



Scott Turansky, Senior Pastor  
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## JOHN 5:16-47

John Series

I'm glad you're here today. I'd like you to open your Bibles to John 5 with me. As John 5:16 unfolds we see that Jesus is again scolded by the religious leaders. Jesus' response is very important.

I want to challenge you today to think about your own life. I want to challenge you today to live in a different dimension. I want you to think about some very important things. Jesus is going to respond to the religious leaders. His message to them from John 5:16-47 is a message that I think we all need. It's a message that's really transformed my life over the years. This one passage of scripture has been strategic.

I want you to know that if you do the things that are mentioned in this passage Jesus is going to talk about, you are also going to be offending some people, like Jesus did with the religious leaders. But if you do the things that Jesus is explaining in this passage you will experience God in a new way. I want to challenge you as you go into this new year to experience God in a new way.

Jesus tells us exactly how to do it in this passage. The principles I'm going to take and apply to our lives today come right out of the verses. I want you to see this. It's not something I'm bringing to the passage and saying, "Oh let's look at this passage to supply some ideas I have in my head." The principles come straight out of the scriptures today.

Watch as we go through and we're going to see how Jesus challenges the Pharisees and how He explains Himself. "This is why I live the way I'm living," Jesus says, and He helps us understand how we too can live.

*John 5:16: So, because Jesus was doing these things on the Sabbath, the Jewish leaders began to persecute him.*

As we saw in our last study, what Jesus had done was He healed a man who had been crippled for thirty-eight years. And He did it on the Sabbath. So now the religious leaders are challenging Him because they don't see the burden that was lifted from his heart; they only see the burden he's carrying around, the mat. Jesus said, "Take up your mat and walk and get out of here..." so he goes and does that and the religious leaders say, "Wait a minute. Why are you carrying your mat on the Sabbath day?" They're very into the rules and regulations and not seeing what God is doing.

I think it's in part because the Jewish leaders at the time misunderstood the purpose of the Sabbath. The purpose of the Sabbath as God instituted in the very beginning, He said after working six days and creating the world, "It is good," and then He rested on the seventh day. For us to be able to look at the work of God in six days and rest and enjoy that rest is what we're doing on the Sabbath day. That's the idea of resting.

Now we don't experience the Sabbath, that is rest, on Saturday like the Jewish people did at that time because we see our rest in Hebrews 4, in God Himself, and so we experience that rest that way. But they didn't understand the Sabbath so they were using the Sabbath as a rule book. You have to do this, this, and this. You can't do this, this, and this on the Sabbath day.

Jesus is going to help us understand why He does what He does, why He's working, and how we can be a part of it. That's going to be very important for us.

Jesus' response is going to give us the keys to experiencing God, the secrets to that, and it's powerful as we apply it to our lives. We are going to see in this passage the secret to Jesus' whole life.

We're going to see why He healed one man, not everybody, when He went to the pool that day and healed that one man who had been lame for thirty-eight years. Why one man? We're going to see why He healed him on the Sabbath day instead of another day.

We're going to see why Jesus chose twelve disciples. We're going to see why He often left a situation when the publicity started getting too great. We're going to see why He talked to a Samaritan woman and took a chance because He was talking alone to a woman, He was talking to a woman who was a different race. Why did Jesus do that? We're going to see why He healed a nobleman's son. All of these things we talked about in the last few weeks, why did He do all of these things?

We're going to learn from Him how we can participate in what God is doing, how we can be a part, following Christ's example, and see how to work where God is working.

Look at verse 17. *In his defense* (so Jesus is going to defend Himself now as He's going to recount why He's doing what He's doing) *Jesus said to them, "My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I too am working."*

Jesus was the Son of God so you would think the solution to Jesus' success or the key to His success would be something rather complex, something sophisticated, something hard for us to understand. It is not. It is very simple and in the simplicity is the profound application that we find for ourselves. It has to do with the Father.

What is your relationship with the Father? Jesus was so singularly focused in His life it just became so simple. Relationships were special to Jesus, ministry was important. Those things were valuable to Him, but why were they important? Because He had a relationship with the Father and because the Father is working.

Now the Father in the Trinity – we have the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit – the Father in the Trinity is credited with the planning, the organization, the overarching design of the plan and so on. That’s what the Father does. The Holy Spirit empowers us in our lives, comforts us, works out that salvation in our hearts. Jesus is the one who implements and He is the one who was there at creation. Jesus was the one who implemented salvation for us in the cross. All of those things come from Jesus Christ.

