John 5: 22-24 “In fact, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son, 23so that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him. 24Amen, Amen, I tell you: Anyone who hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He is not going to come into judgment but has crossed over from death to life.

Here is one of those sections where you really must pay attention to context. Context is so important, especially when you have a section where not once, but in actuality three times in this entire section Jesus will use the phrase, **“Amen, amen I tell you.”** That phrase says that Jesus is marking what is of eternal importance. It is a teaching you cannot ignore or overlook but must consider as important to the truth of salvation and eternal life.

So what is our context? It actually starts at the beginning of chapter 5. Jesus has once again gone to Jerusalem during a festival celebration. That means lots of people to see and hear what he will do and say. At this time, Jesus goes to the Sheep Gate where there is a pool. There are all sorts of sick people there. It is said that when the waters are stirred by an angel the first person to step in would be healed of whatever disease they had. I don’t know how long this has been going on or even how often the waters were stirred, but clearly something was happening because again we are told that the place was crowded with those waiting for the waters to stir.

There is one man there, we are simply told he was “sick.” He had been sick for thirty-eight years! He was there waiting for the waters to be stirred. His problem was such that when the waters were stirred, he couldn’t get in fast enough to be first. As the man said, **“I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up.”** Pay attention to what happens.

First Jesus asks him, **“Do you want to get well?”** Be careful! Jesus is not a fool. Of course the man wants to get well. He is sitting by this pool waiting for the water to be stirred! Jesus is asking this man this question so that the man’s whole attention is given to Jesus. It is clear the man knew Jesus was offering help. That’s why he mentions he has no one to put him into the pool. The man understands that Jesus is offering to help him but please note it is also clear this man does not have a clue about Jesus.

That’s right, the fame of Jesus, while growing is not yet fully realized. Clearly this man does not know that Jesus does miracles. Clearly this man does not know what Jesus teaches. In fact, this man does not even know who Jesus is because when asked later by the Jewish leadership who healed him on the Sabbath, he does not know. If you just think about all that is happening here you would recognize that this miracle is a real eye opener. This miracle is done without faith or confession but done solely by the power and word of Jesus! Don’t ever lose sight of that. The power and word of Jesus!

The miracle is done in the simplest form. Jesus tells the man, **“Get up! Pick up your mat and walk.”** No hocus pocus, no incantations or rituals, no anything but the command of Jesus. From the moment of that command the man must have felt the power, felt the healing taking place. I say that because you know as well as I do that if it were you or me there, we would have looked at Jesus and said, “Are you nuts? How are you going to heal me without putting me in the water? I can’t walk and you want me to get up? Yet I am telling you that before that man could even begin to think such things the power of Jesus was already washing over him. We are told, **“Instantly the man was healed.”** Whatever it was that was preventing his mobility was healed and more than that even the ability to stand, balance and walk was given or instantly restored to him.

Although the text does not tell us, it is clear that a commotion broke out. People had seen and heard what had happened. People saw this man get up and walk around. A buzz, a wave of excitement rushed through the crowd. During all of this, Jesus just quietly slipped away. Eventually the Jewish leadership came to find out what the noise was all about. A healing. A man had been healed. But it was the Sabbath and these men, these religious leaders, instead of realizing the wonder and glory of God in this, they are upset, upset that a man crippled for thirty-eight years was carrying his mat around. Now there is the very epitome of the phrase, **“Though seeing they do not see.”**

Eventually the leaders find out it was Jesus. Jesus later found the man and addressed him with the issue of faith. The man then went and reported to them the name of Jesus! Just before our words we find these words recorded. **“So the Jews began to persecute Jesus, because he was doing these things on the Sabbath”**...and…**”The Jews tried all the more to kill him because he was not merely breaking the Sabbath, but was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.”** Let those words sink in. All Jesus had said to them up to this point was, **“My Father is working right up to the present time, and I am working too.”** The Jews understood that Jesus was claiming to be God. They understood correctly that if God were Jesus’ Father that Jesus was God, the very fulfillment of what their very own Scripture and faith had proclaimed! The rest of this section is Jesus responding to their lack of faith, to their disbelief in God’s Word and power, really their rejection of God’s revelation and reality. That brings us to our text. Our theme: **HERE IS THE TRUTH!**

Jesus says, **“Amen, amen, I tell you; The Son can do nothing on his own, but only what he sees the Father doing. Indeed, the Son does exactly what the Father does. For the Father loves the Son and shows him everything he is doing. And he will show him even greater works than these so that you will be amazed. For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to those he wishes.”**

