

Session 6: John 5:19–6:21

SESSION GOALS

Every session has specific goals—things you want your group to walk away knowing, feeling, and committing to do.

Main Idea

The testimony about Jesus and his works introduces us to his true nature so that we might know him and share his purpose on earth.

Head Change

To know that Jesus is the Son of God and giver of eternal life.

Heart Change

To feel the peace of God—even in our greatest storms—because he is with us.

Life Change

To trust Jesus for our provision and protection in all circumstances.

OPEN

What evidence is there in your own life of God's goodness?

Every Christian has a story of how God has been uniquely kind to them. Our experience of God's goodness stands as a testimony to the truth of the gospel. In today's passage, Jesus shows us people and events that have testified to him being the Son of God. When we put our trust in Jesus, we can experience his goodness.

READ

John 5:19–6:21 (If you are pressed for time, you can shorten your reading to 5:19–27, 36–44; 6:10–14, 6:16–20.)

WATCH

Before viewing the session, here are a few important things to look for in Dr. Tony Evans's teaching. As you watch, pay attention to how he answers the following questions.

What does it mean that Jesus is the Son of God?

What does the feeding of the 5,000 teach us about God's provision?

How should you respond to God in the midst of crisis?

Show Session 6: *John 5:19–6:21* (10 minutes).

DISCUSS

Read John 5:19–32.

This passage helps us understand Jesus’s relationship with his Father. **Who is the Father, according to the passage? What sorts of things does he do?**

What responsibilities and roles has the Father given to Jesus?

While both the Father and Jesus are described as having distinct roles, their work is intertwined. **In what ways does this passage point out the unity in the work of Jesus and his Father?**

What have you learned about the Trinity that you did not know before? What stands out to you about Jesus’s relationship to the Father?

Note: To learn more about the persons of the Trinity, go to **Go Deeper Section 1** at the end of this study.

It can be easy to think of God the Father as a distant person and Jesus as a close, even casual, friend. Jesus is more than a divine pal. As John has already shown us, Jesus is the creator, the judge, and the Son of God.

According to verse 23, how should we respond to the Son? What does it mean to “honor” Jesus in your life?

Lots of people respect Jesus as a great teacher, a good person, and even a prophet. But only Christians see him as the Son of God. **According to verse 23, what does it mean if we do not honor Jesus as the Son of God? What does it say about our view of God?**

The good news of the gospel is that the judge, Jesus, has taken the punishment of sin upon himself. He is both our just judge and our gracious justifier. **What does it mean to you that Jesus has seen your sinfulness and made a way for you to be forgiven?**

Jesus repeats the phrase “Truly, truly, I say to you . . .” multiple times in this passage. Dr. Evans has noted throughout this study that whatever follows the phrase “truly, truly,” is both important and trustworthy. Look at verses 20, 24, and 25. **What points does Jesus make in these verses? What could it look like to remember and**

apply these important and trustworthy points to your life?

These three “truly, truly” statements outline Jesus’s mission to us. First, he is the Son who does the Father’s work. Second, whoever trusts in his work will not experience the condemnation of sin. And finally, those who trust in Jesus will be resurrected to eternal life. **In what ways does the hope of resurrection affect your everyday life?**

Note: To learn more about the title Son of Man, go to **Go Deeper Section 2** at the end of this study.

Read John 5:33–47.

The previous verses are Jesus’s testimony about himself. He now looks at the testimony others have given about him. Even though Jesus does not need human testimony to prove his identity—as he mentions in verse 34—he brings up the testimony of John the Baptist. **How does Jesus describe Israel’s reaction to John? How does their reaction contrast with the way Israel responded to Jesus in verse 40?**

All of us have a unique story of how we met or first encountered Jesus. Some of us immediately trusted him as the Son of God, but most of us didn’t know what to think of Jesus at first. **What was your reaction to Jesus when you first encountered him? What did you think about him before you trusted him as the Son of God?**

Note: To get a Peek at the Greek and learn more about the word “testify,” go to **Go Deeper Section 3** at the end of this study.

In verses 36–46, what other sources testify about Jesus? What are some sources in your life other than the Bible that testify to Jesus?

There was a mountain of testimony in front of Jesus’s audience. They had heard his testimony and seen his miracles. They had heard John testify about Jesus. They even had Moses, the author of the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Bible), testifying about Jesus. Even with all of these witnesses, they did not believe. **Why do you think people choose not to trust in the testimony about**

Reading the Old Testament can be difficult. We don't often know the names of the people or places in the Old Testament and feel disconnected from its culture. But, according to Jesus, the Old Testament is immediately relevant to knowing him. **How do you approach the Old Testament? What could you do to incorporate the Old Testament into your personal Bible study more often?**

Read John 6:1–15.