So we have the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. Jesus is saying the secret here is I’m connected with the Father. We’re going to look at five principles that come right out of this passage that help us know how to be connected to God and what God is doing. It’ll open our eyes to new areas of ministry.

Principle number one comes right out of this verse in verse 17. God is always at work. You see that in verse 17? *My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I too am working.*

God the Father is always at work. He’s creating, He’s sustaining, He’s guiding, He’s leading, He’s directing, He’s working out that plan. That’s a very important point here because God was working on the Sabbath and because God was working on the Sabbath, Jesus was working on the Sabbath. That’s the whole point here. Because Jesus did what the Father was doing.

Verse 18: *For this reason they tried all the more to kill him; not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.*

Jesus has their attention by healing a man. Then He introduces Himself. “I am the Son of God. He is my Father.” This just blew them away. In fact, this is a great verse to show anyone who’s involved in a cult (the Mormons, Jehovah witnesses and so on) who would diminish the value of Christ. They would certainly not say that Christ is God. They weaken salvation and they certainly detract from the person and work of Jesus Christ.

Great verse. Some say Jesus didn’t claim to be God. Well, I’ll tell you, the people who were listening to this were convinced that He was doing that. That’s why they want to kill Him.

*So they tried all the more to kill him; not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.*

Verse 19: *Jesus gave them this answer.* He’s going to continue the dialogue, giving us some more success principles for dealing with this working where God is working. *“Very truly I tell you, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does. For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does. Yes, and he will show him even greater works than these, so that you will be amazed.*

Principle number two is to work where the Father is working. That’s what Jesus is doing. He’s working where the Father is working. The reason Jesus did this thing on the Sabbath, the reason He healed the one man, the reason He goes to the Samaritan woman, the reason He heals a nobleman’s son, the reason He does it on the Sabbath is because that’s what God is doing. He

doesn't ask questions, He just says if God is working I want to be a part of that. So working where the Father is working is going to be the key thing.

Now the fact that Jesus could do what He did was He was so tied into the Father. He knew what the Father was doing and so He would work where the Father was working. That's why the simplicity is so profound for us. We get confused. We make mistakes in life. But if we would follow what the Father is doing we could be tied into the work that God is doing as well.

God is involved in all of the details of our lives. God is working and He's involved in details. Do you believe that? There are some people who believe that God is out there, He's big, but He's not really involved in the details of my life. I want you to know that God is involved in the details of each one of our lives.

For Jesus to know what the Father is doing that's going to be a really important concept. We have to understand Jesus a little bit more. Because you might say, "Jesus was God, therefore He had this connection. He knew what God was doing. He knew all about that." But we have to understand the personal work of Jesus.

Go with me for just a minute to some theology. I want you to understand what made the person of Jesus Christ when He was here on earth. He was man and He was God; what did that mean?

I want to take you to a passage in Philippians 2:6-8 which help us understand a little bit more about God and it gives us then some confidence in how we can work with the Father as well.

In Philippians 2 we're told about what makeup was in Jesus when He was on earth. He became *being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing.*

That word *nothing* by the way you're going to see several times this morning. We've already seen it once. I don't know if you caught it. Maybe I'll read those verses again in John 5. *Rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!*

When Jesus became a human being, He gave up something. He emptied Himself. That's what is used in this passage. He gave up something. The fact that He gave up something, we don't know exactly what all that means, but He gave up some access to Godhead in that moment.

So it was very important for Him then to be connected to the Father in John 5. Because when the Father is doing something, if He would be connected to that, then all these miracles would take place and good things would happen. You see, that's the key to being connected where the Father is working.

The Father is always working is principle number one. Principle number two: we want to work where the Father is working.

Look back there in John 5:19. As Jesus gave them the answer He said, *“Very truly I tell you, the Son can do nothing by himself.”* Interesting. We’re getting some insight into Jesus. I think some insight into ourselves. We can do nothing without the Father as well.

Principle number two is work where the Father is working. If you work where the Father is working then you’ll be able to do all kinds of things and you’ll be attached to the miracles God is doing and you go, “Whoa!” because we’re attached to the Lord.

Now God is interested in the details of life. So principle number three is this: God works in the details of your life. You want to see what some of those details are. You’ve just got to see this to be convinced that God is interested in the daily details of your life.

Psalm 139 says, *You know when I sit and when I rise.* You have to ask the question, does God know which foot you put into your pants in the morning first? Yes, He does! He knows when you sit down and He knows when you rise.

