

The Mind of Christ - Lesson 62

July 10, 2020

Thank you for joining us for another edition of The Mind of Christ. It is a blessing for me to be able to record these messages on the Mind of Christ after the study I did for 7 years. I'm glad to share the things that I learned. I understand that the material is somewhat deep and you're getting it in some very raw form in many ways because of the way it was written in my journal.

We're in **John 5**. We've been in John 5 for at least three weeks and we'll finish up today. I want to go back and reframe this. In John 5, Jesus healed a man at the pool of Bethesda. The issue came because it was done on the Sabbath Day and Jesus was being accused and persecuted because of that and He got into quite a few spiritual skirmishes with these Jewish leaders who took great issue at some of the explanations that He gave for why it was okay for Him to heal on the Sabbath Day.

Jesus basically gets into '*equating Himself with God*' and they accused Him of *making Himself equal with God*; and now He is laying out a case on the kind of relationship He has with the Father, the identity He has, and how this proves that He is who He says He is. So this whole chapter is one context here.

We're going to pick up in **John 5:30-47**, a bit of an overlap, and I'll read to the end of the chapter, and then we'll jump into the journal material.

³⁰ "I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

³¹ "If I alone bear witness of Myself; My testimony is not true. ³² There is another who bears witness of Me, and I know that the testimony which He bears of Me is true.

³³ **You have sent to John**, and he has testified to the truth. ³⁴ But the testimony which I receive is not from man, but I say these things so that you may be saved. ³⁵ He was the lamp that was burning and was shining and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light.

³⁶ But the testimony which I have is greater than the testimony of John; 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.

³⁷ And the Father who sent Me, He has testified of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time nor seen His form. ³⁸ You do not have His word abiding in you, for you do not believe Him whom He sent.

³⁹ You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me; ⁴⁰ and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life. ⁴¹ I do not receive glory from men; ⁴² but I know you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves. ⁴³ I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, you will receive him. 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? 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. ⁴⁶ For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me, for he wrote about Me. ⁴⁷ But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"

Let's dig into this in the journal notes. No one knew Jesus as did the Father, and no one's testimony could be as powerful and influential as the Father's. Who could challenge the integrity and the truthfulness and authenticity of God Himself? Jesus demonstrated such confidence. He had 'not a doubt' of God's testimony of Him. Jesus didn't wonder what the Father might say about Him.

The testimony of the Father settles the matter; there's no need to call any other witnesses. Jesus will call others, but these merely help people to 'get it'. What testimony could **I**, and **you**, expect from the Father? Jesus could expect a testimony about relationship and about verification of His own *perfection* and *sinlessness*. I can only get the 'relationship' part because the *sinlessness* is not true. That would make God a liar if He were to testify that I was sinless. Later in **John 5:37-38** He returns to this line of thinking that He has been talking about here in verses 30-32.

The problem is not that the Father's presence is not all over the life and the person of Jesus, but the people's inability to hear it, to see it and to believe it. That's what is at issue here. Testimony is not effective unless it is *heard*, unless it is *seen*, and unless it is believed.

In **John 8:18** Jesus says again that the One who *sent Him* bears witness of Him. ¹⁸ *I am He who testifies about Myself, and the Father who sent Me testifies about Me.*" We observe in some spy movies, for instance, that the agent is so "deep" in the mission that no one ... the ones who sent him ... they cannot verify or testify or even acknowledge his ties to the agency. It's not this way with Jesus. His Sender, the Father, testifies and completely acknowledges, or confesses Him.

The matter of testimony is repeated many times, especially in the book of John. In Jesus' mind, He could not do His work and carry out His mission without being provided these bona fide witnesses or credentials *by His Father*. Everything depended on the fact that *He had been sent by the Father, and He was acting completely in harmony with the Father's will*. If His enemies can challenge this, then they can completely discredit Him and His work is totally in vain. Satan wants people to believe that Jesus was working alone and not with His Father. The entire plan of God could be defeated at this point and it seems to be working in realm of public opinion. These Jews wanted to kill Him for even implying that God was His Father.

