

The Mind of Christ - Lesson 61

July 3, 2020

Welcome to the Mind of Christ and welcome to our new time on Fridays at 11:00 A. M. We are continuing our study of the Mind of Christ; I call it “Challenger Deep” which is a reference to the deepest part of the Ocean ... over 36,000 feet deep. I use that metaphor in order to try to capture the idea of how deep the mind of Christ actually is, and how we’re going to have to dive down pretty deep in order to understand it. This is an in depth study that took me seven years to complete; it took me seven years to get through all that Jesus said and did and record that in 21 journals. I’m in the third journal now in looking section 49 of “A Harmony of the Gospels” by A. T. Robertson. This is our third lesson in this section of **Scripture; John 5:1-47** and we are making our way through it and have already covered up to verse 24 so far. There will have on more section on this lesson next week.

I’m using the NASB version because it’s a very literal translation and since this is an in depth study I like to keep this translation as our major text. In **verse 24** Jesus said, “Truly truly I say to you, He who hears My word and believes in Him who sent me has eternal life and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.” Now He’s going to expound on this “*from death to life*” matter in the verses that follow. Let’s continue in verse 25.

John 5:24-32

²⁵ Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. ²⁶ For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life *in Himself*; ²⁷ and He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man. ²⁸ Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, ²⁹ and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, and those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment.

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.

Okay, we’re going to stop right here. There isn’t a really good place for us to stop so I’ll stop at verse 32 today to divide all this up because it’s one discourse by Jesus, but for the sake of time, that’s what we’ll do. So this picture of passing out of death into life is now applied to the resurrection of the dead and so if you think of going from death to life, think resurrection.

The ability to raise the dead resides “*in Jesus*” at that point in time, because the Father has granted Jesus to have life **in himself**. Jesus is not merely ‘alive’; He has the **ability to impart** life. Jesus will also have the ability to impart life finally, in the resurrection, but **while He was on earth**, He had the ability to impart life.

In verse 25 it says, “The hour is coming *and now is*. The main resurrection is still coming. It’s what Paul calls “The Day of the Lord” in **1 Thess. 4:13**... This will be a magnificent day in which the dead in Christ will rise and the living will be caught up with them to meet the Lord in the clouds or in the air. Even now, after 2,000 years, we are not unaware, and we are sons of light and of day and have been forewarned that Jesus **is** coming again and that there will be a resurrection on that day.

Just as hearing Jesus was and is essential to life, now as we spiritually pass out of death into eternal life, so will those physically dead have to pass out of death into life by hearing the voice of Jesus. So, there are two senses in which we pass from death to life. One is in the spiritual sense when we were spiritually dead and we pass over into life, but the other is when we are physically dead and we’re passing over into this new life.

John 11:43 is a perfect example of this. “Lazarus”, He said, “Come forth.” So, can the dead hear? He speaks about the dead hearing the voice of the Son of Man. Can the dead hear? Well, I suppose it depends on who is speaking to the dead. When **Jesus** speaks, the dead listen. Here, Jesus refers to Himself as the **Son of God**, in this particular text. He doesn’t often refer to Himself as the Son of God; He mostly refers to Himself as the **Son of Man**. But when He’s calling forth a dead person, at least in this case, He refers to Himself as the Son of God.

He continues to identify Himself with the Father; the very thing the “critics” who are here, (the Scribes and Pharisees in **John 5:17-18**). They don’t like Him doing that ... comparing Himself to the Father. Remember this is in the context of the man who was healed at the pool of Bethesda and it was done on the Sabbath day and Jesus is in the middle of explaining why the Sabbath laws really don’t apply to Him, because He is still working, He’s always working, and the kind of things He is doing in His relationship with His Father cannot come under some kind of Sabbath law.

The coming hour is reserved for all who are in the tombs according to verse 28 as He says a little bit later on, so they can come out of the tombs. But during Jesus’ life on earth, He called a few people out of the tombs or from the dead. The result will be “life”. Jesus judges live people ... not dead people. They have to be conscious and present in order to be judged. That’s why after someone commits a crime, if they’re killed, they can’t be prosecuted, because you can’t prosecute a dead person.

