

11. John 5:19-47

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Getting started

What problems have you run into when trying to explain to others (neighbours/children) that 'Jesus is God'?

Observation and interpretation

1. Read verses 19-27

Under the headings Father and Jesus, chart the relative roles and actions of each.

Father

Jesus

2. Why can Jesus do what he does? (verses 20, 23, 27)

3. Why is this important information to know? (verses 24-27)

Some background

In the second half of this passage Jesus speaks about the reliability of the information he is giving. In a Jewish legal setting at least two witnesses were required to substantiate a claim and a person could not testify on their own behalf. It is in this framework that Jesus' next speech ought to be read.

Read verses 31-47

4. What is Jesus' point in verse 31?

5. List the testimonies to Jesus in verses 33-40. How do the different 'testifiers' relate to each other?

Verse	Testifier	Jesus' comment (if any)
John 5.32		
John 5.33		
John 5.36		
John 5.37		
John 5.39		

6. What is Jesus' point in verses 41-44? What problem does Jesus identify with his opponent's response to himself?

Going deeper

When Jesus speaks about how he can claim to be equal with God he speaks of his total obedience and submission to the Father.

Obedience and submission aren't very popular words these days. What does the fact that these qualities appear to be at the very heart of the divine Father Son relationship mean for a Christian's understanding of these ideas?

What areas do you find it difficult to be obedient and submissive, where perhaps you ought? Eg. Work, parents, etc. How does this picture of the relationship between Father and Son help or hinder your thinking in these areas?

OR

One of the key themes in John is that of 'testimony'. We are reliant on the testimony of others for what we know about the Father and his son Jesus. How well accepted is the concept of 'testimony' in our world today? Are there problems with this idea in people's minds? Some suggest that we should witness to Christ through our own testimony to him, what do you think of this evangelistic strategy?