

The Gospel of John

Five Witnesses of Christ's Deity

John 5:32-47

The healing of the lame man on the Sabbath brought the wrath of the Jewish leaders on Christ. Christ began His defense by reminding them that His actions were the will of the Father, the Lord of the Sabbath. He also claimed equality to God (vs. 17-18). He closes by appealing to five witnesses of His deity and authority.

The Setting

- After the healing of the lame man by the pool of Bethesda – vs. 8-9
- The Jews came to Christ to accuse Him of breaking the Sabbath – vs. 16
- He was working the will of the Father – vs. 17
- In doing so, He claimed equality to God – vs. 18
- He explained the relationship of the Father and the Son – vs. 19-30
- He now gives five witnesses to His Deity – vs. 31
 - In every judicial system, one's own testimony is inadequate by itself.
 - The Jews required two or three witnesses – Deuteronomy 19:15

The Story

- Christ appeals to another witness that He will now produce – vs. 32
 - This is either referring to John or the Father.
- THE FIRST WITNESS – John the Baptist – vs. 33
 - A good witness, but human nonetheless – vs. 34
 - They did accept his role and witness for a time – vs. 35
- THE SECOND WITNESS – the works and miracles of Christ – vs. 36
 - These divine displays of power proved Christ was God – Acts 2:22
- THE THIRD WITNESS – The Father – vs. 37
 - Christ ties the rejection of Himself to the rejection of the Father – vs. 37-38
- THE FOURTH WITNESS – the Scriptures – vs. 39
- The rejection of these witnesses seen in:
 - Not coming to Christ for salvation – vs. 40
 - Not honoring Christ – vs. 41
 - Not having the love of God in them – vs. 42
 - Not recognizing the Father's authority – vs. 43
 - Not seeking the approval of God – vs. 44

- THE FIFTH WITNESS – Moses and the Law – vs. 45
 - Unlike Christ's accusers in vs. 37, Moses had heard God's voice and seen God's form – Exodus 3:1-22, 33:17-23
 - The Law "accused" (pointed out faults) them – vs. 45
 - Moses and Christ are not in opposition to each other – vs. 46
 - Moses prophesied of Christ in His writings – vs. 46
 - A few examples:
 - Genesis 3:15 – Seed of Woman, Suffering Savior
 - Genesis 18:18 – Descendent of Abraham
 - Genesis 49:10 – Shiloh
 - Numbers 24:17 – King
 - Deuteronomy 18:18 – Prophet
 - Off the types and shadows of the Law point to Christ.

The hardness of the hearts of the Jewish leaders refused to reconcile the testimony of these five witnesses. They would not repent of their pride and humbly accept Christ as their Messiah.