

John 5:16-30

Jesus: Judge of the World

Scripture: John 5:16-30

Memory Verse: John 5:24 "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears my word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life."

Lesson Focus: Jesus makes it very clear in this section that He is equal with God the Father in nature, power, and in judicial authority. Jesus as Judge is not very popular but is very clearly taught in this section of Scripture. We will not sugarcoat this truth but challenge the kids to refer to Jesus as "Your Honor" in faith and trust.

Activities and Crafts: Coloring Picture of the Final Judgment, Word Search of different terms from lesson, Bring it Home Discussion for 3rd - 5th.
Craft for 1st & 2nd: Gavel

Starter Activity: Everyday Judgments

This activity should help get the kids thinking about the basics of making judgments. Making judgments about things is something that they do subconsciously every day. First ask the kids what it means to make judgments and then offer several examples to get some discussion going.

Q: What does it mean to judge or make judgments?

A: While the Bible talks about God's judgment (which we will get to), our focus right now is on making decisions. We make judgments every day about things where we will weigh the facts before us, envision the outcomes, and make an informed decision.

Teachers: Below are a few ideas to get the discussion started. Consider bringing in some of these objects to enhance the discussion or come up with your own!

- 1) Breakfast cereal: How many of you make judgments about which breakfast cereal you have in the morning? (i.e. Frosted Flakes vs. Wheaties) *
- 2) Halloween Candy: After saying "trick or treat" you are presented with all of these candy options. Which one will you choose? (i.e. Snickers vs. Starburst)
- 3) Colors: Imagine you get to repaint your room any color that you want. What color would you decide and what factors would inform your decision?

In our lesson today, we are going to learn something very, very important about Jesus. In our study of John so far, we have seen Jesus described as the God-man, the Lamb of God, a Miracle Worker, and the Savior of the world Who can do the impossible. Today we are going to see Him as the great Judge of the world. And not of candy or cereal, but of US!

Bible Study:

John 5:16: The struggle between the Jews and Jesus is only going to heat up as we continue in the gospel of John.

Q: How many of you have ever experienced jealousy? Sometimes you feel envious of what others have (and that is one side of jealousy), but the other side of jealousy is being fiercely protective of something you have. For example, if you have a close friend and some new kid shows up and your friend starts to spend more time with this new kid (and less with you), you may feel very jealous for your friend!

If you aren't careful, you may feel great anger and hatred toward this new kid (which is not OK!). That is what happened with these Jews, many of them religious leaders. They were "at large and in charge" of everything religious so that people listened to them, but now this Jesus guy shows up and people start flocking to Him! They are losing their power and popularity and desperately want to hold onto that!

John 5:17-18: Jesus points out that the works of God are being done before their very eyes! Remember last week Jesus miraculously healed a man (a very good thing), but many of the Jewish people didn't care because He did it in a way that broke THEIR rules (healing on the Sabbath day). They were blinded by their jealousy!

Notice also something very important in v. 18: The bad guys understood Jesus to be claiming to be God here. Remember that Jesus is the "God-man". This seemed outrageous to them and so they hated Him all the more. *

John 5:19-20: Instead of denying that He was God, He confirms it! The Father and Son are completely united. Think of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, one God in three Persons, as the perfect team working together with One purpose.

Q: What does it mean to marvel at something? What are some things that you marvel at? Jesus says that He will perform even greater works so that they may marvel at Him and in doing so also marvel at the Father.

John 5:21: Whoa! Jesus makes a bold statement here. He says that He has the power to raise the dead and give life, just as the Father does! To be clear, other biblical characters have raised people from the dead (i.e. Peter, Elijah). But they never claimed to have that power, but that the power came from God. Jesus is claiming to have that power Himself!

John 5:22-23: So far we have seen Jesus claim that He is equal with God in being and in power. Here we see Jesus say that He is equal with God in authority!

Q: What does it mean to have authority?