In **John 5:33** Jesus says, '*You have sent to John*'. One idea of what he is talking about is back in **Matthew 9:14**, "*Then the disciples of John came to Him, asking, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?"*" The Pharisees and disciples of John seem to be together. Did the Pharisees try to align themselves with John in order to defeat Jesus? What else could "*sent to John*" mean; but it backfired on them. John supported Jesus; he testified or bore witness to the truth! ★ This is the point. It's the truth, the reality, the way it is. Either Jesus is LORD **or** He was not. John was not just a 'friend' and a cousin defending someone he loved; he wanted to be sure of the truth. Truth is of supreme importance; *otherwise* we live in a world of our own making and make decisions based on our own understanding. This makes Jesus *indispensable* to us ... **He is the Truth** ... the only 'real deal' person on earth. And it is because He is a perfect reflection of His Father; the ground of all reality.

But even though Jesus needed only the testimony of His Father to establish His credentials, He knew others might need their testimony so He offered up John the Baptist as a witness. The testimony of men is useless unless rooted in God somehow. And since John was prophesied by God in the Old Testament, and since his ministry as a messianic forerunner was accepted as *authentic* by many of the Jews, he had the distinction of Divine and human endorsement. Even though Jesus did not see this as a reliable witness, He did reference it because it was authentic testimony that led to people being saved.

The word *saved* “sozo” (σωζω) in this verse means to deliver or protect, to heal to preserve, it’s to do well or make someone whole. There are three realms in which this word “saved” is used. The first realm means to ‘deliver out of physical death’. The second realm is of sick persons who are saved from death. The third realm is to be “saved from eternal death”. The latter sets the context. *It is the Son who raises the dead and gives life*. The one believing has passed from death to life. Jesus has life in Himself; otherwise He will execute judgment on them. Jesus allows John’s testimony because He knows it is true and it will lead some to be *saved*.

The fickleness of man is seen in verse 35. The words “for a while” are used. He says he was a lamp that was burning and was shining and you were willing to rejoice “for a while” in his light. This kind of shows the fickleness of man. Man gets excited about a lot of things ‘for a while’. Our affections and convictions and our commitments are often like shifting sand, waves of the sea. We’re often the unstable man who is double and even triple-minded at times. It’s as if we have spiritual ADD; something new and different comes into view and we abandon our first love or the wife of our youth. We see life as one “bad” after another. We accept the “now” and the “trendy”, letting go of the “old” and “outdated” so easily.

Here’s John the Baptist. The whole Judean countryside was going out to him. The residents of Jerusalem had flocked to the wilderness of Jordan for their brush arbor meetings and revival in the desert. Many were stepping into the muddy waters to be identified with the masses. It was a joyous celebration and excitement, but then it was back to work and reality and another charismatic figure who would come along.

Jesus describes John as the lamp that was burning and was shining. All lamps of that day used oil and the oil was limited. They would always run dry and needed to be replenished. Even John said he must decrease so that Jesus would increase. This was intentional, not subject to popular opinion. John’s light, though temporary, was meant to lead the way to the light of the world that never would run out or never would run dry because Jesus had light in Himself...a self-perpetuating light.

John, the Apostle, wrote in **John 1:4**, “**In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.**” John was merely the flashlight used by God to point people to the true source of light. This flashlight was a cause for rejoicing, meaning to jump for joy, to exalt, to be exceedingly glad, or to have ecstatic joy. It’s used in **Matthew 5:12** (in the Sermon on the Mount) regarding the joy of being persecuted because of the reward awaiting us in heaven. You can compare that with other scriptures such as **1 Peter 4:12-13** and in **Rev. 19:7** where there is rejoicing at the marriage feast of the Lamb.

