

John 5:19

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.

Analysis

Jesus explains His relationship to the Father: 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.' This isn't inferiority but unity. The Son doesn't act independently because Father and Son always act in harmony. Jesus sees and imitates the Father's actions perfectly. This is not inability but intimate cooperation.

Historical Context

The double 'verily' (amen, amen) introduces solemn truth. Jesus' explanation reveals intra-Trinitarian relationships: the Son observes and replicates the Father's work. This answers the charge that He acts independently of God—quite the opposite, He acts in perfect union with Him.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does Jesus' inability to act independently demonstrate unity rather than inferiority?
2. What does this verse teach about the relationship between Father and Son in the Trinity?

Interlinear Text

Ἄπεκρινατο οὖν ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς ἀμὴν
answered Then G3588 Jesus also said unto them Verily
G611 G3767 G2424 G2532 G2036 G846 G281

ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν οὐ δύναται ὁ νιὸς ποιεῖ ἀφ'
Verily I say unto you G3756 can The Son do of
G281 G3004 G5213 G1410 G3588 G5207 G4160 G575

ἔσαυτοῦ οὐδὲν ἐὰν μή τι βλέπῃ τὸν πατέρα ποιεῖ ἄ
himself nothing G1437 G3361 what he seeth G3588 the Father do G3739
G1438 G3762 G5100 G991 G3962 G4160

γὰρ ἀν ἐκεῖνος ποιεῖ ταῦτα καὶ ὁ νιὸς
for what things soever he do these also G3588 The Son
G1063 G302 G1565 G4160 G5023 G2532 G5207

όμοίως ποιεῖ
likewise do
G3668 G4160

Additional Cross-References

John 12:49 (Parallel theme): For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.

John 8:28 (References Jesus): Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.

John 14:10 (Parallel theme): Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

John 10:18 (Parallel theme): No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

Romans 8:11 (References Jesus): But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

John 9:4 (Parallel theme): I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

Luke 21:15 (Parallel theme): For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist.

John 5:21 (Parallel theme): For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.

Psalms 138:3 (Parallel theme): In the day when I cried thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul.

Psalms 50:6 (Parallel theme): And the heavens shall declare his righteousness: for God is judge himself. Selah.