



WEEK 3 || *JOHN 5*

THE VIOLATION

As we make our way through the Gospel of John, Jesus continues to be questioned by those around him: Who is he?; where is he from?; what authority does he have to teach and heal? The judgement continues in John 5. This time it's the pious religious leaders who judge Jesus for not being 'religious' enough.

ISRAEL JUDGE JESUS

Read John 5:1-16

1. What does the 'invalid' we meet in v5 want from Jesus?
2. What does this man receive from Jesus instead?
3. What does Jesus do that offends the Jewish leaders? Why is it so offensive?
4. Read **Exodus 20:8-11**. Do you think the Jewish leader's criticism was founded?

Exodus 20:8-11

8 "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. 9 Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 10 but the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns. 11 For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

...WHICH JUDGES THEM

The Jewish leaders were so concerned with keeping the law of the Old Testament that they had made a whole lot of other rules that ensured the Israelites didn't even come close to breaking the law. One of those extra laws was designed to prevent people working on the Sabbath: no one was allowed to even carry anything on the Sabbath, in case that crossed the line into 'work'.

Healing on the Sabbath also looked a lot like work to the religious leaders, and so they judge Jesus as having broken the laws of the Old Testament. The sad reality is they are more concerned with rule keeping than they are with the healing, or more importantly, the one who has the power and authority to perform this remarkable miracle.

Read John 5:17-47

5. How does Jesus defend himself? What authority does he claim?

6. In verses 31-47, others are brought in to testify about who Jesus really is. What do their testimonies add to understanding Jesus' identity?
7. Who are the Israelites ultimately dishonouring when they dishonour Jesus? What are the consequences for them?
8. What's the outcome for those who honour the Son?

WHAT'S YOUR VERDICT?

The religious leaders were so fixated on God's laws that they missed God himself when he turned up in person - they missed the forest for the trees. God's law reveals his character and was intended to turn the Israelites' hearts back to him. The compassion Jesus has for the crippled man, and the healing itself, gives testimony to who he truly is - God's son!

But the religious leaders had missed the point and their accusations against Jesus brought judgement on themselves. Your attitude to Jesus is your attitude to God, because he is God come among us. How you respond to Jesus determines how God will respond to you.

9. How do the testimonies we've seen and heard from John change your perspective on who Jesus is?
10. It turns out Jesus isn't so much the command keeper as the command giver. The ultimate authority. Are there any areas of your life which don't really reflect that?

How is this related to how you see Jesus?

What could change that for you?

Read Exodus 16:1-20 and John 6:1-69 in your own time before your group meets next week.