The text says that they were willing to exalt for an hour (for a while) in John's light. They were willing "for a while". How long are we willing to follow? Was this another instance of the Spirit being willing but the flesh being weak? Jesus recognized the flaw in humans; our inability to sustain commitments ... we're easily moved. Jesus returns to the witness which is **directly** related to His Father in verse 36. It's ***the works that have been given to Jesus to do***. This is greater than John because Jesus' works such as healing a paralytic on the Sabbath Day can only be accomplished by **Divine** power. Remember, Jesus connected **God's work and His work in John 5:17: But He answered them, "My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working."**

Jesus was sent to finish work assigned by the Father; to accomplish that work ... to complete it or to bring it to consummation ... to fulfill that work or to make it perfect or bring it to a full end. Jesus said in **John 4:34**, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work." In Jesus' prayer in **John 17:4** He said, "I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do." So Jesus **has accomplished** the work the Father gave Him to do. It is the same word that is used in **John 17:23**, "I in them and You in Me, **that they may be perfected** in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me." It is of us to be ***perfected in unity***.

Paul, too, desired to finish or complete his course that **he** had received and unlike those who are exalted in John for an hour (or a while), Jesus accomplished **all** His assignments. Paul in **Philippians 3:12** says, "**Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.**" Paul says that he had not already become perfect or accomplished this list he had set forth in **Philippians 3:10-11** **including** to identify with Jesus in his resurrection. Paul, in **2 Corinthians 12:9** tells us that the power is perfected or accomplished in weaknesses. Works perfect or complete faith according to James. He says in **James 2:22**, "**You see that faith was working with his works, and as a result of the works, faith was perfected.**" In keeping God's word we perfect or we complete God's love; by loving God and one another ***love is perfected in us***. So, there are ways in which God's work is brought to completion or to accomplishment both in the life of Jesus ***and in our lives***.

Just as fruit bears witness to a tree, so works bear witness to God's work **through us**. If one is sent to do the will and the work of another, then the person can only receive the testimony and the witness if they accomplish the work they have been given to do. The proof is in the pudding.

In **John 5:37** Jesus continues His assertion that the Father bears witness to Him. He is giving His accusers reason why they do not accept the Father's testimony. He seems to give three reasons why they do not receive the Father's testimony. **First** of all, **they have not heard His voice**. **Secondly**, **they have not seen His form**. And **thirdly**, **they do not have His word abiding in them**.

I wonder if He's referring to the specific events of His baptism. God **spoke audibly**. God descended in the **form** of a dove. And His instruction was for them to listen to Jesus which would have resulted in the word being inside of them.

What has hindered this from happening is *lack of faith in the One* who God sent. I want you to note in **Luke 3:22**, (heaven was opened) “... and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came out of heaven, “You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased.” The word “form” in **John 5:37** is used to describe the descent of the Holy Spirit who came down in the form of a dove. This is the same word used in **John 5:37** “eidos” (εἶδος); it's a view, a form, an appearance, something fashioned or shaped. It's an external experience. Used in **Luke 9:29** it says the form or appearance of His face was changed. “And while He was praying, the appearance of His face became different, and His clothing became white and gleaming.”

These critics of Jesus have no visible or audible experience of God, yet they question Jesus who dwelt in the bosom of the Father according to **John 1:18**. The gateway of an abiding word is *belief in the One who God has sent*. The key question of the ministry of Jesus is “**Did God send Him?**” That's the key ★ question. Everything hinges on **Who sent Jesus**. **If not**, then no other question is important. **If so**, then why ask any more questions; believe Him, follow Him, and serve Him. Do you see how critical it is to determine who sent Jesus?

The Abiding word within; what is that? Jesus will speak of this again in John 8 but He talks about this in **John 5:38**. “You do not have His word abiding in you, *for you do not believe Him* whom He sent.” He will return to this later on, but in **John 8:37** He says, “I know that you are Abraham's descendants; yet you seek to kill Me because *My word has no place in you*.” The word abiding, used here, meno (μένω) means to stay, to abide, to continue, to dwell, to endure, to be present to remain or to stand. Imagine a nomad roaming from place to place, or someone who moves from place to place with no stability, no roots. They have no consistency of the **Word** in themselves.

