

## Introduction

- One of the first things we ask about someone is their job or role:
  - "so, what do you do?"
  - tied up with our identity, our place in the world...
- And here is no exception!
  - reminder of context - Jesus has just healed cripple by the pool of Bethsaida
  - but its the Sabbath - and Jesus invited the healed man to carry his mat!
  - and in his dispute with the Jews Jesus utilises talk of work and working to identify himself with startling directness

## Jesus does what he sees the Father doing

- Image is of apprentice in his Father's shop
  - rather as Jesus would have been Joseph's apprentice in the carpentry shop
- But there the earthbound in the image stops!
  - the Jews understood that the God was continually sustaining the world
  - even on the Sabbath!
  - and yet the Sabbath was given for rest, because God had rested on the seventh day....
  - so they "gave" God a special dispensation; he was a special case and could work on the Sabbath...
- So Jesus claiming that his Father was "always at his work to this very [Sabbath] day" was a clear claim to divine sonship - only made worse by his claim that he too had the right to work on the same basis!
  - to those who could read the signs, Jesus was clearly pointing to his divine sonship!

## Jesus judges as the Father has entrusted him

- Jesus appears to reckon "in for a penny, in for a pound!"
  - if he's going to let people understand that he is the Son of God, he's going to let them take in some of the incredible implications of that
  - which is what his claim to have been entrusted with judgement from God is - a mind-blowing, earth-shattering truth!
- Can you imagine a preacher standing up and starting the sermon something like this:
  - good evening; our topic tonight is everything you've ever done! For, you see, I am the judge of the world, and your every deed and every thought will one day come before me - and I'll be the one to judge your character and motives, your most secret inner fantasies!
  - what kind of a reaction would you get?!
- Yet this is the reality of who Jesus is: divine, holy Son of God - and our judge!

## Jesus gives the life his Father has granted him

- Final thread running through this passage, and the second implication that Jesus spells out as flowing from his divinity, doing his Father's work, is this:
  - Jesus is the life giver
  - not only is he judge, but he is also the one who brings people through judgement
  - for we have overlapping images here - life/death, court/punishment
  - the punishment the judge can give is death, the reward life
  - but none save the judge himself can expect any reward save death - we are sinners
  - but there is hope - for the judge is also the giver of life!
  - he is pleased to give that life to all who hear his voice (v.25)

- 1. *Jesus does what he sees the Father doing*
  - 2. *Jesus judges as the Father has entrusted him*
  - 3. *Jesus gives the life his Father has granted him*
- But how does that lot apply to me?

## Application

### 1. The Father's power is available to us

- Jesus didn't do the miracles because he was divine - he did them in the Father's power (v.19, 30a)
  - and as we now relate to God the Father, cleansed by the blood of Christ and indwelt with the Holy Spirit (who was given to Jesus without limit, as we saw the other week), just as Jesus did, so also that same divine power is available to us
  - *"I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father."* (John 14:12)
- Does that not change the way we think about those aspects of serving Christ that so often daunt us?
  - the power of God the Father Almighty is working in us as we share our faith, as we confront sin in ourselves, etc!

### 2. We need not fear the judgement

- If Jesus is the judge, then we need not fear the judgement!
  - *"I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you."* (John 15:15)
  - *This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.* (1 John 4:10)
  - Our judge is the very one who has already paid for our crimes in full, has done the time, has taken the rap - so we go free!
  - May Pennington didn't fear death, nor the judgement... and we needn't either

### 3. We are already fully and truly alive

- I will almost certainly be reading v.24 from our passage 3 times this week, at 3 different funerals.
  - and what joy it is that at two of them I am confident that, for the person who has died, it is not just true as a statement of principle, but true as an experienced reality
  - before Margaret Roberts or May Pennington were anywhere near dying physically, it was already true for them that they had **crossed over from death to life**
  - they were fully and truly alive - not just half alive
  - it wasn't just their bodies that were alive, but their spirit's too; eternity had already begun in them!
- So it is for those of us who believe, we are already alive:
  - fully, completely, eternally alive, never to experience the real death that physical death is a pale reflection of, the ultimate and complete separation from God that rejecting him brings

- 1. The Father's power is available to us
- 2. We need not fear the judgement
- 3. We are **already** fully and truly alive