*You perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down.* He knows where you go. He knows when you lie down. *You are familiar with all of my ways. Before a word is on my tongue you, Lord, know it completely.*

Principle number three: God works in the details. We’re building to some points here and this is an important understanding. We understand that God works in the details.

Look at Matthew 10. *Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father’s care. And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So don’t be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.*

The sparrow is a small bird. We’re not talking about the eagle or the vulture. We’re not talking about the cardinal that’s so pretty or the woodpecker with the red head. We’re not talking about those. We’re talking about the sparrow, the insignificant common bird. God is concerned about that. God is interested in the details.

This is very important because if you start imagining your life and God is interested in the details then every step you take God is interested in that. If every step you take you’re working where the Father is working and you recognize God is working all the time, wow. We’re coming into some very interesting insight about how we should be living every day.

Let’s go to principle number four and then I’ll read the verses back in verse 20 of John 5. Principle number four is this: God reveals what He’s doing. Verse 20 says, *For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does. Yes, and he will show him even greater works than these, so that you will be amazed.*

And maybe you’re saying, “Yes, but He was the Son of God. No wonder He could see all the things the Father was doing. We’re just common people. He knew more than we do.” Yes, that’s definitely true. The reality is that because Jesus was perfect and because He was tied into the Father and there was that God connection, Jesus could do much more than we could ever do.

But there still is a principle that God is working in the details, God is always working, that we want to work where the Father is working, and fourthly, God reveals what He's doing. That means He will reveal to us. He will help us see what's going on around us in our daily lives every day. Powerful.

Let me show you some more verses that just illustrate this idea. In Ephesians 1:17-19 it says, *I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father (we're back to this name Father again), may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better.*

*I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened.* Open my eyes, Lord. I want to see what you're doing around in life every day. *The eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, and his incomparably great power for us who believe.*

Paul is saying I pray that your eyes would be open. I pray that for myself. Lord, would you just open my eyes so that I can see what you're doing in the daily lives of people so I can work where you're working.

Some more verses about how God reveals things to us. In John 12:26 – *Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me.* If you're going to serve God it implies that you know something about what He wants you to do.

These next verses are all in the gospel of John, the gospel we're in. Jesus is sharing some information now. He's going to elaborate and pass it on to us as we continue on in the verses.

Look at verse 5 of John 15. *"I am the vine; you are the branches."* This is Jesus speaking and He's talking about our own personal lives, the daily stuff we do in our lives. Jesus is saying, *"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit."*

Look at the next words – *apart from me you can do nothing.* Jesus says without the Father I can do nothing.

When Jesus came to earth it says He gave up. He became nothing. Isn't that interesting? We're not just talking about a little bit; it's nothing. We can do nothing without being connected to the Father, in this case without being connected to the branch.

One more passage in 15, in that same passage there. *I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you.*



The point is, there is an intimacy that we have with God that's built around relationship that God reveals to us what He's doing. Do you want to know what God is doing? Then you want to look around in life, be sensitive to the Holy Spirit. Be sensitive and watch what is God doing in any given situation.

Sometimes He speaks through His word. Sometimes He speaks to us through a whisper inside of our hearts. Sometimes the voice of God comes to us in the most unlikely fashion, what we don't expect. A mean neighbor, and God is speaking to us through the mean neighbor. A critical spouse, an angry child, a harsh boss, a police officer. And sometimes God speaks to us in the midst of that. God sometimes speaks in the most unexpected ways.

I like the way God taught Elijah this very important message to be careful not to just box God in, but recognize that God reveals Himself and speaks to us in lots of different ways.

You see, here's Elijah's story. Elijah went on to Mount Carmel for the big battle between the Baal prophets and Elijah the prophet. And Elijah poses a test. "I'll tell you what we do. Let's both build altars. You pray to your god and see if he comes down and consumes the offering. I'll pray to my God and we'll see what happens." They said, "That's a great idea."

So 950 Baal prophets get together. They are up there on the Mount and they're dancing around. About midday Elijah starts taunting them and says, "Where's your god? Maybe he's traveling somewhere. Maybe he's busy. Maybe he can't hear you." They continue to dance around and cut themselves.

These Baal prophets go on until late afternoon and that's when Elijah says, "Okay. Enough for you guys." The Bible says he calls all the people around and he says to them, "Go down and get some water." So they get the water and three times they put water all over the altar.

