

INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW OF 5:1–18

5:1–3a Jesus returned to Jerusalem for the feast (of Tabernacles) and went to the Pool of Bethesda, where many invalids were lying

5:3b–4 Invalids were there because 1st one in pool (after angel stirred water) was healed

Textual issue: Majority Text includes verses 3b–4, but main Egyptian manuscripts do not

5:5–6 Jesus asked a man who had been lame for 38 years and who had waited at the pool a long time— “Do you want to get well?”

5:7 The man said that he lacked a helper so someone else always got into the water before him to get healed (Yes, of course, he wanted to be healed by the angel)

5:8–9 Jesus told him to pick up his bedroll and to walk, which he did immediately

5:10 Judean (officials) told him that it was unlawful to carry his bedroll on a Sabbath

5:11 He said that the man who healed him told him to carry his bedroll

5:12–13 They asked who said to pick up his bedroll & walk, but he didn’t know, because Jesus had gone

5:14 Jesus found him and warned him against incurring discipline through sin

5:15 The man told the officials that it was Jesus who healed him

5:16 The Judean (officials) hounded Jesus and sought to kill Him (as a Sabbath-breaker)

5:17 Jesus’ defense was that He works (on Sabbath), as Father works (on Sabbath)

5:18 The Judean (officials) were even more determined to kill Him, because He claimed equality with God—in addition to breaking the Sabbath

5:19–20 Jesus asserted that He can only do what the Father does, and He will amaze them (with greater signs) because the Father loves the Son

This does not diminish His deity

Rather, it is an affirmation of His deity

5:21 Good News: As the Father raises people and gives them life, so does the Son raise those whom He wishes

Those whom the Son wishes to give life and to raise are those who believe in Him

5:22–23 The Father is not the One who (will) judge, but He has entrusted judgment to the Son so that people will honor the Son as they honor the Father

Those who do not receive life & resurrection from Him will face Him at the Great White Throne

The exposition of John 5:24–30 requires understanding two items from context:

1. Jesus appeals to reliable (and/or impeachable) witnesses testify concerning Him.

- A. Jesus
- B. John the Baptist (5:31–35)
- C. Jesus' works (5:36)
- D. The Father (5:37–38)
- E. The Scriptures (5:39)
- F. Moses (5:45–47)

With the testimony of these witnesses, the leaders should believe Jesus/John

2. 5:24–30 is an explanation of 5:21–22

5:21 The Son gives life; so does the Father

5:24–26 The Son gives life to believers

5:24–26 is good news for believers

5:22 The Son (not the Father) will judge

5:27–30 The Son will judge unbelievers

5:27–30 is bad news for unbelievers

GOOD NEWS FOR BELIEVERS (5:24–26)

Jesus gives everlasting life to believers when they believe, so they will *not* appear at a judgment to receive life, because they have already passed from death to life (5:24)

What it means to believe the Father (the One who sent Christ)

What it means to have everlasting life

How long must one believe this to have believed it?

Contrasting Jesus with the religious leaders:

They *wanted* to judge Him; He *did not want* to judge them.

They wanted *to kill* Him; He wanted *to give* them *life*.

Even right now those who lack life (unbelievers) who hear Christ's message (of life and believe it) receive everlasting life (5:25)

A coming hour that presently is:

Verse 25 speaks of the present time:

²⁵*Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live.*

A coming hour (that presently is not):

Verse 28 speaks of the future.

²⁸*Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice. ²⁹and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.*

Parallelism between verses 24 and 25:

	John 5:24	John 5:25	
a	<i>Most assuredly, I say to you,</i>	<i>Most assuredly, I say to you,</i>	a'
b	—	<i>the hour is coming, and now is,</i>	b'
c	<i>he who hears My word</i>	<i>when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God;</i>	c'
—	<i>and believes in Him who sent Me</i>	—	—
e	<i>has everlasting life,</i>	<i>will live.</i>	e'
—	<i>and shall not come into judgment,</i>	—	—
—	<i>but has passed from death into life.</i>	—	—

John 5:25 speaks of Jesus giving everlasting life to those who believe in Him. They were dead before they believed, but they passed from death to life (John 5:24)

Both the Father and the Son possess life in themselves (John 5:26)

This is the reason that both the Father and the Son have the power to give life (cf. 5:21)

BAD NEWS FOR UNBELIEVERS (5:27–30)

**Christ will judge (at the Great White Throne), because He is the Son of Man (5:27)
Son of Man refers to the agent of God who is God. Consider Daniel 7:13ff.**

At a future time, Christ will summon all (unbelievers) who are in the graves (to the Great White Throne) (John 5:28)

If Christ judged anyone at the Great White Throne to have done good things (according to Christ's standard) that person would be resurrected to life; but everyone that Christ judges to have done worthless things will be resurrected to condemnation (5:29)

The purpose of the judgment is to see if people merit life. Cf. John 5:24 for the clues.

Christ judges fairly—Thus, He will let people attempt to prove that they merit life.

Verse 29 does not say that anyone will merit life. It just says that Christ will not prejudge people. They will be judged to see if anyone merits life, but none at GWT will merit life.

Revelation 20 and the Great White Throne

Christ judges fairly because the only things He does (including judging) is done in accordance with the Father's will (5:30)

This is the same argument that He used to prove His right to heal on the Sabbath (5:19)

CONCLUSION

General Robert E. Lee signed the unconditional surrender at Appomattox Courthouse. That was sufficient to entitle him to a restoration of United States citizenship—without going through a court trial to determine his suitability/unsuitability for citizenship. In the same way, when people believe in Jesus for everlasting life, Jesus gives them everlasting life at that very moment. They never need to go to a judgment in order to receive life. They already have it. They have already passed from death to life.

However, no unbeliever at the Great White Throne will be able to prove that he deserves life. None will be found to have done such impressively good things that would merit life.

It is interesting. The religious leaders wanted to judge Jesus and to kill Him. He did not want to judge them, but wanted to give them life. Those who believe in Him receive life; those who do not believe in Him will be judged and will not live.