Here, Jesus emphasizes the dead hearing “His voice”. What of those who claimed to raise the dead by their voices? Is the voice of Jesus the only voice that can raise the dead? It seems so from this context because He has been given by the Father “life in Himself”. The ability to cause the dead to rise demands the One causing it to have life in Himself. The Father has life in Himself, and He has caused, or He gave to the Son, to have life in Himself. Notice that phrase in verse 26 ‘in Himself’ will be very critical for us to understand. The word life here is the word “Zoë” (ζωήν). The word Zoe is basically life or living existence. It is used in **Luke 16:25** when Abraham said to the rich man that “during your (Zoë) *life*”. It is used in **Acts 17:25** where it says, “It is God who gives to all *life*, breath and all things”. The word life is used in **1 Cor. 3:21-2** saying that ‘*life*’ belongs to the Christian. In **1 Cor. 15:19** we are to be pitied beyond all men if we have hope in Christ only in this “*life*”. So, if

the only hope we have is just for this life, then we are to be pitied because our relationship with Jesus is not just about a better quality of life here, but a better quality of life eternally. In **Hebrews 7:3** it is used of Melchizedek; he had no “beginning of days or end of **life**”. It’s also used in **James 4:14** saying, “We do not know what our **life** will be like tomorrow ...” There are just so many passages that speak of this Zoe life ... physical, spiritual, and of our possessions of it; it refers to humans and animals, and plant life, but in all of these life is “**dependent**” life. It is life given and sustained from outside of ourselves. So, when we talk about having life, we do not have life within ourselves, we have life that is ‘dependent’ life on something else. We have life conferred on us; the life of God and of Jesus though, is **in Himself** life. It’s not external life but is *self-generated* life. It’s *independent* life. It’s the difference between being contingent and being necessary. This is a major distinction between man and God and Jesus, of course. God and Jesus have life “in themselves”. We do not have life in ourselves. We can only have life if it is given to us, conferred on us and also sustained by someone who has life within themselves.

Does the language suggest that Jesus emptied Himself of this gift on coming to earth and at some point, does the Father return this quality to Him? I ask this because it says that God gave Him this ability to have life in Himself. In **1 Cor. 15:45** says, “So also it is written, ‘the first man, Adam, became a living soul.’ The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.” That’s someone who can vitalize, who can make alive, who can give life, who can quicken someone. **1 Timothy 6:13** says, “I charge you, in the presence of God, who gives **life** to all things”. **John 6:63** says, “It is the Spirit who gives **life**; the flesh profits nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and are **life**.” Then it is used in **2 Cor. 3:6** where “the letter kills but the Spirit gives **life**.” In **Galatians 3:21** Paul says “**Law cannot impart life**”, and he here equates **life** with righteousness; so there is a connection between righteousness and **life**. We’ll see some of that in the words he uses and talking about the judgment.

So, life is **in Himself**. It is self-contained. It is internal. It’s the difference between the sun and the moon. The sun generates its own light energy; it has its own life (only, of course, because God created it). But the moon has no life in it at all. It has not light in itself. It’s dependent on the sun for its light.

In **John 5:27** of our text, it says that “**He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man.**” So, what does this mean? The word “authority”, (εκουσαντες) exousia means ‘power to do something’, or ‘to execute’. Notice, He says He gave Him authority to execute judgment so we understand that that word has *authority* or the *power to do something*. It’s the power to do what, in this context? It’s the power to execute, that, is to make or to do, to express some action ... either a completed action or a continued action. So what are we to make of this? We have ‘**authority**’, ‘**execute**’ and the third key word in this verse is the word ‘**judgment**’. When we put those three words together, they form a picture. We begin to see how these concepts fit together.

