

John 5d 5:22-47 Judgement

Read John 5:22-47

We now come to a difficult passage: John 5:22

Moreover, the Father judges no-one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son, 23 that all may honour the Son just as they honour the Father. He who does not honour the Son does not honour the Father, who sent him.

The Jews were saying that Jesus was guilty of breaking the law. He quickly showed them that it was they who were guilty in the sight of God. And it was he himself who would judge them.

The Jewish legal system required two or more witnesses to agree (Num 35v30, Deut 19v15) so in John 8:17-19

17 In your own Law it is written that the testimony of two men is valid. 18 I am one who testifies for myself; my other witness is the Father, who sent me."

19 Then they asked him, "Where is your father?"

"You do not know me or my Father," Jesus replied. "If you knew me, you would know my Father also."

The Father testifies to the son. The Jews might not accept this testimony, but it was this testimony that mattered. John 5:37-40

37 And the Father who sent me has himself testified concerning me. You have never heard his voice nor seen his form, 38 nor does his word dwell in you, for you do not believe the one he sent. 39 You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me, 40 yet you refuse to come to me to have life.

Jesus now turns on the attack. The Jews and Pharisees had been accusing him, now he accuses them.

John 5:45-47

45 "But do not think I will accuse you before the Father. Your accuser is Moses, on whom your hopes are set. 46 If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me. 47 But since you do not believe what he wrote, how are you going to believe what I say?"

Well what did Moses write? Deuteronomy 19:15

15 One witness is not enough to convict a man accused of any crime or offence he may have committed. A matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.

Yes, they liked that. Fully acceptable.

How about Deuteronomy 18:15?

15 The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own brothers. You must listen to him.

And do you remember Moses' record of Balaam's prophecy?
Numbers 24:17

*17 "I see him, but not now;
I behold him, but not near.
A star will come out of Jacob;
a sceptre will rise out of Israel.*

A phrase in 1 John 2v11 is appropriate – *The darkness had blinded them* and also Mat 6v22-23

22 "The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light. 23 But if your eyes are bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

They thought they had God all sewn up. They knew how he worked. They confined him to the temple. They could control him that way. They had gone in, shut the door, and drawn the curtains. They refused to accept Jesus.

John 9:39-41

39 Jesus said, "For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind."

40 Some Pharisees who were with him heard him say this and asked, "What? Are we blind too?"

41 Jesus said, "If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains.

This brings us to a problem. Let's pick out some verses

John 5:22

22 Moreover, the Father judges no-one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son,

John 5:27

27 And he (the Father) has given him (the Son) authority to judge because he is the Son of Man.

John 5:30

30 By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me.

So we see that Jesus is Judge. In fact in John 9v39 Jesus says 'For judgement I have come into the world.'

In John 12v47 Jesus says 'For I did not come to judge the world, but to save it.'

Is this a contradiction?

(Pre-write cut-down version on board)

Let's look for a moment at the legal system. In a court of law the process is:

- State the charge
- Ask whether the defendant pleads 'guilty' or 'not guilty'
- Detail the case against the accused
- Bring witnesses to support the accusation
- Detail the defence.
- Bring witnesses to support the defence
- A decision then has to be made based on the evidence, whether the defendant is guilty or not guilty.
- If guilty, a suitable punishment then has to be decided

Which of these is the duty of the Judge? Certainly the last one, but the penultimate one may be a Jury or perhaps magistrates.

What's 'an open and shut case'?

A plea of guilty, no defence.

What do we mean by 'The facts speak for themselves'?

Like overtaking a police car at 90 mph on the motorway. The outcome of the case is patently obvious to everyone. There is no defence, and the accused pleads guilty. For this particular case there is a fixed penalty of £60 + 3 points so effectively no judge is involved. It is the accused's actions that have condemned him and he already knows the punishment.

So Jesus can say *John 12:47,48*

47 "As for the person who hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge him. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save it. 48 There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day.

And John 3:18 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.

There is coming a day of final judgement but again there can only be a guilty plea: *Romans 2:15-16*

15 since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them.) 16 This will take place on the day when God will judge men's secrets through Jesus Christ, as my gospel declares.

Take the man on the motorway. As he passed the police car, did his conscience accuse him or did it try to produce an excuse? (Note we only need an excuse because we know we've broken the law.)

Sometimes in a court of law it is necessary to call an expert witness. Not a witness to events of the particular case in process but to explain perhaps the expected effects of the accused's actions. How a poison works; the trajectory of a bullet; the effects of alcohol on your reactions. But how much can an expert witness be relied on?

We are judged on whether we believe in Jesus *John 5:24*

"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.

Jesus effectively becomes our expert witness and his words – his testimony becomes vital. Can they be trusted? Look again at John 5: verses 19, 24+25 I tell you the truth.

We all know John 3v16 – let's read it

16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

But don't stop there – read 17 to 19 as well

17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. 18 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. 19 This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil.

It is not the purpose of the sun's shining to cast shadows, but when the sun shines, shadows are inevitable

Jesus did not come to bring judgement, but judgement is an inescapable outcome of his coming.

Let's look again at John 5:37-38

*37 And the Father who sent me has himself testified concerning me. You have **never** heard his voice
nor seen his form, 38
nor does his word dwell in you, for you do
not believe the one he sent*

Note the negatives in **bold**. Put it positively: If you believe in Jesus you **will be able to** see God, hear his voice, and have his word live within you

And 5v24

"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 a sense Jesus is the charge, the prosecution witness, the evidence, the Judge; and as the charge is that the accused did not know Jesus, so the sentence is appropriate: they **will not** know Jesus and the rest of eternity will truly be spent in Hell.

Fortunately for those who believe, Jesus is also the defence, our advocate, our substitute, our righteousness, our acquittal and our guarantee for eternity.