

# Deity on Trial

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## [John 5:1-47](#)

In my high-school years, I was hooked on television lawyer programs. Those intrepid men and women always found the missing piece of evidence that would rescue the innocent and convict the guilty. I've learned since high-school days that sometimes judges and juries are wrong. Men and women may hear all the testimony and still make a wrong decision.

In [John 5](#) Jesus is on trial. It is not a formal trial in a courtroom, but all the elements of a trial appear in the story. A group of people are forced to make a decision about Jesus in their hearts. They hear all the evidence but make a disastrously wrong decision. Judgments are still made for and against Jesus. Whenever he is presented as Savior and Lord, people decide in their hearts to believe his claims or to turn and walk away.

Read [John 5:1-15](#). Based on the scene and conversation around the pool, how would you describe the feelings and attitudes of the invalid?

How do you think the man felt after his healing?

The seventh commandment said: "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy" (see [Exodus 20:8-11](#)). In their zeal to apply this command, what were the Jews failing to see ([John 5:9-15](#))?

When have you been more concerned about a religious activity than the reality behind it? Explain.

Read [John 5:16-30](#). Jesus explains that the work of creation ended on the seventh day, but not the work of compassion ([John 5:16-18](#)). Why does his explanation make the Jews even more determined to kill him?

What insights does [John 5:19-23](#) give us into (a) the Father's devotion to the Son and (b) the Son's dependence on the Father?

According to Jesus, why is our response to him a matter of eternal life or death ([John 5:24-30](#))?

Read [John 5:31-47](#). What "witnesses" does Jesus call forward to testify on his behalf?

How does their testimony validate his claims?

What counter-accusations does Jesus make against those who are attacking him?

Why would each one be a severe blow to the religious piety of these Jewish listeners?

How can we avoid the kind of religion that is outwardly pious but inwardly bankrupt?

According to this chapter, what really influences our verdict for or against Jesus?