

Dear All,

Sunday's Study Service this week at 7pm is a bible study on JOHN 5: JESUS' FIRST FULL CLASH. John 5 is Jesus' first major confrontation with the Jewish leaders of his day. If John 1 outlines the whole of John's gospel, John 5 is a full outline of the profound clash between the coming of God into time and a tradition which used the word of God in the law as a barrier against him by fulfilling its outward demands while refusing to let it speak to the mind and heart and lead them to knowledge and love of God himself.

In Jesus, God steps out from behind the law, confronting people personally with himself in the starkest possible way. His divinity is of course veiled, for he comes *as man*, but he does so in such a way that people are profoundly shaken by his presence and can no longer avoid ultimate questions about God and his relation to them. Ultimately, it is a clash between the revelation of God as he is, Father, Son & Spirit, and a deistic view of a distant, abstract God.

Jesus is careful to reveal himself gradually and never fully, as he knew even his disciples could not understand him till after his resurrection & sending of his Spirit. John 5 here is supremely important in giving us a profound sense of the nature and depth of the relation between Father and Son.

It is the Son who became man, not the Father or the Spirit, but they all work together in Jesus for the reconstruction of humanity. In this one man, in space-time, 2000 years ago, God has acted decisively to heal humanity & establish the eternal life which is identical with Jesus' risen humanity. It is freely offered to all who believe and embrace him. Not to do so, is to refuse life, and with it light and love.

Reading: John 5

7-8.30 by Zoom meet (details on request)

Best wishes - Bob