



Sunday, March 19, 2023: "Doing the Father's Work" Commentary  
(The UGP Curriculum)

## Sunday, March 19, 2023

**Lesson Text:** John 5:19-29; **Time of Action:** 28 A.D.; **Place of Action:** Jerusalem

**Golden Text:** "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" (John 5:24).

**I. INTRODUCTION.** The deity of Jesus Christ is the foundational doctrine of our Christian faith. The Apostle John's purpose in His Gospel was to reveal Jesus Christ as the Son of God (see John 20:30-31). This week's lesson reinforces the deity of Jesus by revealing aspects of His unique relationship with the Father. Jesus had just healed a person on the Sabbath Day. By doing this He claimed to be doing God's work. Our lesson picks up Jesus' discussion where He gave proofs of His deity.

**II. THE LESSON BACKGROUND.** Those who have carefully studied the chronology of Jesus' life tell us that John chapter 5 recounts the events near the beginning of His second year of public ministry. At the time of our lesson, we find Jesus visiting Jerusalem to attend a feast that is not



identified (see John 5:1). He faced antagonism there after He miraculously healed the man beside the pool of Bethesda who had been crippled with an infirmity for thirty-eight years (see John 5:5). Once the man told the Jewish leaders who had healed him (see John 5:10-15), they determined to kill Jesus, primarily because He had done this healing work on the Sabbath (see John 5:16). When the Jewish leaders confronted Jesus, He told them that He was simply carrying on the work that His Father had been doing (see John 5:17). That angered them even more because they understood His words to mean that He had made Himself equal to God, so they sought to kill Him (see John 5:18). This is where our lesson begins.

### III. THE FATHER AND THE SON (John 5:19-23)

#### **A. Their relationship (John 5:19-20).**

**1. (vs. 19).** Our first verse says **"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."** Here Jesus gave the Jews further reason to think that He was claiming to be equal to God by basing His authority to heal on the Sabbath on His relationship with God. He said to the Jewish leaders **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do."** The LORD was saying that He, **"the Son"** can't do anything by Himself;



He does only what He sees His **"Father"** doing. This does not mean that Jesus didn't have the ability to do any work. It emphasizes the complete unity of purpose and action of the Trinity. Because of the relationship between **"the Son"** and the **"Father"** it was not possible for Jesus to do any work on His own (see John 14:10). Jesus is obedient to His **"Father"** and He only does the works of His **"Father"** who sent Him. Therefore He added **"for what things soever he (the Father) doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise."** In other words, the **"Son"** does the same things that **"the Father"** does. He does not act independently from or contrary to the **"Father."** We must remember that **"Father," "Son,"** and Holy Spirit are not three Gods but one God existing in three Persons (see I John 5:7). The point Jesus was making to the Jewish leaders who were opposing Him because He healed a sick man at the Pool of Bethesda on the Sabbath Day (see John 5:16) was that He was in perfect harmony with **"the Father"** when He healed the man on the Sabbath Day. This was further proof of Jesus' words that *"the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath"* (see Mark 2:28).

2. (vs. 20). This verse says **"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."** In addition to His claim that He did the same things that **"the Father"** did, here Jesus added **"For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth."** Jesus declared that since **"the Father loved"** Jesus who was **"the Son,"** He **"sheweth"** or revealed to Jesus everything that He was doing. In addition



to that, Jesus said **"and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel."** Because of their relationship based on love, Jesus knew that He was going to do even **"greater"** things in the future as God directed Him. This most likely means that the healing of the sick man was nothing compared to what Jesus was yet to do. For example, Jesus would later raise Lazarus from the dead (see John chapter 11).

