

The Gospel of John 5:24-47

I The Son Equal with the Father in Giving Life and Executing Judgment (part 2 - 5:24-30)

- A. Eternal life is the divine and uncreated life of God, which not only is everlasting with respect to time but is also eternal and divine in nature. (**John 3:15-17**) The source of death is the tree of knowledge, and the source of life is the tree of life (**cf. Gen. 2:9, 17**). Hence, to pass out of death into life is to *change the source* of one's living
- B. The phrase, "*An hour is coming, and it is now,*" when the dead will hear and live [**v.25**] refers to the very time when the Lord spoke these words. These "dead" are not those who are dead physically but those who are dead spiritually. (**Eph. 2:1, 5; Col. 2:13**) In the eyes of the Lord, all of the people living on earth are dead in their spirit. Many at that time heard His living words and consequently were made alive. Hence, in this verse to live means to be alive in spirit. It does not signify resurrection of the physical body, which is mentioned in vv. 28-29. For twenty centuries, people have heard the living voice of the Son of God and have been enlivened with life. Both the Father and the Son have life in themselves [**v.26**]. So the Son can and does enliven people with life, as the Father desires.
- C. The Son also has authority to execute judgment, just as the Father. Jesus Christ shall judge the living and the dead. (**2Tim.4:1**) The Son will judge justly, according to the Father's will (**5:30**). He is one with the Father in the matter of life's enlivening. He is also one with Him in the matter of judgment. The Lord is the Son of God (**v.25**); hence, He can give life (**v.21**). He is also the Son of Man; hence, He can execute judgment.
- D. An hour is still to come, however, when all in the tombs will hear His voice (**v.28**); these are those who are physically dead and are buried in tombs. They will all come forth in resurrection of the body.
1. There will be a resurrection of the saved believers, which will take place before the millennium (**Rev. 20:4, 6; 1Cor. 15:23, 52; 1Thes.4:16**). At the Lord Jesus' coming back, the dead believers will be resurrected to enjoy eternal life. Hence, this resurrection is called the resurrection of life.
 2. There will also be a resurrection of the unbelievers, who practiced evil (habitually) and who are to perish; it will take place after the millennium (**Rev. 20:5, 12**). All the dead unbelievers will be resurrected after the thousand years to be judged at the great white throne (**Rev. 20:11-15**). Hence, this resurrection is called the resurrection of judgment.

II The Sons' Fourfold Testimony

- A. In this section (**5:31-47**) we see the Son's fourfold testimony: the testimony of John the Baptist (vv.32-35); the testimony of the Son's work (v.36); the testimony of the Father (vv.37-38); and the testimony of the Scriptures (vv.39-47). We see in this section that it is possible to have these four witnesses and yet not have Christ Himself.
- B. John the Baptist was a witness of Christ. His testimony was to direct the Jews to Christ. Verse 32 says that John testified concerning Christ; verse 33 says that John testified to the truth. Truth is the same Greek word as for *reality* in 1:14, 17. This proves that truth here is Christ (**14:6**). According to the entire revelation of this Gospel, truth is the divine reality embodied, revealed and expressed in Christ, the Son of God.
- C. In verse 36, the second testimony to the Lord was His works. The Jewish religious leaders saw the works of Christ, yet they would not come to Him.
- D. From the beginning of His ministry the Father testified of the Son when He was baptized (**Matt. 3:17**). At that time the Jews heard the Father's voice and saw the form of the Holy Spirit (**Luke 3:22**), although prior to that time they had neither heard His voice at any time nor seen His form. The Father testified concerning the Son, but they did not have His word abiding in them, for they did not believe the Son whom He sent.
- E. The Scriptures also testified of the Son. (**Luke 24:27**) Yet, the religious leaders searched the Scriptures that testified of Him, but they failed to come to Him that they might have eternal life.
1. It is very possible to "search the Scriptures" and still not come to Him (**v.40**). The Jewish religionists searched the Scriptures but were not willing to come to the Lord. These two should go together; because the Scriptures testify concerning the Lord, they should not be separated from the Lord. Only the Lord can give life.
 2. The Son's being in the name of the Father is equivalent to the Son's being the Father; hence, He is called the Father (**1sa.9:6**). This proves that the Son and the Father are one (**10:30**) The religionist rejected the Lord because they did not have the love of God in themselves (**v.42**); they only had room in their hearts for receiving glory from one another, not seeking the glory that is from God. (**v.44**)
 3. If people do not hear what the word of God says, they will not be persuaded even if someone miraculously rises from the dead. [**Luke 16:31**] The Savior's word implied that if the Jews, represented by the Pharisees, did not hear the word of God in the Old Testament, they would not be persuaded even though He would rise from the dead. This very tragedy occurred after His resurrection (**Matt. 28:11-15; Acts 13:30-40, 44-45**).
 4. We should never separate the Scripture from the Lord Himself. Whenever we search the Word, we must come to the Lord Himself. We must make searching the Word and touching the Lord one thing. Whenever we study the Bible, we must open our spirit to the Lord. While our eyes are reading the words and our mind is understanding them, our spirit must be exercised to contact the Lord through the Scriptures. Then we shall not only have the understanding of the black and the white letters in our mentality, but also have the life in our spirit.
- F. All of the signs, manifestations, and gifts are merely witnesses by which we may contact Christ. The problem is that people today have the testimonies, but fail to contact the Lord Himself. It is possible to have the signs, the manifestations, the gifts, and the knowledge of the Scriptures, but not come to contact the Lord Himself. It is only the Lord Himself who will give you life. It is not the signs, the gifts, or even the Scriptures, but it is the Lord Himself who will enliven you and impart life into you.