The picture is very exact and it’s very specific. *Judgment* to be *just* must be *executed* but the *execution* must have *authority*. In order for a judgment to be just, it must be *executed* but the *execution* must come with *authority*. **Romans 3:26** says “The cross was justice”. Surely there was an execution. It was the carrying out of the sentence imposed based on the false judgment that was made by men, but right judgments made by God Himself.

So this was done with the authority of Pilate, an authority given to him from above, all the way back to God. But the ultimate authority of execute judgment is in Jesus' hands. That's why Jesus can say, 'nobody takes my life from me, I lay it down on my own'. He, in a sense, executed His own judgment. Jesus says this because He is the Son of Man. And "the Son of man" part here is important. It says He had given Him authority to execute judgment ***because He is the Son of Man***. When coupled with the other verses in this section, where son, and son of God is used, we see that all three convey a sense of ***authority*** and ***legitimacy*** of relationship to the Father. The 'Son of man' is not less authoritative than the 'Son of God' or just simply, 'the Son'. All refer to one and the same person ... Jesus. So, it's not the words that are used, necessarily, but it is the ***person in who*** resides the authority. One note is 'Son of man' does not have the definite article. It's not '***the***' Son of man, but just simply ***Son of man***. If you compare that to **Revelation 1:13** and **Revelation 14:14**, it says one "***like***" a son of man. In **Hebrews 2:6** it says in the Greek, "***What is man, that You remember him? Or a son of man, that you are concerned about him?***" What are we to make of this terminology?

Daniel 7:13-14 says, "I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven ***one like a Son of Man*** was coming, and He came up to the Ancient of Days and was presented before Him. ¹⁴ "And to Him was given dominion, Glory and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations and men of every language might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which will not pass away; and His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed." It depicts one ***like a son of man*** coming in the clouds into the presence of the Ancient of Days and given authority, glory, and sovereign power.

Jesus uses this phrase the most ... the phrase 'Son of man' more than anybody else. And He says that the son of man ***has*** authority to:

1. Forgive sins - **Matthew 9:5-6**
2. He has authority as the Lord of the Sabbath – **Matthew 12:8**
3. He will be 3 days and 3 nights in the heart of the earth – He has authority to do that – **Matthew 12:40**
4. He will send out His angels to weed His kingdom – Authority to do that **Matt. 13:41**
5. He is the Son of God – **Matthew 16:13-7**

There are so many more cases where He uses this idea of the Son of God or the Son of Man in conjunction with His authority. So the picture that Jesus paints here is the fulfillment of **Daniel 7:13-14**. ***Jesus was declaring His Messiahship in this verse, John 5:27.***

The Jews would have understood this; that when He uses the phrase "Son of man" and that He has the authority to execute judgment, they would have connected it to **Daniel 7:13-14**. ***Jesus knows this will get their attention.*** He knows exactly what He is saying when He's using this terminology. He follows with, "Do not marvel at this". To marvel means to admire, to regard with admiration, or to wonder at. For example, when the Centurion demonstrated his great faith in **Luke 7:9** it says that Jesus marveled at his great faith. This is what Moses did at the burning bush according to **Acts 7:31**. It means to reverence or adore. In **2 Thess. 1:10** when Jesus comes again, He will be 'marveled at' by believers – to be filled with wonder and astonishment. It is used in **Luke 4:22** in a synagogue at Nazareth when they "wondered" or "marveled" at His gracious words.

Some words “stun” us. They cause us to be taken aback. The way Jesus connected Himself with the Old Testament about the Messiah was ‘stunning’ to the crowds. Of course, if He were **not** the Messiah, His words **would be blasphemous**. Jesus offers us proof, eventually of His authority to judge by declaring that all in the tombs would hear the voice of the Son of man and will come forth. So I guess the authority is kind of in the proof of calling forth people from the tombs ... if they come forth **then** they know that He really has authority.

He’ll give a demonstration of this in **John 11:43**. All are going to hear His voice one day and they will not be able to resist it. They will come forth. Here, Jesus said that an hour is coming. The word hour is “hora” (ωρα). It can mean a ‘time’, a ‘season’ a ‘definite space’ or ‘division of time’ a day or division of it. Other places use the term as ‘a day’. It’s a period of time; it’s not necessarily an hour or a day, but a period of time. It’s a time known only to the Father when the dead will be summoned to judgment.