From the very start, Philip is sure that there is no way Jesus could feed so many people. He estimates that they could not feed everyone even with “two hundred denarii,” an amount equal to eight months' pay for a day laborer. Think of an impossible circumstance you have faced in your own life. **In what ways can you relate to Philip's concerns? What did you pray for in the face of that circumstance?**

Just like in his miracle at the wedding in Cana, Jesus overabundantly meets the needs of those around him. **When has Jesus met your needs with an overabundance? What did you learn about his care for you through that experience?**

It seems that no one who came to Jesus understood his true purpose—the Jewish leaders, the crowds that followed him, even his own disciples failed to understand why Jesus came. **How might we have misunderstood Jesus today?**

Note: To learn more about King Jesus, go to **Go Deeper Section 4** at the end of this study.

Read John 6:16–24.

Jesus is in control of the storm, even though his disciples could not see him. **When you don't feel like Jesus is near to you, how do you react?**

The feeding of the five thousand shows Jesus as the provider for our needs. His walking on water shows him as our protector. **What does it mean to you that Jesus will provide for all of your needs?**

God does not promise to rescue us *from* every one of life's storms, but he does promise to protect us *through* all of life's storms. Even though suffering and difficulty will come to us, we know that God will never abandon us.

**What does it mean to you that you will be protected
through all of life's storms?**

Jesus spent a lot of time explaining who he was and why he came to us. He even illustrated the benefits of trusting in him in the middle of our storms and chaos. Even so, we still struggle to trust in him alone. **Why do you think it is so difficult to take Jesus at his word? What could you do to actively trust in the promises of Jesus?**

LAST WORD

Jesus is the Lord over all creation, walking on water and providing food for thousands. Jesus is the image of the invisible God. Through him, we see the Father, hear the Father's words, and learn about the Father's love for us. And, we have both the Bible and our experiences of God's goodness that testify to Jesus, the Son of God.

We have an overwhelming abundance of testimony about Jesus. Trust in him, the Son of God, so that you can be fully forgiven and have everlasting life.

GO DEEPER

The Go Deeper section has two potential functions. It can supplement your small group discussion by providing extra discussion material. We've highlighted a place where each of the following segments could fit in the Discuss section of the study guide.

But you can also use these sections as short devotionals to carry you through the week until your next group meeting.

1. The Persons of the Trinity

There is only one God, but he exists in three persons. These three persons—the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—are not parts of God. Each is fully God and distinct from the other. For example, we cannot say the Father dies on the cross for our sins. So, what makes each person distinct? How should we think of the roles within with our triune God?

Let's start with the Father. **How would you describe the Father?**

Read John 3:16; Acts 10:38; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Revelation 1:1.

What do you learn about the Father in these passages?

The Father is the almighty originator of divine action—everything begins with the Father. He is the authoritative force behind creation, salvation, and even the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Now, let's look at the Son. **How would you describe the Son?**

Read John 5:30; 2 Corinthians 5:14–19; Colossians 1:16–17; Hebrews 1:8.

What do you learn about the Son in these passages?

The Son is the agent of divine action. Think of John 3:16: The Father loved the world and sent the Son to show us his love. Salvation is the free gift of the Father accomplished in the Son.

Finally, let's investigate the role of the Holy Spirit. **How would you describe the Holy Spirit?**

Read Genesis 1:2; John 16:12–15; Romans 8:11; Titus 3:5–7; 2 Peter 1:21

What do you learn about the Holy Spirit in these passages?

The Spirit is the power, or means, of divine action. He is the power that created all things, raised Jesus from the dead, and regenerates redeemed sinners.

But how do the persons of the Trinity work together? The Father is the origin, the Son is the agent, and the Spirit is the power. In other words, the Father acts through the Son by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Father created everything through the Son by the power of the Holy Spirit. The Father saved us through the work of the Son accomplished by the Spirit. The Trinity is even intimately involved in your prayers as we see in Luke 11:2; Romans 8:26; Ephesians 3:11–12.

The work of the Son gives us access to the Father. The Spirit supports us and even prays for us as we pray.