When they put the water all over the altar Elijah just prays and says, "God, reveal to these people that you are the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Reveal to them that you are the powerful God that they should serve." Immediately the lightning or fire comes down from heaven, consumes the sacrifice on the altar, consumes the whole altar itself, burns up all the water that is there, and leaves a hole. And people are just amazed by all of that. Elijah, I'm sure, himself was amazed to be used by God in the powerful way that God wanted to use him in that moment.

The next week Elijah is depressed. Amazing. He comes off this mountaintop experience and now he's depressed. For forty days he's by the brook there just depressed and discouraged.

At the end of forty days, God says, "Elijah, I want to speak to you. Go up in the mountain (this is a different mountain), go up on this mountain, go up the cave, I want to speak to you." Now God has something He wants to teach Elijah about how He speaks to Him. So Elijah goes up there and there is this big lightning storm.

The Bible says – well let me read it to you – in 1 Kings 19:11-13: *Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. After*

*the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper. When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave.*

God speaks to us sometimes in ways that we don't understand. If our eyes are open, if we're connected to the Father He will speak to us, He will reveal, He will show us what He's doing. God is always at work. God is connected to the intimate details of our lives. We want to work where the Father is working. God reveals Himself to us.

All of those things are the things that we need to understand. It's going to open up new areas of thinking than we ever thought before. We'll start living on a different plane in our lives.

To experience God we need to work with Him. Have you ever thought, "God must be behind that. Ooh God must be doing..." If you ever think that, you want to say, "Okay. How can I be involved in it?" because God is at work and He wants us to be involved in what He's doing. If you see God working in someone's life, you want to go there and encourage them. If you see God convicting someone, you want to be there to help them and to encourage them.

You might see God working in a person's life and know that's a person that needs Jesus Christ right now. They need to accept Jesus Christ into their life. If you see God comforting someone, you want to be there to comfort that person.

If you see God doing something in someone's life, you want to be there to be a part of what God is doing. I'm not just talking about answers to prayer and I'm not just talking about a tingly feeling that we have. I'm talking about watching God work in the very intimate details of life and being a part of that and seeing how we can be a part of what's going on. God shows you what He's doing, not so you can take over but so you can partner with Him, you can work along in the business that He's involved in. He wants you to be His business partner. He wants you to be part of the family business. It's His family and He's directing things, He's moving, He's working in life, and He's saying, "Hey, I want you to be a part of this. I want you to work where I am working."

About a year and a half ago I came to this church as a pastor because Carrie and I came here on a Sunday and we said, "God is doing something here. We want to be a part of what God is doing." Since then, a number of people have come.

I love the story of John and Diana. They drive forty-five minutes every Sunday morning to get to church here because they want to be a part of this. God is doing something here and they see that and they want to be a part of that. The Browns, the Snees, Tim Stewart, the DeLisis have all said, "God is doing something here and I want to be a part of that."

Many of you have come to that same conclusion. God is doing something here; I want to be a part of it. I'm not just talking about the church. That's just one way we see God working. I'm talking about the intimate things in our lives, the small things that are going on in our lives. God is at work. I want to be a part of it. Let's see Him work. Let's watch Him work.



When we start living our lives on that plane, I would call this level three thinking. I'm trying to teach this to children through parents in our parenting ministry.

Level one thinking is the things we do every day. We play our video games or we are doing our grocery shopping or we're driving in the car. That's level one.

Level two thinking is the responsibility thinking. What should I be doing instead? What other things do I have? What day is it today? What time is it? That's level two thinking. That's just being responsible and many children need to move to that level.

But level three thinking is what is God doing in this situation right now? I'm trying to help children ask that question. Can children ask that question – what is God doing in this world right now? Yes they can. But it's not just children; it's us too. We want to be asking that very same question.

Let's go on. Verse 21 in John 5: *For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it.*

Now Jesus is defending Himself before the religious leaders and He's coming to a point here where He's saying, "This is the separating factor. You must understand that there is life in Jesus Christ. There's life in me that is a completely different life." That's what we're talking about.

When we work where the Father's working, we're working in a whole different dimension. So He's saying, "I healed this guy, this crippled guy. This one man by the pool here, I healed him because that's where the Father was working. I did it on the Sabbath because it's where the Father is working." The way that you'll know where the Father is working is you understand life and how to have that life.

