JESUS’ AMAZING CLAIM, PART 3

OK, today we’re going to finish John Chapter 5. Next week we will be in John Chapter 6 looking at the 4th of Jesus’ eight miracles recorded by John – the feeding of the 5,000.

In the last 30 verses of John Chapter 5 Jesus responds to the Pharisees. He makes the most amazing claim! Jesus reiterates a point He had made previously – that He is equal with God. In essence what Jesus is claiming is that He IS God. Of course the Jewish religious leaders, “the Jews” didn’t believe Him. They considered Jesus to be a blasphemer and a liar. And we know as early as John 5:18 that these Jews wanted to kill Jesus.

Jesus response to them is, in essence, this: “You heard John the Baptist, your own prophet, who you acknowledged was from God, and yet you didn’t believe his testimony concerning Me. Not only that, but you have been witnesses of the many signs that I have been doing. But you refuse to believe that I was sent from God.” The Jews certainly couldn’t deny Jesus’ miracles, could they? But we know from our study of Matthew that they attributed Jesus’ miracles to the power of Satan (Matt 12:24). And if all that wasn’t enough to convince them of who He was, Jesus goes on to say, “You search the Scriptures, which are all about Me, and still, do not believe Me.”

READ John 5:37-40

Here Jesus wraps up His argument that it is God the Father Himself who bears witness about Jesus. That’s what v 37 says. “And the Father who sent Me [here’s Jesus’ claim again that He was sent by God] has Himself borne witness about Me.” Jesus goes on to say that they hadn’t actually heard the audible voice of God. That’s true. Whenever God’s voice spoke from heaven and said “You are My beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased…” the religious leaders weren’t there. And Jesus says, you have not seen His physical form. Of course Jesus is speaking about God the Father Whom they had never seen with their physical eyes. But God revealed Himself through His holy word. They had His word, right? And what was His word? The O.T. scriptures. Notice how Jesus moves from the lesser to the greater as he presents to them the witness of His Father – thru John the Baptist, he bore witness for a time; then thru the miracles of Jesus, for 3 ½ years; and finally thru the abiding, eternal word of God, the scriptures. V 38-39, Jesus tells the Jews that they may have the word, “You search the scriptures” but you guys don’t really believe it or understand it. “You don’t have His word abiding in you.” If they had, then they would have recognized who Jesus was and believed Him. And why is that? V 39, Because “it is they (the Scriptures) that bear witness about Me.”

Nine times the Gospel writers record Jesus saying, “Have you not read?” And then He quotes the O.T. to reinforce His point. Jesus knew the Scriptures and He based His arguments from them. They spoke about the Sabbath, about divorce, about the Messiah, about the resurrection.

Rich man and Lazarus, Luke 16:29 “They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.”

Jesus is talking to some disciples on the road to Emmaus, Luke 24. In v 27 says, “And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, He interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.”

Jesus appears to His disciples Luke 24:44 “These are My words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.

Paul’s sermon in Acts 13 in the synagogue of Pisidian Antioch is all about how Jesus fulfilled the O.T. Messianic prophecies.

So, clearly the O.T. scriptures bore witness about Jesus. Let me just skip a stone across the top of the water…

Genesis – God creates a perfect world, man sins, brings curse on mankind and on the rest of creation (for man there is both spiritual death, Gen 2:17 and physical death, Gen 3:19, Gen 5). But right after all that happened in the garden, God promises that the seed (offspring) of Eve, human being, will eventually come along and defeat the serpent (Satan). God brings a message of hope that all is not lost. God preserves the lineage of this promised one thru Noah. Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. God destroys the world except for Noah and seven other family members. Then thru Noah’s line comes Abraham. Gen 12:2 God promises to make Abraham a great nation. Because of Abraham’s obedience, Gen 22:18 God promises to bless the nations thru him. The promised one will come thru Abraham and his descendants. To some degree Joseph did that, God used him to bless the nations, but he was not the promised one. In fact the promised one will actually come thru Judah’s line (Jacob’s blessing of his sons), Gen 49:10.

Exodus God raises up a great leader and a prophet named Moses. God uses him to deliver His people out of Egyptian bondage. God gives the Law to Moses, institutes the Passover. It’s a Passover lamb that pictures the innocent dying in the place of the guilty. In the opening chapter of Leviticus, you have all these sacrifices for sin that are substitutionary in nature. But they have to be repeated and repeated and repeated and repeated because none of them is ever enough. But they’re pointing to one – the Lamb of God – who will be. In Lev 18:18-19 God reveals that the promised one will be a prophet and a leader like Moses.

