

**Sermon outline notes: John 5 verse 16-30 'Life through the Son'**  
**Introduction**

Jesus has always been a controversial figure. Controversy has surrounded many great and important men of history, but the debate about Jesus is a rather special. What makes Jesus controversial is not the ideas He expressed, but the person He was, or rather claimed to be.

Christianity has been a controversial religion simply because Christians have insisted that no category was sufficient to describe their Master than the category of divinity itself.

**1) The Extraordinary Claims in verses 16-23**

- a) The controversy about Jesus' divinity had already begun during the years of his public ministry in Israel.
- Jesus called God His own Father in a particular way and that's what offended many of the Jews verses 16-18.
  - Jesus' deeds are divine deeds; they are a perfect reproductions in miniature of the cosmic activity of God, verse 19.
  - Jesus' knowledge is divine knowledge, verse 20.
  - Jesus claims divine prerogatives—life and death lie in His hands, verses 21 and 26.
  - Jesus claims to have divine authority, verse 22.
  - Jesus claims divine worship, verse 23.
- b) Yet perhaps the most remarkable thing about these verses is that I don't find a hint or the faintest suspicion of megalomania within them, verse 30.
- c) C.S. Lewis, "A man who is merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher; he would either be a lunatic on the level of a man who said he was a poached egg, or else he would be the devil of hell. You must make your choice, either the man was and is the Son of God, or a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit at him and kill him as a demon or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God. But let us not come up with any patronising

nonsense about him being a great human teacher, he has not left that alternative open to us".

**2) The Critical Decision in verses 24-29**

- Verse 24, the original Greek says something more like 'out of death into life!' In other words Jesus thinks of death and life not so much as descriptions of a person's physical condition, but as spiritual spheres or environments within which a person exists.
- Jesus has life in himself and that life has broken into the sphere of death. Jesus has created in his own person a kind of interface—he acts like a corridor leading from the world of death to the world of life.
- Eternal life is not something for which a Christian waits, it is a sphere of existence into which he/she through Jesus has already entered.

**Conclusion**

The controversy about the person of Jesus is not a mere academic debate it's a life and death issue. Jesus is offering us personal access through his person into a whole new universe. He calls us to make a decision.

**Points To Ponder**

- 1) Share first reactions to the sermon.
- 2) Is the C.S. Lewis quote a helpful one for you?
- 3) Who are the 'dead' in verses 21 and 25.
- 4) Study carefully verses 28-29. What is Jesus teaching here?
- 5) Why are Christians persecuted?