

THE AUTHORITY OF THE SON

John 5:19-29
Key Verse: 5:24

Lesson #13

"I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life."

In this section Jesus answered the Jews who persecuted him for healing a crippled man on the Sabbath. In his answer, he explained to them about his work. Jesus did not work on his own. He only did what he saw God doing. He did not do kind deeds or good works because they were good. He did not work because of his talent or ability or interest. He worked because God was working. He told them that his Father God is always working, and he, the Son is working too. He was saying that his work is God's work. They understood that he was claiming equality with God and they were furious. Jesus really wanted these Jewish leaders to have God's life in them. He did not want them to be condemned and be cut off from God forever. So Jesus explained to them about the life-giving work of God and warned them about the final judgment. He told them that they must not judge the Son--they must listen to him and have life.

Jesus does God's work. How does he know what God is doing? God loves him and shows him all that he is doing. This is one of God's best ways of showing his love. (Ge 18:17; Jn 15:15) God the Father loves Jesus. Jesus always seeks to please God. We can know what God is doing and we can share in his work if we love God and seek to do what pleases him. If we only try to do what we like to do and only try to please ourselves, we can never know what God is doing.

Jesus gives life. Healing the Paralytic was a great work. Jesus gave new life to a man who had been lying there like a dead man, burdening everyone, for thirty-eight years. But God would do greater works. By his resurrection power he would raise Jesus from the dead. God the Creator is the source of life. Jesus also gives life like his Father. Jesus gives spiritual life to sinners who are dead in their sins. He gave life to me. Jesus' life is life that will change sinful men into new and godly men (21,24).

God also gives Jesus the full right to judge. These Jews were judging Jesus using their own interpretation of the law as a standard. However, this is ironic, because they were not really judging Jesus--they were judging

themselves. When they rejected Jesus' words they brought judgment on themselves.

Someday, Jesus, the Son of Man will come again. His word gives life. The dead will hear his voice and live. The first time he came, he came as a Savior and Shepherd. The second time he will come as the Judge. He will speak and the dead will come out of the graves to join all the living. He will separate the sheep from the goats (Mt 25). Those who have done good--who are clothed in God's righteousness--will rise to live, while those who have done evil--who depend only on their own righteousness--will rise to be condemned. They will live forever in hell. Physical death and heaven seem far away from young men and women. But death is a reality. And judgment is a reality. Heaven and hell are real. Jesus promised, "I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life." In John 3:17-18 Jesus said, "For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son."