In **John 5:29** one might think that Jesus was setting a system of works or judgment based on good or evil deeds. He says, they “[will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment.](#)” He’s not talking here about a system of “works salvation”. It is true that our **deeds** are important but *they are a reflection of our faith*. The **good** deed is to *believe in the One the Father has sent*. The evil deed is to *reject the Son*. The verse must fit with all else that is said about salvation. To literalize the idea of “all in the tombs hearing the voice of Jesus” would be absurd if taken according to the science of the matter. How can a decomposed corpse hear anything? This reminds me of Ezekiel’s valley of dry bones and his being told to prophesy to the bones. Jesus has the ability to speak to the inanimate just as He or God did at creation, or the sea and the winds that obey Him when He said, “Peace, be still.” Perhaps the word here is accommodative language. He’s not using it literally, in a physical sense. The test of Jesus’ power and authority is concentrated in resurrection power; the greatest sign being His own resurrection. The hopelessness of death is replaced with the possibility of life for those who did good deeds, but those resurrected who committed evil deeds will only face judgment. Judgment is contrasted with life. This was also true in **John 5:24** (“[Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.](#)”)

In verse 30, Jesus returns to the idea that was found in verse 19. In verse 30 he says “***I can do nothing by my own initiative***” but in verse 19 He said, “[Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner.](#)” So in verse 30, He returns to this idea ‘of Himself’. It is kind of swapped out with the idea of ‘***on my own initiative***’. So let’s look at the difference between verse 19 and verse 30.

The phrase in 30 is a certain Greek phrase ... I won’t try to give you the Greek language here. It’s a certain Greek phrase here. If you compare it with verse 19 the two phrases look very similar. But not being a Greek scholar I had to do some research on this to compare the two phrases because they’re not exactly alike although they have similarities here.

From studying a little of the Greek language, what I can tell and from a speaker – a fellow named Geoffrey Horrocks on page 356 of his work, the phrases are equivalent terms. So, if

there is any difference it means one of them refers to “myself” and the other is found in the third person, “Himself”. The difference is that Jesus speaks in the third person in verse 19, and in the first person in verse 30. So in verse 30 it would be “on my own initiative” which is equivalent to “of myself”. This is the only distinction. I’m not sure why the New American Standard Bible didn’t keep it simple and just use the same phrase in 19 and in 30.

But even though all judgment was entrusted to the Son, He still judged according to what He hears. A fundamental truth of all judgment or discernment is first ‘hear’ and then ‘judge’... otherwise, we rush to judgment. This is a pretty practical application of judgment. If you want to judge correctly, you first have to hear the matter. That’s why they call it a “hearing”. We have a “hearing”. The goal is to make your judgment just. So judgments have to be just in order to be good judgments. They have to be equitable. They have to be innocent in nature. They have to be holy. They have to be right. They have to fit. It has to be proper. It’s acting “alike” to all, it’s even-handed. God is called the righteous judge in **2 Timothy 4:8**. A similar teaching is found in **John 7:24**, “Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment.” So, the kind of judgment has to be a righteous judgment, a judgment that is “just” or “appropriate”.

Jesus chastises the multitudes for not judging properly in **Luke 12:57**. They have great expertise in judging the weather by looking at the sky, so in matters of personal conflict, why don’t they judge what is right? Rather, they take it before others to the judge.

Paul makes a similar point in **1 Corinthians 6** about Christians going before pagans for a judgment instead of letting wise men in the church judge the matter. “Does any one of you, when he has a case against his neighbor, dare to go to law before the unrighteous and not before the saints? ² Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world? If the world is judged by you, are you not competent to constitute the smallest law courts? ³ Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more matters of this life? ⁴ So if you have law courts dealing with matters of this life, do you appoint them as judges who are of no account in the church? ⁵ I say this to your shame. Is it so, that there is not among you one wise man who will be able to decide between his brethren, ⁶ but brother goes to law with brother, and that before unbelievers?”