Verse 22: *Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him. "Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life. When you cross over then from death to life, then you're able to see the things the Father is doing.*

*Very truly I tell you, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself. And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man.*

*Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out—those who have done what is good will rise to live, and those who have done what is evil will rise to be condemned.*

Now go back to 24 again. I just want to look that verse because I think that's the key verse in this whole area that he's sharing that helps us understand the separation. If you want to move from

death to life, that's the key in verse 24. *Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life.*

It's the separating factor that allows you to work where the Father is working. It's the doorway through which we enter into this new world.

If you're here today and you've never accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, that is your first step and you will see God working in your own life right now. You'll see that God is leading you to a place and you say, "Whoa, this is amazing. I want to get on board with this." So you go through the doorway of salvation and it opens up this whole new world where you see God working continually in your life.

In order to do that we first have to recognize the word 'nothing' in the passage as we read today. We are nothing. We start thinking, "I did this. I feel good because I did this. I accomplished that." We are nothing. When we have sin in our lives it corrupts us, it messes with us, it hinders us from having a personal relationship with God. That sin problem has to be dealt with first before we can enjoy the benefits of the life that God calls. That's why we need a Savior to rescue us, to save us from our sin problems so we can move from nothing to being connected to the Father.

That's the message of salvation is accepting Jesus Christ as our personal Savior and enjoying Him in our lives. Once we do that, then we can practice watching God work and that's when life gets really fun and interesting.

Principle number five comes in verse 30. This is the last principle I want to share with you. Verse 30: *By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me.*

The principle is we need to please the Father. That's our goal in life, to please the Father. We need to submit to the Father. We're seeking one thing and that is to serve God in our lives. It's a God thing. I'm not doing my own thing; I'm doing a God thing. I'm serving the Lord in my life.

Jesus shares these principles about how He works with all these people. Now what He's going to do is He's going to give His credentials and He's going to share with them what He does.

He first does this miracle to get their attention. He heals one man. Then He introduces Himself as the Father. Then He explains how He works with the Father in order to get things done and that's why I did it. Let me now give you my business card, that's what Jesus says.

In the Old Testament it says *by the testimony of two or three witnesses* something is paid attention to. Jesus is going to give us four witnesses mentioned in these next verses. You want to see God work? Well then let's look at the four witnesses, the four testimonies that are presented.

Verse 31: *"If I testify about myself, my testimony is not true. There is another who testifies in my favor, and I know that his testimony about me is true.*

The four testimonies are going to be John the Baptist, the miracles that he does, the Father's voice at his baptism, and the scriptures. I'll just read them, but I want you to know that's where we're going.

The people are not believing. Not because they don't know the testimonies, not because they don't have evidence; they're not believing because they have a heart problem. We're going to see that in the passage as we go along as well.

I think some people say to themselves, "I can't trust Jesus because if I trust Jesus then I'm not going to be able to do these things I really like to do or I'm going to have to do these other things that I don't want to do." It's a problem. Some people have this contract view of God. If I do these things, God's going to be pleased with me and so on. The Pharisees had that problem too. The contract view of God says I've got to do these things on the Sabbath and then I'll be righteous.

God has a whole other plan for us. It's such an exciting plan that we have.

Just a few weeks ago I was working with a young man, a teenager in my office. I'm talking to him about the exciting relationship with the Lord that we can have. I said to him, "Having a personal relationship with God and watching Him work is more exciting than video games." He says, "I don't think so."

Here's a kid who's really into video games; my goal was to try to help him see that living the Christian life and watching God work in your life is more exciting than video games. Do you believe that? Yes, it's powerful. I don't know. I'm still working on him.

Verse 33: *"You have sent to John and he has testified to the truth.*

Verse 34: *Not that I accept human testimony; but I mention it that you may be saved. John was a lamp that burned and gave light, and you chose for a time to enjoy his light."* John the Baptist was the one who said, *"Look, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world."* That was testimony number one.

Verse 36: *"I have testimony weightier than that of John. For the works that the Father has given me to finish—the very works that I am doing—testify that the Father has sent me.*

What works has the Father given to Jesus to do to finish? Well example number one, a man here has been healed of being lame for thirty-eight years. Miracles that Jesus did are the demonstration that He's from God. It's the testimony.

But wait, there's more, Jesus says. Verse 37: *And the Father who sent me has himself testified concerning me. You have never heard his voice nor seen his form, nor does his word dwell in you, for you do not believe the one he sent.*

So witness number three is the Father's voice. You remember at the baptism – *"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,"* He says.