In **John 5:39** and following, it is interesting to see Jesus' view of Scripture. Of course, here, He's talking about Old Testament Scripture. “You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me.” The searching of Scripture is being denigrated (criticized unfairly, disparaged). He is not saying that they **should not have been searching the Scripture**, but searching with the wrong purpose can be futile. The mere activity of searching Scripture is pointless unless we are **looking for Jesus** in there. **What** are we searching the Scripture for, or for **Who** are we searching?

Imagine when entering a cave, originally to find a lost child, but then becoming so caught up with the stalactites and stalagmites and their beauty, that the little boy is forgotten, or at least, moved to second place of importance! And imagine that the stalactites were meant to point the way to the child, but instead they just became something to be admired. God designed Scripture to **point us to His Son**. Could this be the flaw of the prophecy crowd? Too much time is spent chasing the *end times* instead of chasing **Jesus** in the prophecies!

Eternal life is the by-product. Jesus is the **One** we seek. Scripture cannot give us life; it can only lead us to the One who **can** give us life. The folks He is talking to are focused on the **Sabbath text** while the **Word of Life** is right before their eyes! Instead of insisting that He more faithfully keep the Sabbath, they **could** do the obvious... they could conclude that they don't understand the Sabbath Laws, conclude that He does, and fall down and worship since He doesn't think their concerns are valid. But the Pharisees don't **do** that. The

Pharisees believe that they **do** understand the Law, better than the *One who gave it*; and they **do** believe that they have a case to make and they don't have to listen to the very Son of God who stood before them.

The witness of Scripture is merely *the witness of God in writing to His Son*. All Scriptures point to Jesus. They are willing to pour over Scripture to have life which they have a distorted view of life ... a mutated or destructive view of life, but are unwilling to ask the One who **has life in Himself** for it. Scripture only has life in that it is **His** Word of life.

As I write in my journal, now for over one year, I started May 3, 2010 and I'm now in May 10, 2011, I want to be sure that I do not stray from **my** original intent to know Jesus and His mind. But I want to be conscious of this. Merely knowing Him is not all. It is from Him I need life. "Jesus, I come to you for life."

Man's problem is in the will which is too much controlled by the flesh and not by the Spirit. You're not willing to come to me that you may have life. **Unwillingness** is ★ key here. It's not merely that all the pouring over Scripture was useless and legalistic. Surely, they knew the texts about the Messiah. Surely there was some longing for His coming. And surely they wanted to see Abraham's promise fulfilled. But they did not want to come to **Jesus** to have life. Perhaps their pride would not allow them to bow the knee to a Jewish carpenter from a backwater town like Nazareth. Jesus was not personally impressive enough and too liberal for them! He was a "rule-breaker". How could a rule-breaker be the Messiah? They were unconvinced that He was the Source of Life. They saw Jesus as a dry well; and why should one draw from a dry well?

Another level of difficulty here is the Source of Glory. Everyone seeks glory, recognition, acceptance and approval but for what source? Man, praise of man ... glory is deceptive and fading. We flatter one another mostly so we'll get glory in return. This 'mutually dead' glory is bound to depreciate over time, unless each is receiving true glory from God above. Jesus avoided man's glory as a source and relied exclusively on God's glory. He would only eat "**organic**" glory, if you will; no artificially grown or impure glory for Him. Yet His critics fed continuously on man's glory because they did not have the love of God inside themselves. It must be our internalized glory and love. The phrase "**in yourselves**" is similar to the idea of Jesus having life *in himself*.

These men looked for men with credentials. Do I? The more 'titles' I accumulate the more respect of man glory I receive. Why do I not simply introduce myself as 'one sent by the Father' to do His work? It could be through the fire department, through BAANK (Believers Against the Abuse and Neglect of Kids), my work at Central or the Ministerial Association. It could be that I have fallen into the trap. Lord, help me see clearly on this because I want to simply seek your glory.