In **2 Thessalonians 1:5** we read, “This is a plain indication of God’s righteous judgment so that you will be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which indeed you are suffering.” We see in God’s righteous judgment that He will pay back the ones afflicting the Thessalonica Christians while giving relief to the others. In other words, God, when He comes back, God is going to repay those who are persecuting Christians but in the meantime He is going to give Christians relief. He’s going to give them some kind of ability to be able to stand up under the persecution. But when is this going to happen? When is the judgment on those persecuting Christians going to happen? It will happen when Jesus is revealed, dealing out retribution. These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction. The response of grace is there for those who have believed, but destruction for those who reject the Christ. This judgment is deserved according to **Revelation 16**. God gave those who kill the prophets what they deserve. Jesus gives this judgment at the end of **Matthew 23**. It’s the same thing. The judgment coming upon those who persecuted the prophets will be deserved.

Further study of this word will help us learn to make right judgments in our dealings with one another. In other words, if you want to study this further, the idea of how we render right judgments or correct judgments, there's a lot that the Bible has to say about this. But the key to his type of judgment is to be impartial, and nonpartisan to seek a **higher** will; the will of the One who sends Jesus. Jesus was so focused on the will of God; His judgments reflected this will.

So how do we come to make right judgments? The only way we can make right judgments is if they're centered in the will of God. In marriage, many conflicts can be avoided if both parties merely seek the will of God together instead of trying to persuade the other to accept their will. ***In any fight, there are three wills.*** There is the will of the husband, the will of the wife, and the will of God. This is the Mind of Christ.

So Jesus takes up the truth of validation. At first, verse 31 seems to be a switch in topics, but it's not. Verse 31 says, "If I alone bear witness of Myself, My testimony is not true." Jesus has been discussing His connection and interdependence with the Father. His enemies see this as "equality" with God. Now Jesus proclaims that His authenticity cannot be established without His Father's testimony. ***This is important on many, many levels.***

The principle of establishing a matter on the testimony of two or three witnesses is fundamental in law. **2 Cor. 13:1** says "This is the third time I am coming to you. Every fact is to be confirmed by the testimony of two or three witnesses." A person who testifies simply on his own without corroboration to support with evidence or authority can say ***anything***, and who knows what to believe? The practice of backing up your proof is preferred. Jesus says, "If I **alone** bear witness of Myself, My testimony is not true. The word "alone" is not actually in the Greek text ... it's implied. The word witness and testimony is the same word, and it gave rise to the word "martyr"; those who bore witness to Christ were often persecuted and killed for Him.

When Jesus says His testimony is not true, He does not mean He is lying. He means that the truth has not been established as truth merely by His own testimony. How does this apply to us? If **Jesus** needed backup or corroboration, then certainly **we** need it. We need God's witness or the Holy Spirit as in **Romans 8:16**, who testifies with our spirit that we are children of God. Or as in **1 John 5:7**, the three who testify ... the Spirit, the water and the blood. But often we need the witnesses of men as well. We should live in such a way that we have the testimony of others. Hopefully, many, who see us from many different angles and know that we are authentic, real and true.

Husbands and wives are especially important here. If we do not have the corroboration of our spouse who supposedly knows us better than anyone, what testimony on earth is greater. How do we get that testimony?

We're going to actually break at this point and we'll pick up again in verses 32-33 next week to get a closer look. We'll try to finish this chapter next week. This is an important section and really helps us to understand the credentials of Jesus, how He **was** His own credentials and how to verify His equality with God, His special relationship with God because that was essential to Him establishing the point concerning the Sabbath Day.

The point is that Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath, that He is still working the work that God has given Him to do. He has resurrection work. He has judgment work. He has a lot of work that God is giving Him to do. And the work that He did on the Sabbath Day with healing this man was not to be criticized or to be judged by these Pharisees who were persecuting Him. So, again, I hope you will join us next week here at 11:00 on Friday