**B. Their ability to give life (John 5:21).** This verse says **"For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will."** Since the Jews were acquainted with the Old Testament Scriptures, when Jesus said **"For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them"** they had no problem hearing that God can give life (see I Kings 17:8-24; II Kings chapter 4:18-25, 32-37). But they did have a problem when they heard Jesus say, **"even so the Son quickeneth whom he will."** The word **"quickeneth"** means *"to make alive"* or *"to give life."* The Jewish leaders understood from this statement that Jesus was claiming that in the same way that **"the Father"** gives life, **"the Son"** also gives life to those He wants to. Once again, Jesus was claiming to have equality with God. The giving of life is the prerogative of God alone. Therefore, if **"the Father"** and **"the Son"** both give life, then both **"the Father"** and **"the Son"** are God. What is especially precious to us is the fact that Jesus gives spiritual life as well as physical life. It is only through Him that we can have eternal life and be assured of heaven (see John 10:28).



## C. Their handling of judgment (John 5:22-23).

1. (vs. 22). This verse says **"For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son."** Jesus also claimed that **"the Father"** had given to Him the authority to **"judge"** all things. He went so far as to say here **"For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son."** This too is something greater than the healing of the man by the pool, and it also emphasizes the equality of **"the Father"** and **"the Son."** The fact that the **"Father judgeth no man"** does not mean that **"the Father"** has resigned as the Righteous Judge, but that He is pleased to govern and judge by Jesus Christ, His **"Son."** Jesus said that **"the Father... hath committed all judgment unto the Son"** which means that God had given Jesus the authority to **"judge"** the world. The psalmist confirmed that God has given Jesus the authority to **"judge"** mankind when he said *"Before the LORD; for he cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity"* (see Psalms 98:9). The Apostle Paul also confirmed this in his sermon on Mars Hill when he said, *"Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead"* (see Acts 17:31). This important transfer of authority to deliver **"judgment"** from **"the Father"** to **"the Son"** is also described in the book of Daniel where Daniel said *"I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And*



*there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed"* (see Daniel 7:13-14). **Note:** *Like "the Father," Jesus, "the Son" is the righteous judge who will one day judge the world. Just or right "judgment" requires the judge to know all the facts and the intent of the heart of the person who is being judged. Jesus is omniscient (all-knowing); He knows the motives of everyone's heart. He is just, fair and impartial. Jesus will fairly judge everyone (see I Corinthians 3:13-15; II Timothy 4:8). Believers of all times will be judged at the Judgment seat of Christ (see II Corinthians 5:10) and unbelievers of all times will be judged at the Great White Throne (see Revelation 20:10-12) with Jesus as the Judge.*

2. (vs. 23). This verse says **"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."** Here Jesus gives the reason **"the Father"** has committed all judgment to Him. He said it was so **"That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father."** This means that part of God's great design is for Jesus Christ to receive the same **"honor"** that men give to **"the Father."** It was the intention of **"the Son"** to **"honour"** and glorify **"the Father,"** and therefore **"the Father"** intended to **"honor"** and glorify **"the Son"** (see John 13:31-32; 17:1). If God will have **"the Son"** receive **"honour"** it is the duty of everyone to whom **"the Son"** is made known to **"honour"** Him. This also speaks of equality





between **"the Father"** and **"the Son."** It is so important that people recognize Jesus' equality with His **"Father"** and His authority to judge that in the last part of this verse Jesus said **"He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him."** Simply put, if a person does not **"honor"** Jesus, he or she does not **"honor"** God either.

The reason for this is because **"the Son"** is **"sent"** and commissioned by **"the Father."** It's true that any insults made to an ambassador are justly resented by the leader who sends him or her as their representative. The Apostle Paul wrote in Philippians 2:9-11 that one day every knee will bow and acknowledge the supremacy of Jesus Christ. But that will only happen after this life. How much better is it to acknowledge Him now! **Note: *Unfortunately, some people pretend to have reverence for the Creator, and speak honorably of Him, but make light of the Redeemer, and speak contemptibly of Him. But they should know that the honours and interests of "the Father" and "the Son" are so inseparably tied together that "the Father" never considers Himself honoured by anyone who dishonors "the Son." Any contempt directed to the LORD Jesus reflects upon God Himself, and will be reckoned with in the court of heaven.***