Note that Jesus does not receive glory from men. It doesn't say "He does not seek glory from men". What does He mean? Isn't the chief end of man to glorify God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit? So if He does not receive it, what is the point of us offering it? In other words, the statement that 'He does not receive the glory of men' ... what is He saying? Aren't we supposed to give Him glory? Why won't He receive the glory that we give Him?

I think He must mean this in some ‘special’ sense. I think He means He does not receive glory from men *instead of* glory from God. These critics of Jesus, on the other hand, fed off of glorifying one another instead of seeking the glory of God. The trap is easy to fall into. “Man-glory” is often instantaneous and it feels good like a cheap fix but God’s glory may only come later. Didn’t Jesus say, “Father, the hour has come? Glorify the Son so that the Son may glorify the Father” **John 17:1**. The cross had to come before the glory...or was *the cross* the glory? Much is written about this topic in Scripture, but it is clear that ‘man-glory’ cannot and must not substitute for God’s glory.

John 5:42 is a strong indictment by Jesus. “**But I know you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves**”, He says. Indwelling love, innate love, the love of God at our core out of which all of life goes forth, why do we do what we do? Is it the love of God that is within us? Is there a difference between the love of God within and the love we have for God? Is the love of God a “knowledge” that He loves us personally? If we reject His Son, we must not love Him, and if we reject His Son we must not have His love in us. *The ability to love and to be loved is what makes us stable and balanced and capable of relationship*. As Paul said, “**The love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us**” **Romans 5:5**. It is only with God’s help that we can love Him and have His love within.

Jesus said receiving glory from one another prevents people from believing. Receiving glory from the one God makes it possible for us to believe. The horizontal dimension of life when dominant blinds us to the primary dimension which is vertical ... God before others. Caring what God thinks trumps what other people think. By saying *the only God* says there is only one true and meaningful source of glory. Be careful what you seek and from whence you seek it. You can seek the right thing from the wrong source or one can seek the right thing from the right source. When one values God-glory supremely, then man-glory can be put into perspective.

Jesus has no need, He says here, to accuse them. They already stand accused by Moses, He says. The word “accused” is the word is a legal word. It means to charge someone with an offense, or to speak against. It’s used in **Matthew 12:10**, “**And they questioned Jesus, asking, “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?”—so that they might accuse Him.**” The Jews looked to accuse Him by asking leading questions or in **Mark 3:2**, they also wanted to accuse Jesus for healing on the Sabbath Day.

In **Mark 15:3** at Jesus’ trial, the chief priests began to accuse Jesus harshly. That’s also in **Luke 23:10**. The woman in adultery was brought to Jesus so that they might have grounds to accuse Jesus, not her, in **John 8:5-6**. “**Now in the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women; what then do You say?**” ⁶“**They were saying this, testing Him, so that they might have grounds for *accusing Him.***”

In **Acts 22:30** Paul was accused by the Jews and in **Acts 24:2** Tertullus accused Paul.

In **Romans 2:15** it says that the conscience can defend and also accuse. So, it’s a defense, or a prosecuting attorney. That’s what this conscience can be; both the defense and the prosecuting attorney.

The accuser was Moses ... in whom they had set their hope. The reason Moses 'will' and 'can' accuse is because he wrote about Jesus, the Messiah. It is possible to set our hopes on someone without listening or following their teaching. This is a *sentimental* kind of hope. These people have tender *emotions* and *feelings* for Moses but are not serious about *listening* to him. I wonder if Jesus' statement caused them to search the writings of Moses.

The idea of setting one's hope in someone is in **Matthew 12:21** and **Isaiah 42:1ff**. Isaiah prophesied that the Gentiles set their hope in the name of the Messiah. **Isaiah 42:2** says, "Behold, My Servant, whom I uphold; My chosen one in whom My soul delights. I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the **nations** (or the Gentiles)."

