

Who is Jesus?: The True Testimony

John 21:20-25

Introduction

- This is the Jesus we bear testimony to in John's Gospel. He is the Christ! He is God!

The True Testimony is Christ (vv.20-23)

- Christ is our Testimony (vv.20-21)
 - Not even those who bear witness to the Christ
 - Even John, who was very close with the Savior ("reclining at table close...")
 - Even John, who was very close with Peter
 - This is a valid friendship
 - It is easy to be distracted by secondary agents, instead of directed to Christ through their testimony
 - Peter was distracted by John and his condition
 - Calvin points out that given Peter's gracious choice by Christ, that he could be saying "why not him?" (possible – certainly consistent with our human nature to question God's gracious choice – We know it's His choosing and it's grace upon grace, yet we feel that grace must be given for some reason, which, by the way, would make it something other than grace!!!)
- Christ is who we Follow (vv.22-23)
 - In focusing on other witnesses, we can fashion our lives around fallen, finite people, rather than following Christ, the God and maker of the Universe!
 - We are to cease concerning ourselves with what others are doing and make sure that we are following faithfully.
 - There is no accounting for what others do
 - Our responsibility and accountability is directly with Christ

- Our speech is to be concerned with Christ and Him crucified, not guess-work, folk-tales, or speculations
- Christ will work according to His sovereign will and pleasure, not our plans (necessarily)
 - **Phil.2:12-13**
 - The scripture record and church history proves that God uses different people in different ways. For example, Calvin and Luther were both prime "martyr" candidates but were sustained to give great written record of the Reformation and its theological foundations
 - This is where Christian biography can be very helpful (even therapeutic, if I may use that word) – Long Line of Godly Men, by Steve Lawson / The Swans are Not Silent series by John Piper
 - Essentially, be guarded and make sure you read about people of the faith who will spur you on to the Scriptures and to follow Christ, rather than their own example per say.
- Guard against divisions (especially around Christian "personalities") – **1 Corinthians 1**
- It should also be noted that within this is an unhealthy focus on the return of Christ
 - Christ knew in v.22 what Peter was really asking in v.21.
 - The emphasis is on "follow me", not "figure me out"
 - We have to avoid the extra-biblical beliefs to drive our biblical beliefs
 - Similar rebuke to that of **Acts 1:7-8**

The True Testimony is Christ, the Living Word (v.24)

- John is the witness bearing the true testimony about the Christ
 - Validity of testimony and intimate understanding of who Christ is (**v.20**)

- Defends apostolic work in much the same way as Paul...and for the same reason(s)
 - **Titus 1:1-3**
- John's witness is that Jesus is the Christ, the Living Word
 - **John 1:1-3,14** (Carson points out that v.14 is the strongest help with the "we" in 21:24)
 - **John 20:30-31** (identity)
- John's witness is through the written living Word testifying about the Christ the Living Word
 - **John 20:30-31** (record of His identity)
 - **Heb. 4:12**
 - Practical approach:
 - Witness to the Word
 - Written Word
 - Knowledge of the Word (Christ)

The True Testimony is Sufficient (v.25)

- More works than could be recorded
- These Words are recorded by real men through whom the Holy Spirit worked
 - John's freedom with the language
 - Peter's own testimony in 2 Peter 1:20-21
- The works / words recorded are enough for faith in this life
- Sufficient to follow Christ
 - **Heb. 4:11-13**
 - **2 Peter 1:3,16-21** (Peter's testimony)
 - WHY, THEN, DO WE ATTEND TO SO MANY OTHER SOURCES AND RESOURCES FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT?
 - The answers we don't have are answers we don't need. We must heed what is revealed, for that we will be held accountable!

Application

- The testimony of the written record of Scripture is of Jesus the Christ. Everything written in the Bible points to Christ. That's why you must reckon with HIM! Not a follower of His, but Christ Himself.
 - Do you know Him? There are no introductions in heaven, either He knows you or He does not.
 - Do you follow Him? Have you concerned yourself with others (only to be disappointed) or meaningless myths (even extra-biblical beliefs) but actually mission the point? The Gospel?

Benediction

- READ TOGETHER **1 JOHN 1:1-4**