

John 5: 1-30

Introduction

I. The miracles of Jesus are “signs” (= miracles with a message) that point to who Jesus is and what he came to do

The Passage

I. The miracle itself (v. 1-15)

- A. Jesus raises the man to health/life simply with his voice (v. 8)
- B. Jesus warns the man about the possibility of eternal judgment (v. 14)
- C. The Jewish authorities are concerned that he healed on the Sabbath

1. What constitutes work on the Sabbath?

The authorities came up with a long list of actions people could not do on the Sabbath so that they could be certain to keep the Sabbath

2. Does God work on the Sabbath?

Most rabbis agreed that God continues to work on the Sabbath as evidenced by the fact that babies are born and people die (so God continues his work of giving life and executing judgment)

II. Jesus defends his actions on the Sabbath (v. 16-18)

- A. Since his Father works on the Sabbath, he is free to work on the Sabbath as well. Their Sabbath rules don't apply to God or to him.
- B. This infuriates the authorities, as it is an implicit claim to equality with God

III. Jesus defends his implicit claim to be equal with God (v. 19-30)

A. He says there is no equality: Jesus is totally dependent on the father, can do nothing without the father, and only does what he sees the father doing

- 1. He uses language that evokes the apprenticeship relationship between father and son in first century Israel (a child learning his father's trade)
- 2. Jesus was the most dependent person who ever lived

B. And yet there is an equality: Because Jesus is perfectly obedient, the Father has entrusted all of His authority to the Son (analogy: a perfectly faithful right-hand man)

- 1. He has the Father's authority to give life (v. 21, 26)
- 2. He has the Father's authority to execute judgment (v. 22, 27)
- 3. The purpose of this is so that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father (v. 23)
- 4. There will come a time when every human hears the voice of the Son and rises and will be judged by the Son—every single person's eternal destiny is in the hands of the Son! (v. 24-25, 28-29)

IV. This miracle was a “sign” of the truth of Jesus' explanation

- A. A sign of his ability to raise up and give life (v. 8)
- B. A sign of his authority to execute judgment (v. 14)

Implications for Us Today

- I. Jesus claims to be the exclusive Lord of the universe
 - A. To the non-Christian: Jesus makes audacious claims that require us either to accept or reject him as Lord of the universe. That he is simply a good, moral teacher is not an option he gives us.
 - B. To the Christian: we can humbly but confidently affirm the exclusive Lordship of Jesus in a pluralistic society without feeling arrogant. These are not our claims for him; they are his claims for himself.

- II. Jesus is a perfect reflection of who God is
 - A. Jesus' heart is exactly like God's, and God's heart is exactly like Jesus'

Our view of God must be shaped by the picture of Jesus given to us in NT
 - B. Does your view of "God" match your view of Jesus?
 1. Many people see the God of the OT as a God of wrath, justice, judgment, and rules, while seeing Jesus as a man of grace, mercy, forgiveness, and freedom
 2. But, while God works differently in Old and New Covenants, there's a great consistency in the personality/heart of God revealed in the Old Testament and the heart of Christ revealed in the New Testament
 - a. The OT God has more grace than we often think
 - b. The NT Jesus has more judgment than we often think

Discussion Questions

1. Opening questions: What struck you most about the sermon/the passage? What surprised you? What confused you? What did you disagree with?

2. In verses 24-25, when he describes his gift of eternal life, Jesus doesn't just say that a person who believes in him "will have" eternal life but rather that he/she "has eternal life" and "has crossed over from death to life." Why do you think he describes eternal life in that way?

3. When you think of the word "God" and the Being that word represents, how is your view of God different from your view of Jesus? Where might you need to change or adjust your view of God the Father or Jesus?

4. Jesus is the ultimate example of a man who was completely dependent on his heavenly Father in every area of his life. As you consider your life right now, where are you tempted to simply rely on yourself and do your own thing, and where might God be challenging you to surrender and depend on him (e.g. finances, relationships, work, family, etc.)?