Paul quotes **Isaiah 11:10** saying, "In that day the **nations (or the Gentiles)** will put their hope in the root of Jesse, who will stand as a signal for the peoples; and His resting place will be glorious." In a different twist, Paul tells those who are rich in the present world not to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy.

In **2 Corinthians 1:10** Paul makes clear when he was under the sentence of death he trusted in God who raises the dead, and on Him he sets his hope.

In **1 Timothy 4:10** Paul's labor and striving was because he had fixed his hope on the Living God who is the Savior of all men, especially those who believe.

The older widow in **1 Timothy 5:5** fixes her hope on God and continues in prayer night and day. **1 Peter 3:5** talks about women of old who put their hope in God, and they adorned themselves by being submissive to their own husbands.

In **1 Corinthians 15:19** Paul makes the argument that we are to be pitied if only **in this life** we have hoped in Christ.

Perhaps the clearest mention of Jesus directly by Moses is found in **Deuteronomy 18:15** regarding a prophet coming like himself. Moses said, "The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen, you shall listen to him." They were to **listen** to this prophet! This was obviously a Messianic statement. Even here, what was written was to be compared to what the Messiah would actually say. Which is more powerful and authentic; the writings of Moses in 1500 BC about "One who was coming" or the very spoken words of the One who now was here ... **the very Son of God?**

These leaders put more stock in Moses' writings than they did in the Prophet before them, who now speaks the words about Moses' prophecy! These people neither believed Moses' writing **nor** Jesus' words! How could they? Neither was being 'heeded'. They simply were 'attached' sentimentally to Moses and not seriously to him. **And we too, can be sentimentally attached to the Bible.** You know, we were raised on the Bible. It was the Bible of our mother and our father perhaps, or grandparents. We can be sentimentally attached. We can carry the Bible around and we can treat it with respect, but all the time it may be just simply a sentimental attachment to the Bible instead of a serious place to go to find **Jesus** who can give us *life*.

The occasion of **John Chapter 5**, the healing at the pool of Bethesda certainly provided Jesus with an opportunity to present some profound teaching. The theme of the teaching was Jesus' *intimate* and *intricate* relationship with His Father. Jesus made it clear that He was no ordinary prophet. As Son, He was unique; *the one and only*.

The mind of Christ demonstrated here shows the source of Jesus' **work** ... what He saw His Father doing, and the source of Jesus' **authority** being sent by and given by the Father, and the source of **confirming testimony**, the witness of the Father. All of these in quality were unique to Jesus. *No one else* was given such an ability to know what the Father was doing because only One could **see** and **hear** and **experience** this. The only One who could do that was Jesus. No one else was given such authority to execute both **salvation** and **judgment** to represent perfectly the very love and justice of a perfect God! And no one else could have the same testimony as the Father gave to Jesus because no one else has the **identity** of Jesus. *These truths dominate the mind of Jesus. These are how He sees Himself and His mission.*

Since all these things were uniquely true of Him, what is the effect and application to our lives? First of all, Jesus came to reveal the Father and His will to us. Although Jesus works in many ways was unique to Him he did call *us* to share in this work with Him. By observing what the "seen" God did, we can know the heart of the 'unseen' God and join Him in accomplishing His work.

Second, we too share in the authority to communicate love leading to salvation that He gives and warning against the judgment that He will give and is still to come.

And thirdly, because of our identification with Jesus, it is a *divine witness* that we share. If we confess Him before men, He will confess us before the Father who is in heaven.

Well, we finished Chapter 5 in the mind of Christ. When we begin next week, we will go to section 50 if you're following A. T. Robertson's outline of the chronological life of Christ, and we are going to be looking at three Scriptures from **Mark 2:23-28** and **Matthew 12:1-8** and **Luke 6:1-5**, and again, the occasion is another Sabbath Day and we are going to see what happens on that particular occasion.

Well, thank you for joining us and I hope you will go back and read the Scriptures and use this as a study tool to get your own 'meat' from God's Word as we pursue Challenger Deep, the Mind of Christ. God bless you. Take care.