

# John 5:16-30

## “Jesus: Judge of the World”

**Scripture:** John 5:16-30

**Memory Verse:** Acts 10:42b “...it is He (Jesus) who was ordained by God to be Judge of the living and the dead.”

**Lesson Focus:** Jesus makes it very clear in this section that He is equal with God the Father in nature, power, and in judicial authority. Jesus as Judge is not very popular, but is very clearly taught in this section of Scripture. We will not sugarcoat this truth, but challenge the kids to refer to Jesus as “*Your Honor*” in faith and trust.

**Activities and Crafts:** Coloring Picture of Favorite Things, Word Search of different terms from lesson, Make It Real Discussion for 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>.  
Craft for 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup>: Gavel

**Starter Activity:** Everyday judgments

This activity should help get the kids thinking about the basics of making judgments. Making judgments about things is something that they do subconsciously every day. First ask the kids what it means to make judgments and then offer several examples to get some discussion going.

Q: What does it mean to judge or make judgments?

A: While the Bible talks about God’s judgment (which we will get to), our focus right now is on making decisions. We make judgments every day about things where we will weigh the facts before us, measure the outcomes, and make an informed decision.

**Teachers:** Below are a few ideas to get the discussion started. Consider bringing in some of these objects to enhance the discussion or come up with your own!

- 1) Breakfast cereal: How many of you make judgments about which breakfast cereal you have in the morning? (i.e. Frosted Flakes vs. Wheaties)
- 2) Halloween Candy: After saying “trick or treat” you are presented with all of these candy options. Which one will you choose? (i.e. Snickers vs. Starburst)
- 3) Colors: Imagine you get to repaint your room any color that you want. What color would you decide and what factors would inform your decision?

In our lesson today, we are going to learn something very, very important about Jesus. In our study of John so far, we have seen Jesus as the God-man, the Lamb of God, our Team Captain, a Miracle Worker, the Father’s gift to us, and Savior of the world. Today we are going to see Him as the great Judge of the world. And not of candy or cereal, but of us! Let’s take a look.

## Bible Study:

**John 5:16:** These Jewish religious leaders are the bad guys and the struggle between them and Jesus is really going to heat up now.

Q: How many of you have ever experienced jealousy? Sometimes you feel envious of what others have (and that is one side of jealousy), but the other side of jealousy is being fiercely protective of something you have. For example, if you have a close friend and some new kid shows up and your friend starts to spend more time with this new kid (and less with you), you may feel very jealous for your friend!

If you aren't careful, you may feel great anger and hatred toward this new kid (which is not OK!). That is what happened with these Jewish religious leaders. They were "large and in charge" of everything religious so that the Jewish people listened to them, but now this Jesus guy shows up and people start flocking to Him! They are losing their power and popularity and desperately want to hold onto that!

**John 5:17-18:** Jesus points out that the works of God are being done before their very eyes! Remember in the first part of John 5, Jesus miraculously healed a man (a very good thing), but the religious leaders didn't care about that, because Jesus did it in a way that broke THEIR rules (healing on the Sabbath day). They were blinded by their jealousy!

Notice also something very important in v. 18: The Jewish religious leaders understood Jesus to be claiming to be God here. Remember that Jesus is the "God-man". This seemed outrageous to these Jewish people and so they hated Him all the more. \*

**John 5:19-20:** Instead of denying that He was God, He confirms it and tells them to take what He is saying very seriously! For He says that all that He does is the same that the Father does. Father and Son are One in activity and purpose. Think of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit as the perfect team all working together with One purpose.

Q: Notice v. 20: What does it mean to marvel at something? What are some things that you marvel at? Jesus says that He will perform even greater works so that they may marvel at Him and in doing so also marvel at the Father.

**John 5:21:** Whoa! Jesus makes a bold statement here. He says that He has the power to raise the dead and give life, just as the Father does!

To be clear, other biblical characters have raised people from the dead (i.e. Peter, Elijah). But they never claimed to have that power, but that the power came from God. Jesus is claiming to have that power Himself!

**John 5:22-23:** So far we've seen Jesus claim that He is equal with God in being and in power. Here we see Jesus say that He is equal with God in authority!

Q: What does it mean to have authority?

A: To be “the boss” or “the big cheese”. The one that we should HONOR! (v. 23)

Q: What does it mean to HONOR someone?

A: To praise, respect, obey, and give someone what they are due.

Jesus makes it very clear that if we are to honor God the Father correctly, we must also honor God the Son. If people say they believe in “god”, but they don’t believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, they do not believe in the true God!

**John 5:24:** There is a lot to unpack in this verse! This is the second time Jesus tells them to listen very carefully to what He is saying, because He is going to tell them something very important!

Q: How many of you have taken medicine when you are sick? Does the doctor or your Mom “casually” instruct you on how to take the medicine? No! They are very SERIOUS and give you very specific instructions that you must follow to get better! \*

Jesus is being very SERIOUS here and saying that one must hear His word and believe (respond in faith) if you want to be saved from judgment or eternal punishment.

