

THE SOURCE OF ETERNAL LIFE

Request: “Why is there so much confusion about eternal life within the church community? Could you give some enlightenment on it?”

This is not a modern day problem. Jesus faced the same problem in the first century in our lesson text.

The background of our lesson text was a Jewish festival (horte) held in Jerusalem (Jn.5:1). Many scholars believe it was Passover where Jesus taught and performed many miracles.

Our lesson text comes from the Testimonial section of His teachings at this Passover (**Jn.5:31-47**). Jesus began by explaining what a valid legal testimony was in the Scriptures (Jn.5:31-32). It was based on the Law of Witnesses (2 or 3) from Deut.17:6 and 19:15.

Jesus gave 6 or double even triple the witnesses required by Law: John Baptist (Jn.5:33-35); Miracles (Jn.5:36); God, the Father (Jn.5:37-38); **Scriptures (Jn.5:39-40)**; Believers (Jn.5:41-44); and Moses (Jn.5:45-47).

**Today’s lesson will study four points from the Scriptural Witness (Jn.5:39-40)
and the title of our lesson - Source of Eternal Life.**

1. While attending this Passover, Jesus performed many messianic healing. One of these healing caught the attention of the legalistic Pharisees when a paralyzed man “picked up his mat and walked” (Jn.5:2-8).

This violated a legalistic rule of the Traditions of the Elders (a legalistic handbook of the Pharisee put on par with the Canon of Scriptures) [blue laws]. These legalists condemned the healed man and sought to murder Jesus for telling him to “pick up his mat and walk.” (Jn.5:16-18)

It is important to see the danger of reading (cosmos diabolicus) **into** the Scriptures rather than reading out truth (divine viewpoint) **from** them (Matt.15:1-3).

Bible: “Thus says the Lord, ‘Take heed for yourselves, and do not carry any load on the sabbath day or bring anything in through the gates of Jerusalem.’ (Jer.17:21) The **load** meant a business transaction not an emergency or miraculous healing (**Matt.12:8-14/ read**).

Tradition of Elders (legalism and works) “It is the Sabbath, and it is not permissible to carry your pallet (load).” (Jn.5:10)

Jesus offered miraculous grace healing as a messianic sign to the Jews that He was the Savior of the world (1 Cor.1:22; **Matt.12:11-12**) – “But in order that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins – He said to the paralytic – ‘I say to you, rise, take up your pallet and go home.’” (Mark 2:10-11)

2. (Pay Attention) - Jesus warned the legalistic Pharisees that their mistaken approach to the Scriptures would prevent them from having eternal life

“You search (eraunao / p.a.impv.2pl) [to search by close examination for the truth] the Scriptures, because you think that **in them** you have eternal life; and it is these that bear witness of Me; and you are **unwilling to come to Me, that you may have life**.” (Jn.5:39-40)

We learn that sometimes searching the Scriptures requires unlearning lies while learning truth. And that sometimes unlearning requires reading truth out of the Scriptures rather than reading into them or super-imposing our opinions. This can be part of putting off OMCD and putting on NMDV (Eph.4).

3. The point Jesus was making is that the OT Canon of Scriptures bears witness that HE is the Source of Eternal Life (Jn.5:39).

We search the Scriptures to find Christ for salvation and eternal life. The Scriptures are not an end in themselves.

Let me mention three that bear witness: shadow Christology and messianic prophecy and messianic genealogy.

- **Shadow Christology:** “For the Law, since it has only a **shadow** of the good things to come and not the very same sacrifices year by year, which they offer continually, make perfect those who draw near.” (Heb.10:1; chs.5-10) “So Christ also, having been **offered once to bear the sins** of many, shall appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him.” (Heb.9:28)
- **Messianic prophecy:** Virgin Birth (Isa.7:14) “Behold, **the virgin** shall bear a Son, and they shall call His name **Immanuel**,’ which translated means, ‘God with us.’” (Matt.1:22-23)
- **Messianic genealogy:** Covenant Messiah (Luke 3 and Matt.1) “The book of genealogy of Jesus Christ, **the son of David, the son of Abraham.**” (Matt.1:1) “Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, ‘And to seeds,’ as referring to many, but rather to one, ‘And to your **seed**,’ **that is Christ.**” (Gal.3:16)

4. The source of eternal life is Jesus Christ - “For God loved the world that he gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.” (John 3:16)

(John 3:36) “He **who believes in the Son** has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.”

(1 John 5:11-13) “And **the witness** is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. These things I have written to you **who believe** in the name of the Son of God, in order that you may know that you have eternal life.”

(Titus 3:4-7) “But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out upon us richly **through Jesus Christ our Savior**, and being **justified by His grace** we might be made **heirs according to the hope of eternal life.**” (1 Cor.15:1-4; Rom.1:16; Eph.2:8-9)

Eternal life is a free gift at the moment of salvation.

(Rom.6:23) “For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

(John 5:29) Eternal life has a beginning (grace salvation) but no end (resurrection of life)

(John 5:24) “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who **hears** My word, and **believes** Him who sent Me, **has eternal life**, and does not come into judgment, but has been **passed out** (metabaino / perf.a.ind.3ps) **of death** (tou thanatos) **into life** (ten zoe).”