#### IV. THE PEOPLE AND THE SON (John 5:24-29)

##### **A. The importance of belief (John 5:24-25).**

1. (vs. 24). This verse says **"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.**" Here is the rule by which the Son uses in executing His commission. Jesus began by saying "**Verily, verily, I say unto you.**" The actual Greek words used here are "*amen, amen*" which are sometimes translated as "**Verily, verily.**" The intent of these words is to emphasize the certainty of the statement that follows them. We might say "*truly, truly.*" It could also mean "*what I'm about to say can be taken with complete assurance that it is the truth.*" Therefore, whenever we read those words we should pay special attention to what Jesus says next. What the LORD said next was "**He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation.**" The truth Jesus stated is that anyone who "**hears His words**" and "**believes in the God**" who "**sent Him**" will be guaranteed eternal "**life,**" which will result in escaping m "**condemnation**" or judgment. Usually, in the Bible the wording of the truth of salvation emphasizes believing in Jesus Christ rather than in the Father. But since Jesus had been referring to His unity with the Father, it is understandable that He would say that anyone who believes in the Father "**hath everlasting life.**" The Father and the Son are so completely unified that to genuinely believe in one is to believe in the other. For the person who believes in the One who sent Jesus, instead of experiencing "**condemnation**" or judgment, Jesus said they have "**passed from death unto life.**" This phrase becomes even more important when we understand that in the Greek text, the perfect tense is used. That means that a completed act took





place sometime in the past but has continuing results. When we believed in Jesus Christ as our personal Saviour, we **"passed from death unto life"** and continue to have that **"life."** The Apostle Paul wrote *"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned"* (see Romans 5:12). Therefore, before salvation, we are spiritually dead. Paul also wrote that *"the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our LORD"* (see Romans 6:23). When we believe in Jesus Christ, we become spiritually alive. At the moment we believe, we leave the realm of death and enter the realm of **"life."** Jesus said that this spiritual **"life"** was **"everlasting (or eternal) life."**

**2. (vs. 25).** This verse says **"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."** Once again Jesus uttered a truth that can be trusted with the words **"Verily, verily."** The truth that can be trusted is **"The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God."** In other words, Jesus was saying that there is a time—in fact, it had already begun—when those who are spiritually **"dead"** will **"hear His voice"** meaning they will obey **"the voice of the Son of God,"** and when **"they hear"** they **"shall live."** They will experience eternal life. This is the meaning we get from the little phrase **"and now is."** The context here refers to Jesus' ability to give life not the future resurrection that will lead to judgment for many. It is true that in a future time those who are physically **"dead"** will hear Jesus' **"voice"** and come alive again (see Revelation 20:12-15). But in the



present, those who are spiritually **"dead"** can **"hear"** the gospel of salvation and receive eternal life.

## **B. Authority for judgment (John 5:26-27).**

1. (vs. 26). This verse says, **"For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself."** As humans, we don't have **"life"** in ourselves; we receive **"life"** from our heavenly **"Father."** He does not depend on any other source of **"life,"** therefore, Jesus said **"For as the Father hath life in himself."** He is **"life"** and the source and Creator of all **"life."** Jesus also said that just as the Father has **"life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself."** In other words, God had given Jesus the same **"life"** that He had in **"Himself."** Like **"the Father,"** Jesus has **"life in himself"** and does not depend on any other source for **"life."** This explains verse 21. Jesus can give **"life"** because like His Father, He is the source of **"life."** **Note: It seems reasonable to believe that John's reason for recording this conversation of Jesus was to make sure that his readers understood not only that Jesus possesses "life in Himself," but also that He has the power to give "life" to others. John 1:4 says "In him was life; and the life was the light of men." It is the spiritual "life" that we receive from Jesus that gives us spiritual light, that is, understanding of God and His ways. Without Jesus we could never receive such insight and we would be eternally lost and separated from God.**