The Trinity always works in cooperation because God is one. We have one God in three persons who is as active today as he was two thousand years ago. **In what ways does understanding the persons of the Trinity influence the way you worship God?**

2. Son of Man

Son of Man may seem like an unusual title for Jesus, but it held deep significance for the Jews. In three simple words, the title designated Jesus as both Messiah and God. To understand why this title is so important, we need to go back to an ancient prophecy in Daniel. Read Daniel 7:13–14.

What is “given” to the Son of Man? What does he have authority over?

What do you think the title “Son of Man” means?

The Jews, particularly the Pharisees, would have perked up their ears when Jesus used called himself the “Son of

Man” in John 5:27. They would have quickly realized Jesus was claiming to be the eternal Messiah, the cosmic king with unending authority over all creation. It must have shocked his audience because his first words after claiming to be the Son of Man are, “Do not marvel at this.”

The title also is literal. By calling himself the Son of Man, he is also claiming to be fully human. In the Bible, God often calls humans “son of man.” He uses the title for Ezekiel ninety-eight times. But? The author of Hebrews helps us understand why it is important for Jesus to be a human. Read Hebrews 2:17 and 4:15.

What do these verses teach us about the importance of Jesus’s humanity?

Of what relevance is Jesus’s humanity to your everyday life?

When Jesus is called “Son of Man” he is affirming his eternal divine authority, his identity as the Messiah, and his qualification to act as our high priest and judge. He knows us, saves us, justifies us, and is our king. That’s a lot of significance for three little words.

Find a quiet moment to reflect on who Jesus is to us. Meditate on his overwhelming provision for us. Praise him for who he is and what he has done for us.

3. Peek at the Greek: Testify

When we think of testimony, our minds are pulled to a courtroom where a witness is questioned by a lawyer or judge. But the Bible has more in mind when it tells us that someone testified to Jesus.

The Greek word *martyreō* means “to testify, give a record of, or to carry a good report.” The word also carries the idea that the speaker refused to keep back their testimony. It is a willing and trustworthy report about what a person has seen, heard, and experienced.

But it doesn’t end there: *martyreō* is not just about what a person says. Ancient Greek records often use *martyreō* in reference to a person’s actions. Testimony to Jesus is not merely a written or spoken record; it is a lived report of who Jesus is in your life. Because you have known, heard, and experienced Jesus, you now have the charge of giving testimony to him in both word and deed.

When a person dies for their belief in Jesus, we call them a “martyr.” What we are really saying is that their life was a reliable testimony to the works of Christ.

In what ways do you testify to Jesus through your words? In what ways do the ordinary, everyday actions in your life testify to Jesus?

4. King Jesus

The title of king is often floating around Jesus. In John 6, Jesus retreats from his followers because they were wanting to make him king by force. In Matthew, Mark, and Luke, Jesus is mockingly called “King of the Jews” by the Romans as he is crucified. But today, we neither think that he should be an earthly king nor do we use the title in a derogatory way. Today, we praise Jesus as King of kings and Lord of lords. Why?

Let’s go back to the Old Testament, specifically to the covenant God makes with King David. Read 2 Samuel 7:16.

What does God promise to David?

Now, jump ahead to the first verse in the New Testament. When Jesus was born, Israel had no king. Herod was called king, but he had very little authority under Roman rule and was not a descendant of David. He could not fulfill God’s promise of an everlasting kingdom. Read Matthew 1:1 and Luke 1:32–33.

How do the Gospels identify Jesus?

When Jesus was questioned by Pilate, he was accused of being a revolutionary trying to overthrow Roman rule and establish a Jewish state. Read Jesus’s response in John 18:36–37.

What does Jesus say about his kingdom and purpose?

His kingdom is not as small as an earthly nation. Jesus is in authority over everything in creation—from the tiniest bacterium, to the storms watering the Great Plains, to the movements of the planets. He is also in authority over our lives, even the mundane and boring parts. After Jesus was crucified and resurrected, he was “given all authority

on heaven and on earth” (Matthew 28:18) and raised to sit at the right hand of God. Read Ephesians 1:20–23.

In what ways is Jesus ruling right now?

We also look forward to God’s future kingdom, when all sin will finally be done away with. Read Revelation 19:11–16, 21:3–5.

We may not think of Jesus’s kingship often, but it is extremely important. Our hope for ultimate justice, redemption, peace, and eternity are rooted in Jesus’s unending reign as king. **How does understanding his authority change the way you think about your daily plans?**

Mediate on his rule and reign—let it be a wellspring of assurance and peace in your life. Our God reigns.