

A. John 5:31-47 – The witnesses to Christ’s deity

1. John 5:31-32 – The need for witnesses

- a. John 5:31 – “*If I alone testify about Myself, My testimony is not true.*” Jesus anticipated that His listeners would likely **object** to His claims of being equal with God. He did not base His claims on His own authority. If He did that, His testimony would be unreliable. Deuteronomy 19:15
- b. John 5:32 – “*There is another who testifies of Me, and I know that the testimony which He gives about Me is true.*” Jesus’ testimony was **true** and confirming by itself (John 8:12-18), but in keeping with the Law of Moses, He graciously provided more witnesses. Numbers 35:30, Deuteronomy 17:6, John 8:17, 2 Corinthians 13:1, Hebrews 10:28
 - 1) John used the noun “**testimony**,” (or witness) MARTURIA 14 times and the verb “testify” MARTUREO 33 times, making this a profound and fundamental theme in his Gospel. John brought to the witness stand many unmistakable witnesses who proved Jesus is God and our true Messiah.
 - 2) John’s goal was to **prove** Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God, so that people would come to believe in His name. Acts 4:12; John 19:35, 20:31; 2 Timothy 1:12; 1 John 1:2

2. John 5:33-35 – The witness of John the Baptist

- a. John 5:33 – “*You have sent to John, and he has testified to the truth.*” John the Baptist was a **faithful** witness. We read his testimony in John 1:19-28 when the Jews sent interrogators to question him.
- b. John 5:34 – “*But the testimony which I receive is not from man, but I say these things so that you may be saved.*” Jesus, being God, obviously did not need the testimony of **human** witnesses, yet He graciously provided John the Baptist’s faithful testimony. He did this so that His hearers would listen, believe and be saved.
- c. John 5:35 – “*He was the lamp that was burning and was shining and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light.*” Although John the Baptist was not the “true Light,” he **shone** as a messenger of the coming Christ. For a time, the masses of Israel rejoiced at his witness. John 1:6-9, 29-34

3. John 5:36 – The witness of Jesus’ works

- a. John 5:36a – “*But the testimony which I have is greater than the testimony of John ...*” As good as John’s testimony was, Jesus’ **works** gave even greater evidence of who He was. Jesus now called His own works, the signs and miracles He daily preformed, to come to the witness stand and testify on His behalf.
- b. John 5:36b – “*... for the works which the Father has given Me to accomplish—the very works that I do—testify about Me, that the Father has sent Me.*” Jesus’ works gave observable evidence of His **deity**. Jesus’ miracles proved that God had sent Him. No ordinary son of Adam could do the works of Jesus. John 3:2, 5:17

4. John 5:37-38 – The witness of God the Father

- a. John 5:37a – “*And the Father who sent Me, He has testified of Me.*” The Father had testified of Jesus at His baptism. In Matthew 3:17 the Father said, “*This is My beloved Son in whom I am well **pleased**.*” 1 John 5:9
- b. John 5:37b – “*You have neither heard His voice at any time nor seen His form.*” Although certainly there were those who heard the audible voice of the Father speaking from heaven at Jesus’ baptism, spiritually the Jews were blind and **deaf** towards God. Matthew 15:14, 23:24; Mark 4:11-12
 - 1) In their **hearts**, the religious Jews were far from God. They cared more about their traditions than they did about God. Mark 7:6-8
 - 2) Their problem was a **faith** issue, not a lack of information. Listen to what Jesus said next.
- c. John 5:38 – “*You do not have His word abiding in you, for you do not believe Him whom He sent.*” Clearly, the religious leaders did not believe God’s **word**. If they would have believed God’s word, they would have also believed Jesus, God’s messenger.

5. John 5:39-40 – The witness of scripture

- a. John 5:39 – “*You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me ...*” No one professed to know the truth better than the religious people of that day, yet Jesus said they had **missed** the greatest witness of all: The Old Testament scriptures.
 - 1) The Hebrew scriptures decisively **proved** Jesus’ deity and messiahship.
 - 2) But the Jews were **blind** and misguided. They were trying so hard to gain righteousness through the Law that they missed the only One who could give them eternal life and genuine righteousness. Romans 10:2-4

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- b. John 5:40 – “... *and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life.*” The problem was not a lack of evidence concerning Jesus’ deity and messiahship; it was a refusal to believe the existing, overwhelming **evidence** all around them. They were simply too proud to come to Jesus as their Savior. Romans 1:18-20
6. John 5:41-47 – The witnesses rejected
- a. John 5:41 – “*I do not receive glory from men.*” Even though the Pharisees and other religious leaders prided themselves in loving and knowing God, the reality was that they sought glory from **people**. On the other hand, people’s empty praise did not mean a thing to Jesus. John 12:43, Galatians 1:10
- b. John 5:42 – “... *but I know you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves .*” Jesus Christ, as God, could see right through these religious hypocrites. He told these **pious** leaders that they did not possess, or even begin to know, the love of God. John 5:38
- c. John 5:43a – “ *I have come in My Father’s name, and you do not receive Me...*” Jesus had come to earth in the authority of God the Father, audibly identified and praised by the Father at His baptism, yet these religious leaders did not **accept** Him. Luke 3:21-22
- 1) Angels heralded His birth, wisemen traveled great distances to adore him, His star appeared in the night sky and prophets announced His arrival, but the religious leaders of Israel remained **unmoved**.
 - 2) John 1:11 says, “*He came to His own , and those who were His own did not receive Him.*” Isaiah 53:3
- d. John 5:43b – “...*if another comes in his own name, you will receive him.*” Having **rejected** the truth, they would readily believe a lie. This is often the case. 2 Thessalonians 2:8-12
- 1) 2 Corinthians 4:3-4 says, “*And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case the god of this world has **blinded** the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.*”
 - 2) Having rejected Christ and all these witnesses, these religious leaders were wide open to Satanic **deception**. Jesus told them that they were dangerously disposed to self-proclaimed impostors. Jesus said that if someone false came touting his own authority or validity, they would readily accept him.
- e. John 5:44 – “ *How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another, and you do not seek the glory that is from the one and only God?* ” It is no wonder they did not believe, since they **cared** more about pleasing people than about pleasing God. Matthew 6:24, Galatians 1:10
- f. John 5:45 – “ *Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; the one who accuses you is **Moses** , in whom you have set your hope .*” The Jewish people set their hope of salvation on keeping the Mosaic Law. But the Mosaic Law brought death, not life. Romans 3:19-22, 10:2-4
- g. John 5:46 – “ *For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me, for he wrote about Me .*” **Israel** prided itself in possessing the Pentateuch, but tragically the nation did not accept by faith what Moses wrote regarding the coming Messiah. Genesis 3:15, 12:3; Deuteronomy 18:15; John 1:45; Luke 24:27; Acts 7:37
- h. John 5:47 – “ *But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?* ” Jesus accused the religious leaders of not believing Moses’ **writings**.
- 1) The religious leaders had refused to believe the **various** witnesses to Christ’s deity.
 - 2) The Father’s witness, John the Baptist’s witness, the witness of Jesus’ **works**, and the witness of the scriptures itself all testified to Jesus being the Messiah. They should have believed in Him based on these witnesses. How about you? Will you believe in Him? Numbers 14:11