Q: Are YOU listening? He who hears and believes HAS eternal life! That means you have it right now and it will NEVER be taken from you! This is one of those amazing promises of God that we cling to as believers!

**John 5:25:** Jesus repeats Himself about the seriousness one more time!

Q: How many of you know what zombies are? Jesus is saying that all of us are like sin-zombies, dead in our sin, until this moment when we believe in Him and pass out of death and into life! At that point, we are no longer sin-zombies, but we are alive in Christ! Back in John 3 we talked about being born-again. When that happens, God’s Holy Spirit INVADES us and we are no longer sin-zombies at war with God, but we become God’s children at war with sin!

**John 5:26-27:** Jesus says once again that He is the boss and has been given all authority as Judge. We talk a lot about Jesus Christ being the great Savior of the whole world (which is true) but the Bible also teaches that He is the great Judge of the whole world!

Jesus’s first coming was as Savior of the world. But His second coming will be as Judge!

**John 5:28-29:** In the beginning of our lesson we talked about how we make judgments about things we like and don’t like. \* But when we talk about God’s judgment, it is much more serious. When God judges, He determines where people will be forever.

Jesus says here that ALL will come forth before Him to stand before His judgment seat. No one can escape this! There are only two outcomes:

- 1) Eternal life with God forever
- 2) Eternal punishment away from God forever

Or C.S. Lewis, the author of the Narnia stories put it this way:

- 1) People who said to Jesus, “Your will be done”.
  - Their lives were characterized by living life Jesus’s way and are welcomed into heaven
- 2) People to whom Jesus says, “Your will be done”.
  - Their lives were characterized by rejecting Jesus and will be banished into hell

Q: Back in v. 23, Jesus said to HONOR God the Father we must HONOR Him. What do people call the judge in a courtroom? **Your Honor!** Those who HONOR Jesus now by believing in Him are His and will be with Him forever. Those that do not HONOR Jesus now, but reject Him or ignore Him will be punished forever.

**John 5:30:** Here Jesus says once again that He and the Father are completely united in judgment and that their judgment is perfectly righteous. There are a lot of verses in the Bible that talk about Jesus sitting down at the right hand of the throne of God (i.e. **Hebrews 1:3**). Imagine yourself now standing before God’s throne with Jesus sitting at the right hand of the Father and you will need to give an account of everything you ever did!

**Key Point:** So what are you to do? Call upon the coming Judge, Jesus Christ, to be your Savior right now! Admit that you are guilty and that you need a Savior. If Jesus Christ is your Lord and Savior, then HONOR Him every day. Show to all those around you by the judgments you make, that Jesus Christ is your Lord and Savior.

If you do, then when you stand at this judgment seat guilty of your sins, Jesus will look to the Father and say, “He is mine. I paid for His sins. Forgiven!”. If you don’t, then you will have to pay for your sins on your own in hell forever!

This fact of final judgment is taught throughout the whole Bible. It can be scary and it is not popular, but it is the truth! We must also remember the amazing promise of Jesus in v. 24 that we are saved by faith and trust in Him. Then we joyfully cling to His promise that “there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” (**Romans 8:1**)

# Bring It Home

**Lesson Theme: “Jesus: Judge of the World”**

**Scripture: John 5:16-30**

**Memory Verse:** Acts 10:42b “...it is He (Jesus) who was ordained by God to be Judge of the living and the dead.”

**Teachers/Parents:** We talked a little bit about jealousy and how the Jewish religious leaders’ hatred toward Jesus was rooted in their loss of power and popularity. Jealousy can be a dangerous trap when we cling desperately to something we have that someone else may be threatening to take away. Share some examples of where you experienced such jealousy and how you dealt with it.

## Discussion Questions:

- 1) **Read John 5:18.** The Jewish religious leaders already hated Jesus with jealousy, but now Jesus takes it up a notch. Why would the Jewish religious leaders be even more angry at Jesus’s claims described in this verse? (Hint: Jewish people were mono-theists)
- 2) It is popular for critics of Christianity to argue that Jesus never claimed to be God and that this was made up by the church centuries later. But **Read John 5:19-22** which is Jesus’s response to the religious leader’s anger. Instead of denying His deity to appease them, He actually affirms to them that He has equality with God! How does He affirm this here?
- 3) **Read John 5:23.** What does this teach us about people who say, “they love god”, but ignore or reject Jesus as God?
- 4) **Read John 5:24.** In the middle of this heavier passage on judgment, we have this beautiful promise of Jesus that we escape condemnation through hearing and believing IN God. What is the difference between believing “IN” God and merely believing “THAT” God is there (Hint: **Read James 2:19**)
- 5) We rightfully celebrate Jesus as the Savior of the world (**John 4:42**), but it is easy to neglect the reality of Jesus as the Judge of the world (**John 5:27**). Why is it important to rightly understand and believe in Jesus as both Savior and Judge?
- 6) **Read Acts 10:36-43.** Verses like this show us how the early church preached the gospel to the surrounding culture. Do you see God’s love taught in these verses? How about God’s judgment?