You have to think about these words. Jesus is clearly telling these men that yes, He and the Father are intimately linked. Jesus doesn’t do anything without the Father’s will and blessing and at the same time you grasp that Jesus is also letting them know that everything he does is the Father’s will and blessing. Jesus is also telling them how they can be sure that what he is telling them is absolutely true and factual. Watch for greater works! He just healed a guy sick for thirty-eight years by just commanding him and yet greater things were going to happen. As Jesus life unfolds, storms are stopped, thousands are healed, water is walked on, and crowds are fed. The wonders just don’t stop. Most important, there will be resurrections. The young man of Nain, Jairus’ daughter, and the raising of Lazarus. But don’t forget the dead being raised at the very same time that Jesus himself is raised from the dead. And if all of these things are true, then Jesus is indeed the Son of God, the Savior of the world, yes, God himself to be heard and believed.

There it is. Either Jesus is God’s Son, our Savior or he is just a delusional person, a person with a god complex. Either Jesus is all that He claims and shows himself to be or he is nothing. You have to make up your mind. You can’t have the attitude: “Yeah, I believe he is the Savior, but to treat him as God, to worship, praise, follow, strive after and die for….nah!” People, it is either all or nothing.

Yet the lesson is not done. Jesus goes on, **“In fact, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son, so that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him. Amen, Amen, I tell you: Anyone who hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He is not going to come into judgment but has crossed over from death to life.**

Again, the impact, the depth and point of these words. First, Jesus is the judge of all. The Father has put into the hands of Jesus all judgement. Next week, when you hear some of the rest of this section and it will become clear how Jesus is going to judge. Believe in him and be saved, reject him and you will stand before God with the full weight of the law standing against you. I can tell you if you think you will stand before God without Jesus, you will be lost to condemnation. What Jesus says is clear and straight forward. It is either him and salvation or the law and death.

Yet it is even more than that. As you study all that Jesus says here you become aware of the fact that without Jesus you don’t even have and know the true God. The full revelation of God is found in Jesus. Reject Jesus, change what Jesus says he is, deny Jesus on any level and you have denied the truth and reality of God the Father. In truth, you do not have God or even a god. You have your imagination. You have your wisdom and thoughts. You have your best guess and I can tell you right now that none of that will open for you the joy of eternal life and salvation. Because if there is one thing that this section makes absolutely clear it is the fact that without Jesus there is no eternal life and salvation at all.

Wow, just like our Old Testament reading says. The Old Testament speaks of judgment and damnation to the point where not even a root or branch of the ungodly will be left. Yet note, that those who fear God’s name, who believe God’s revelation and wonder, for them there is righteousness and healing, the Old Testament’s way of speak of eternal life and salvation.

And wow, the very lesson of the Epistle reading from Hebrews. And how did that reading conclude? **“And, just as it is appointed for people to die only once and after this comes the judgment, so also Christ was offered only once to take away the sins of many, and he will appear a second time—without sin—to bring salvation to those who are eagerly waiting for him.”** Jesus is the heart of salvation. Jesus is what the promise of God is all about. Just as pointedly, Jesus is the one who has died and paid for the sins of the world.

That is the greatest news there is. To be a believer in Jesus is not about living this way or doing those things that you have determined are the most god pleasing. Believing in Jesus is to trust that his sacrifice on the cross was done for you. That Jesus paid for your sins. That Jesus endured the eternal wrath of his Father just for you and me and all the souls of this world. That’s the message of Jesus. That you have a Savior who will grant the reality and eternity of His kingdom when the time is right.

By the way, you did notice what the Hebrew text reveals? It tells you that when you die, that is your judgment. You will stand before the Lord God. You will stand before God to be judged either with Jesus at your side pleading your case….which means you win! Or you will stand before God with Jesus standing opposed to you, putting upon you the full weight of the damning law and you will lose eternally!

And with all of this I now believe you can fully grasp what Jesus meant when he said in our text, **“Anyone who hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He is not going to come into judgment but has crossed over from death to life.”**

In Jesus our “life” has already begun. We are not filled with the horrors of sin, weighed down by the burdens of guilt, crushed by our iniquities or snuffed out forever. We are given life in Jesus. We understand the world differently. We see the world differently. We see the battles of good and evil. We grasp the struggle we have in temptations and the joy of being tested. We relish salvation free and sure without the need of works because Jesus did it all and yet we know that in Jesus our works abound to the glory of his Name. All because we hear his word and believe the message of eternal life He brings. Jesus is it. He is our hope, our confidence, our life, our sure defense and our eternal salvation! And just like that man was healed and walked because Jesus said so, so is our spiritual healing done in and through Jesus.

I pray that this marvel of Jesus, which escaped so many who even witnessed it, will be yours. Hear and believe Jesus. Our Lord. Our Savior. The complete revelation of God. Amen.