Therefore, we use the gospel to help one another rather than accusing and judging one another.

Until Christ arises to judge his child in mercy and settle this in his heart, the carnal man hates God. He thinks he is morally superior over others, even Christ. He will not confess he is vile and in need of another to save him. But those who are his, Christ shall dethrone in grace and keep us at his throne of grace all our days. The rest Christ shall dethrone when every knee is made to bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is LORD, to the glory God the Father.

Amen!