And the last witness is the scriptures and that's in verse 39. *You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life.*

Jesus is explaining salvation to them. *"Come to me and you will have life."* If we look through the scriptures we'll see even in the Old Testament over 300 prophecies in the Old Testament were fulfilled by Jesus. The scriptures are a testimony that say, "Get saved. Get saved." God shares those testimonies with us and that's the decision we need to make.

Verse 41: *I do not accept glory from human beings, but I know you. I know that you do not have the love of God in your hearts.*

See, it's a heart problem. It's not more testimony, it's not more witnessing that they need; it's a heart problem. They're missing something inside of their hearts.

*I have come in my Father's name, and you do not accept me; but if someone else comes in his own name, you will accept him. How can you believe since you accept glory from one another but do not seek the glory that comes from the only God?*

The Pharisees had a contract view about their relationship with God and sometimes we get caught in that too. "Okay, if I become a Christian I've got to go to Sunday school and I've got to go to church and I've got to change that thing in my life. That's for sure. I've got to give to the church. I've got to do this. Oh man, I've got to do that too. And so if I do all those things then wow I'm in."

That's not how God designed the relationship with us. God designed it to be not a contract. We're not an employee of God. We're adopted into His family. There's a relational component there. It means that we learn to understand how much Jesus loves us and cares for us. In the midst of that relationship that's when we get to see the Father working, that's when we get to see what's going on. It's relationship that is the key.

So Jesus demonstrates how this new relationship works. You get in contact with the Father, it opens up a new life, you start seeing things differently, and you start working where the Father's working.

The problem is, we work where we want to work. So we start doing this, we start doing that. And we think, "Oh that's a good idea." The problem is our good ideas sometimes end in failure or they get really frustrating because we're not working where the Father is working.

Five principles it seems to me that describe the relationship in this passage between the Father and Jesus that apply to our lives. Number one: God is always at work. Number two: work where the Father is working. Number three: God works in the details of life. Number four: God reveals what He's doing so we can be a part of it. And number five: seek to please the Father.

Let's read to the end of the chapter to conclude this section. Verse 45: *"But do not think I will accuse you before the Father. Your accuser is Moses, on whom your hopes are set. If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me. But since you do not believe what he wrote, how are you going to believe what I say?"* thus ending His statement that He's making to these people in helping them understand the truth of who He is.

If they would just look at the Old Testament, you look at the sacrifices, you look at the tabernacle, you look at all of the priestly duties, and you see Jesus Christ. That's what He's saying. If you see Jesus Christ at work, then you would believe in me.

One more story I want to give you from the Bible that I hope will inspire you to live a life that has your eyes looking differently for what the Father is doing. It's a story that comes from the Old Testament. It's the story of Elisha.

Elisha had a surprise attack come to him and around the city there. The way they found out about it is a servant goes out in the morning. The servant got up in the morning, the sun comes up, and the servant would go out and he's getting, not the newspaper, but he goes out and gets the wood for the fire or he goes out and gets the water for the day. The servant goes out, he looks out, and there's an army surrounding them. The enemy army surrounding the city and he just doesn't know what to do. He goes, "We are in trouble. We've got a big problem here."

It reminds me of some of us sometimes. We look at the problems in our life, we go, "This is really big. I've got a major problem in my life. I don't know what I'm going to do."

He runs into the house. 2 Kings 6:15-17: *When the servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city. "Oh no, my lord! What shall we do?" the servant asked.*

*"Don't be afraid," the prophet answered. "Those who are with us are more than those who are with them." And Elisha prayed, "Open his eyes, Lord, so that he may see." Then the Lord opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. Whoa.*

I pray that God will open our eyes. Because if we start seeing what God is doing and we start connecting ourselves to what God is doing, amazing things happen in our personal lives, amazing things happen in our church life. I want to work where the Father is working. Let's do that together. Okay? Let's pray.

[PRAYER] Father, the deepest desire of our heart is to serve you and to love you and to get to know you. We want to be used by you. But we can so easily get caught up in the individual day to day stuff that happens in our lives. But, Lord, I pray that you'd break through all of that and help us see you. Help us to work where you're working, to trust you in everything that we're doing. Change our hearts so that our number one desire is to serve you in everything that we do. Lord, we want to join you in your work that you're doing in the world. Give us the insight, the knowledge. Show us what you're doing in the details of our lives and the details in those around

us. We will walk through those open doors that you provide for us to serve you and to partner with you. In Jesus' name, amen.