Fast forward several hundred years to David. David is described as a man after God’s own heart. He has a lot of godly attributes, but David falls, he sins, so he’s not the promised one. Thru Nathan the prophet David learns that it will be thru his line that the promised one will come and He will establish an eternal kingdom, 1 Chron 17:12-13. David and the other psalmists reveal much more to us about this coming promised one from God, the Messiah, the holy one. In Ps 2 we learn there will be enmity between the Messiah and the rulers of the earth. Ps 22 speaks of the death of the Messiah, the crucifixion, but Ps 16 talks about the resurrection – “your holy one will not see corruption.” Ps 40 addresses the insufficiency of the O.T. sacrifices for the forgiveness of sins. Ps 45 tells about the godliness of the Messiah. Ps 72 speaks of the Messiah as king, his sufferings, his death, his resurrection and the last judgment. Ps 110 mentions the Messiah as a holy king and a royal priest.

The prophet Isaiah gives us great insight as to what the Messiah will look like, who he will be. He also tells us that the people he comes to will lack understanding and will not be receptive to his message. In Isa 7:14 we find out he will be born of a virgin. In Isa 8:10 the Messiah is described as God with us. In Isa 11:1 we learn how the Holy Spirit will come upon him. In Isa 35 we see the Messiah as a healer. In Isa 42 the Messiah will be patient and show compassion to human weaknesses. In Isa 49 he will bring salvation to Israel and to the world. In Isa 52-53 Isaiah presents a vivid description of a suffering Messiah who is crushed for our iniquities, dies bearing the sins of many.

The writings of the O.T., the psalms, the prophets and Moses are filled with Messianic references. Micah tells us the Messiah will be born in Bethlehem. Many of the prophets speak about the Messiah’s earthly kingdom and about how he will bring salvation. They tell us that the Messiah will be God and yet Jesus’ favorite term for Himself comes from the prophets Daniel and Ezekiel, “Son of Man.” Jesus, though never mentioned explicitly by the name “Jesus” clearly is the bodily fulfillment of many O.T. prophecies. Yes, there are some O.T. prophecies concerning the Messiah that have not happened yet. They are still future. These will be fulfilled at His second coming. Read Revelation. One last note: the name Jesus, in the Hebrew, “Yeshua,” means “salvation.” And why is it that Jesus came? Jesus gives us His mission statement in Luke 19:10: “For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.” He came to bring salvation. John 3:16.

So if the Jews had been true believers of God, seekers of the truth, then they would have seen that Jesus Christ was the Son and believed. They had the testimony of John the Baptist about who Jesus was. They witnessed Jesus’ miracles which bore evidence that He was who God said He was. And they had the Scriptures which prophesied about the coming Messiah, the Savior. But they did not believe. READ John 5:40.

So, why were they unwilling to come and have life? Jesus gave us the answer already back in John Chapter 3. READ John 3:18-20. Why? Because they love their sin. Men love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil. That goes for the religious as well as the non-religious.

READ John 5:41-44

Jesus did not come to receive glory from people but sought to please the Father and ultimately to receive glory from Him. The Jewish religious leaders by contrast sought to be noticed, praised and honored by the people. They really didn’t seek to please God.

READ John 5:45-47

At the final judgment Jesus will be the Judge. Moses, this great prophet that they revere so highly (later in John chapter 9 the Jews will describe themselves as “disciples of Moses”) will be the prosecuting attorney. Jesus says to them, “The one on whom you set your hope will, in the end, condemn you.”

Jesus didn’t exactly make friends with the Pharisees did He? But Jesus didn’t come to be their friend, but to be their savior. In closing, the application, the take away from John Chapter 5 is that Jesus must be who He claimed to be. He is the Messiah, the Son of God, the Savior of the world, the Redeemer, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

This room is filled with brothers and sisters in Christ who believe that. I believe if it came down to it that everyone here would willingly give their lives for this truth. But most people in the world out there either don’t know who Jesus is or they reject Him. We need to be filled with the scriptures, to have His word abiding in us. So that we will always be prepared to make a defense of the gospel and to explain to lost people how they can be saved. Sing “Redeemed,” Fanny Crosby, 1882. Let this be your personal testimony.