

From a talk by B. Cobbey Crisler
Book of John, A Walk with The Beloved Disciple

(from transcription notes with earlier permission from Janet Crisler)
 Jesus responds to the debate on the Sabbath with a brilliant exegesis of the seven days of creation.

In John 5:17, "*Jesus said, You're stopping me for healing on the Sabbath. But my reading of the Scripture is this, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.*" If the original works, what can the image or reflection do? 5:17

Notice also John 5:19 is Jesus' famous statement, "*The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do.*" Taking this apart, it really gives you what man's role is. What is it? It's reflection. It's image. 5:19

Man is not original in what he does. What he does stems from the original which is God. Then it reflects originality. Otherwise there would be competition for the job of Creator. Under monotheism there is no ability for such competition. Otherwise there would be competition for the job of Creator. Under monotheism there is no possibility for such competition ("*For what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise*").

He took the Son of Man through every problem that the world could hurl at him and proved that even the Son of Man can be victorious and not a creature of circumstances when the understanding of his true nature as the Son of God can be applied.

Our understanding of the Son of Man and the Son of God, and the difference, might be heightened by realizing that the Christ comes to the Son of Man. The Christ doesn't come to the Son of God because the Christ really presents the Son of God.

We're on the the human side of things, who feel the foot of domination on our necks from outside circumstances. Is that where the Son of Man belongs? Notice the argument of Bildad in the Book of Job, Chapter 25:6. There's something in there that might refer to his mental stature, "*man is a worm and the Son of Man is a worm.*" It uses the very same phrase that Jesus does, elevating him way above the outlines of fleshly domination. So, "*The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do.*" Why?

John 5:20, "*The Father loves the Son,*"

> 5:30

John 5:30. The same point is repeated, "*I can of mine own self do nothing.*" Is

this false humility or is Jesus actually giving us the facts straight out? What is the secret and source of everything he thought or did? What's the obstacle then between us and following Jesus? There's something in there. Some kind of different concept of our selfhood than what he had. His was so transparent that there was nothing obstructing his at-one-ment with God, even on earth. His summons us to follow his example and shows his own expectation that we're equipped to do it. So, we're equipped to receive and to act on the instructions given us *via* communication. All we need to do is tune in.

We're coming to understand Jesus' view of himself, and where he thinks this authority originates, "*The Son can do nothing of himself*" (John 5:19).

We find, beginning in John 5:31, that we're going to have a list. The first thing he talks about is his self-witness. How good is it? "*If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true.*" What is Jesus' impression of his own opinion? What is our impression of our *own* opinion? Do you suppose if Jesus were asked to write a resume for *Who's Who*, it would sound exactly like what we might write?

As a matter of fact, if he wrote anything, it would probably include borrowed-manger and criminal's-cross, which aren't exactly what *Who's Who* is looking for. Rarely does he associate himself even with the Messiahship. In public, he let's what we are about to see bear witness of him. That shows the essence of humility, and that is the key to the communication with the angels of God, ascending and descending on that ladder.

In John 8:14, have we caught Jesus in a contradiction? Here is where, "*Jesus answered and said, Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go; and so forth.*" (By the way, that Greek word "record" is the same as "witness.")

Does that look like it's a contradiction of John 5:31? You might suggest that seeing yourself as God sees you elevates you above human opinion. But as long as our human opinion is in accord with what God knows of us, then it's alright. How Christ Jesus saw himself is something that matters little unless it's how God saw him. Because if the Son and the Father are One, when that at-one-ment is expressed, in one's view of oneself, you don't have to worry. It's not opinion. It's fact.