A: To be "the boss" or "the big cheese". The one that we should HONOR! (v. 23)

Q: If you go into a courtroom, who has the ultimate authority? A: The judge!

Teachers: We will leave a judge wig and gavel in class. Consider inviting a few volunteers up to put it on and "judge" between something. Perhaps offer them two different kinds of candy and have them use the gavel to "judge" or decide which one they want! *

In a court of law, people refer to the judge as "**Your Honor**".

Q: What does it mean to HONOR someone? A: To respect, obey, or praise that someone. Jesus makes it very clear that if we are to honor God the Father correctly, we must also honor God the Son. *

John 5:24: There is a lot to unpack in this verse! This is the second time Jesus tells them to listen very carefully, because He is going to tell them something very important!

Q: How many of you have taken medicine when you are sick? Does the doctor or your Mom "carelessly" instruct you on how to take the medicine? NO! They are very SERIOUS and give you very careful instructions that you must follow! *

In the same way, Jesus is being very SERIOUS here and saying that one must hear His word and believe (respond in faith) if you want to be saved from the judgment and punishment you deserve for your sin. *

John 5:25: Jesus, for the third time, uses this phrase to get their attention and listen! *

Q: How many of you know what zombies are? Jesus is saying that all of us are like "sin-zombies", dead in our sin, until the moment when we believe in Him and pass out of death and into life! At that point, we are no longer sin-zombies, but we are alive in Christ! Back in John 3 we learned about being born-again. When that happens, God's Holy Spirit INVADES us and we are no longer sin-zombies at war with God, but we become God's children at war with sin! **Teachers:** We will leave pictures of a Minecraft Zombie Villager and a cured Villager. Consider using these to further reinforce this point! *

John 5:26-27: Jesus says once again that He is the boss and has been given all authority as Judge. We talk a lot about Jesus Christ being the great Savior of the whole world (which is true) but the Bible also teaches that He is the great Judge of the whole world! *

John 5:28-30: In the beginning of our lesson we talked about how we make judgments about things we like and don't like. * But when we talk about God's judgment, it is much more serious. When God judges, He determines where people will be forever! Jesus says here that ALL will come forth before Him to stand before His judgment seat. No one can escape this! There are only two outcomes:

- 1) Eternal life with God forever
- 2) Eternal punishment away from God forever

Or C.S. Lewis, the author of the Narnia stories put it this way:

- 1) People who say to Jesus, "Your will be done".
 - Their lives were characterized by giving Jesus honor and living Jesus's way. They are welcomed into heaven because of their faith in Jesus who forgave their sins.
- 2) People to whom Jesus says, "Your will be done".
 - Their lives were characterized by dishonoring Jesus, ignoring or rejecting His ways. They will be judged and punished as they deserve (in hell) for their sins.

Imagine yourself now standing before the throne with Jesus sitting at the right hand of the Father. You must give an account of everything you ever did! How will it go for you? *

Key Point: If you're not a believer in Jesus, it will not go well for you. Call upon the coming Judge, Jesus Christ, for mercy right NOW. Admit that you are guilty and that you need a Savior! And He will forgive you and heal you! No longer will you be a "sin-zombie"!