2. (vs. 27). This verse says, **"And hath given him**



**authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.**" Not only did the Father give life to Jesus, He **"hath given him authority to execute (or render) judgment also."** God did this because Jesus **"is the Son of man"** a title that comes directly from the prophecy of Daniel (see Daniel 7:13-14). There, Jesus is called **"the Son of man"** and described as receiving an everlasting dominion over all of creation. This title emphasizes Jesus' human nature and is the one He used most often when referring to Himself (see Matthew 9:6; 12:8, 32, 40; Mark 2:10; 8:31; 9:9; 10:33, 45; Luke 9:26, 58; 12:8, 40). It is especially meaningful to know that the **"judgment"** Jesus will **"execute"** or render will be done by One who has a nature like ours.

### **C. Power for resurrection (John 5:28-29).**

1. (vs. 28). This verse says **"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice."** Now Jesus spoke of a future event as opposed to what He seemed to refer to as something present in the phrase *"and now is"* (see verse 25). Jesus said to the Jews **"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice."** There is a physical resurrection **"coming"** that will involve every person who has ever lived. So Jesus told His listeners not to be amazed or surprised that a time **"is coming"** when all people who are dead and **"in their graves will hear His voice."** This statement refutes any teaching that death ends everything and that there is nothing beyond this life. Everyone who has died will be brought back to life



at the appropriate time. Christians will be resurrected at the rapture (see I Thessalonians 4:13-18) and those who are not saved will be resurrected after the thousand year (the millennium) reign of Jesus on earth (see Revelation 19:11-16; 20:11-15).

**2. (vs. 29).** Our final verse says **"And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."** This verse is a continuation of verse 28 where Jesus said *"for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice."* He continued His statement here declaring that those who are in their graves (both saved and lost) **"shall come forth"** out of their graves. Then Jesus adds that there will be two **"resurrections."** The first one will involve **"they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life."** This first **"resurrection"** involves believers, those who have a right relationship with God through faith in His Son, Jesus. The fact that they are said to **"have done good"** does not refer to their deeds or works, but to their choice to believe in Jesus and trusted Him for salvation. This is the only real **"good"** anyone can do because goodness and **"good"** works do not earn a place in heaven. Those of us who take part in the first **"resurrection"** will be raised to eternal fellowship with and glorification of the LORD. The second resurrection involves **"they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."** This resurrection involves unbelievers, those who have not received Jesus Christ as Saviour. They **"have done evil"** does not refer to the deeds or works they have done, but to the choice they made not to believe in Jesus and



trust Him for salvation. One “**resurrection**” leads to heaven while the other proceeds to a place of “**damnation.**” The word translated “**damnation**” is the Greek word “*krisis*” which refers to a tribunal at which justice according to divine law will be rendered. This “**damnation**” refers to a state of eternal punishment in the “**lake of fire and brimstone**” with Satan and all that’s evil (see Revelation 20:10, 14-15). But worse of all, they will be separated from God throughout eternity. **Note:** *At first glance, this verse appears to indicate that works or deeds are the criterion for determining a person’s eternal destiny. However, this is not the case. We are saved or lost based on our relationship with Jesus Christ not by our works (see Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5). It is true that believers will be judged at the Judgment Seat of Christ to determine whether or not they will receive rewards for their works, but that has nothing to do with their salvation. What saves us is our belief and trust in Jesus Christ as our Saviour. Then because of our love for Him we practice good deeds for which we will either receive rewards or lose them (see I Corinthians 3:12-17).*

**V. Conclusion.** In this week’s lesson text, Jesus revealed His relationship to God the Father. He shares the Father’s unique characteristics, making Him coequal to and in perfect agreement with the Father. The Father has committed the judgment of all to the Son, before whom we all shall stand to give account.



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**\*\*\*The Sunday School Lesson, Union Gospel Press  
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