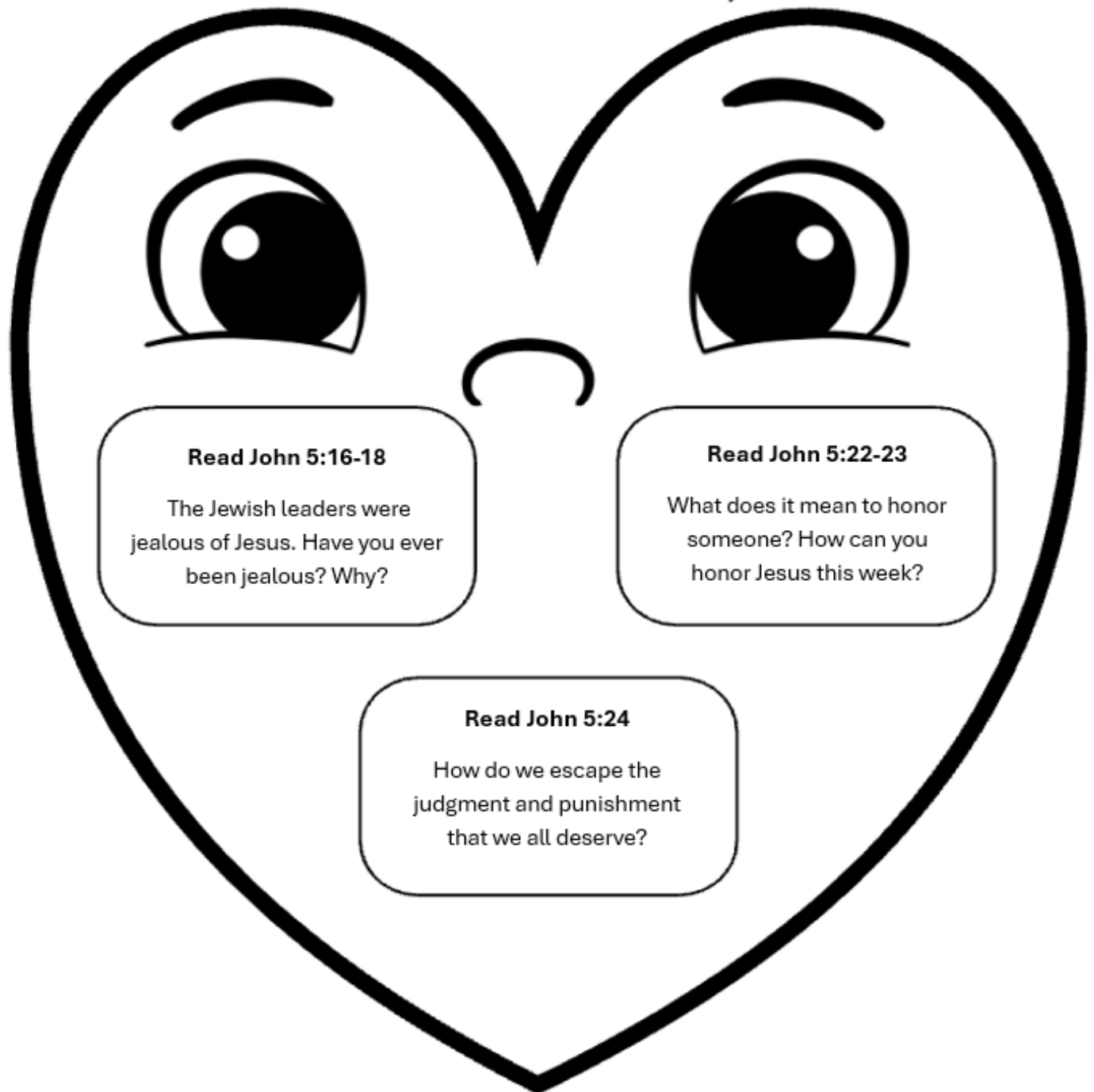
If Jesus Christ is your Lord and Savior, then HONOR Him every day. Show to all those around you by the judgments you make, that Jesus Christ is who you honor and follow.

If you do, then when you stand at this judgment seat, Jesus will look to the Father and say, "*That one is mine. I paid for his/her sins. Forgiven!*". (**Teachers:** Consider using the gavel as you make this point) If you don't, then you will have to pay for your sins on your own in hell forever!

This fact of final judgment is taught throughout the whole Bible. It can be scary and it is not popular, but it is the truth! We must also remember the amazing promise of Jesus in v. 24 that we are only saved by faith and trust in Him. Then we joyfully cling to His promise that "*there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.*" (**Romans 8:1**)

BRING IT HOME

BEHOLD what manner of **LOVE** the Father has
bestowed on us,



that we should be called children of God!