

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, 10-11-15 AM NOTES  
"TESTIFYING OF JESUS"  
1 JOHN 5:6-12  
# 15 in Series, "Absolute Assurance"

**1 John 5:13a (NKJV)** "These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life..."

Four Truths John Emphasizes

1. Our Love for God
2. Keeping God's Commands
3. Loving the Brethren
4. Correct Doctrine About the Person of Christ

**Deuteronomy 19:15b (NKJV)** "... by the mouth of two or three witnesses the matter shall be established."

I. The Testimony of His Baptism (vv. 6-8)

**Matthew 3:13-17 (NKJV)** "13 Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. 14 And John *tried* to prevent Him, saying, 'I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?' 15 But Jesus answered and said to him, 'Permit *it to be so now*, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.' Then he allowed Him. 16 When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. 17 And suddenly a voice *came* from heaven, saying, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.'"

Why Was Jesus Baptized?

- A. He Was Identifying Himself With the People He Came to Save
- B. The Baptism Pictured His Future Baptism on the Cross

**Luke 12:50 (NKJV)** "But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how distressed I am till it is accomplished!"

II. The Testimony of His Crucifixion (vv. 6-8)

"As soon as we reduce the death of Jesus to that of a mere man, so soon do we lose the cardinal point of the New Testament doctrine of the atonement, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself; in the last analysis, the doctrine of the atonement means that God Himself bears our sins and shows that the final reality in the universe is sin-bearing, pardoning love, but if Jesus is not the Son of God, His death can no longer bear this significance."

□□. Howard Marshall

**2 Corinthians 5:19 (NKJV)** "that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation."

III. The Testimony of the Holy Spirit (vv. 6-8)

**John 15:26 (NKJV)** “But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me.”

IV. The Testimony of the Father (vv. 9, 10b)

“So why should I believe on Jesus Christ? Well, if you have no other answer, God has told you that this is the Messiah. It is not merely the testimony of man, but the testimony of God, and over above all other testimony our case rests on this fact that this is a revelation from God. This is not a philosophy. This is not something that man thinks. It is not human imagination; it is not a myth. We claim that we have here a revelation from God, and the reason for believing this message is that it is the witness and testimony of God Himself. But John puts it negatively as well as positively. **1 John 5:10b (NKJV)** ‘...he who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given of His Son.’”

□Martyyn Lloyd-Jones

**Titus 1:2b (NKJV)** “...God, who cannot lie...”

V. The Testimony of Your Heart (v. 10a)

**1 John 5:10a (NIV)** “Anyone who believes in the Son of God has this testimony in his heart.”

**Romans 8:16 (NKJV)** “The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.”

VI. The Testimony of Eternal Life (vv. 11-12)

**John 1:1a (NKJV)** “In the beginning was the Word...”

**1 John 1:2a (NKJV)** “the life was manifested...”

**1 John 5:20b (NKJV)** “...His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.”

**First Baptist Church Powell**  
**Sermon 15: Testifying Of Jesus**  
**Series: Absolute Assurance**  
**1 John 5:6-12**

If you are new to a verse by verse study of the book of 1 John, let me give you a summary of John's approach. John's method is to hold certain important truths up before us continually. The overall purpose of the book is that we would be absolutely sure of our salvation. (1 John 5:13a) "These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life..." To bring us to that absolute assurance, John holds up four truths that give evidence that our salvation is real. John often repeats these truths using slightly different approaches. The four truths are:

1. Our love for God – those who have truly been born of God will love God more and more as they grow in understanding the depth of the love God has for them (1 John 4:19) "We love Him because He first loved us."
  2. Keeping His commandments – Those who have been born of God have a Spirit given strong inner desire to please and obey God.
  3. Loving the brethren – As a result of being born of God, the Holy Spirit has poured out the love of God in our hearts and love always pours out on others (Romans 5:5).
  4. Correct doctrine about the person of Christ – Those who have been born of God have believed what the Scripture says about the person of Jesus Christ. He is the Son of God, fully God and fully man.
- We will focus on what John has to say about the fourth one – correct doctrine concerning the person of Christ.

Perhaps the best known American atheist in the 20<sup>th</sup> century was Bertrand Russell (1872-1970). Russell authored more than one hundred books and was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature in 1950. Perhaps his best known book was *Why I Am Not a Christian* (1927). In that book Russell argued that all organized religions are the residue of the barbaric past that finally came to us as superstitions that have no base in reality. On one occasion, Russell was asked what he would say to God if he found out there is a God and was standing in front of Him. Russell said, "I would reproach Him for not giving us enough evidence." Russell's problem was not that he lacked evidence. The evidence is plentiful (see Romans 1-2). I suspect that Russell's problem was the same as the problem most atheists have – it was his own morality. Russell was a serial adulterer and even wrote a book trying to justify his wayward moral life. The book was entitled *Marriage and Morals* and in it he argued that humans are not naturally monogamous and we should not expect them to be so. Personal morality has a large influence on many who loudly profess their atheism. They realize that if there is a God, they are accountable to Him and they want to be their own god. As a result, they go on a crusade to deny that the God of the Bible exists so that there is no rival to them being their own god.

If it is evidence that someone wants, there is plenty to be found in this text – 1 John 5:6-12. In this passage, John (himself an eyewitness to Christ's supernatural life, death, resurrection, and ascension back to heaven) brings six witnesses to the stand to give testimony to the fact that Jesus Christ is truly who He said He was – the Son of God, God in human flesh.

In the text, the word translated "witness" or "testimony" (the same root word in the Greek) is used ten times! It is the Greek word *martus*. Probably because so many Christians were killed for their witness or testimony, it became the root of the English word "Martyr." The background of multiple witnesses, multiple testimonies that are required to establish truth comes from the time of Moses. In order for something to be determined true, there had to be two or three witnesses. Deuteronomy 19:15b: "...by the mouth of two or three witnesses the matter shall be established." John gives not two or three, but six witnesses that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, fully God and fully man.

## I. The Testimony of His Baptism (v 6-8)

There is some disagreement as to what the water and the blood are referring to. Some say it is referring to baptism and the Lord's Supper, and others say it is referring to the water and blood that came from Christ's side when He was pierced with the spear before being taken down from the cross.

I don't believe that either of those is correct. I think that it is referencing the beginning and the end of Jesus' public ministry – His baptism (water) and His crucifixion (blood). This is also the view of the overwhelming majority of Bible scholars. The witness of the water is the witness of His baptism and what happened there. At His baptism the triune God was revealed and God the Son, Jesus Christ, was anointed for His public ministry. The baptism of Christ is so important that it is recorded in all four Gospels. Let's focus in on the testimony of His baptism. Jesus' baptism is, in a sense, Jesus' commissioning as He begins His public ministry. One of the main reasons this passage is so important is that in it we clearly see the Trinity. Matthew 3:13-17:

Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. And John *tried to* prevent Him, saying, "I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?" But Jesus answered and said to him, "Permit *it to be so* now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he allowed Him. When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. And suddenly a voice *came* from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

The obvious question here is "why would Jesus who knew no sin need to be baptized by John, a sinner, with a baptism that was called 'a baptism unto repentance?'" John also was troubled with this question (Matthew 3:14). John resisted baptizing Jesus for exactly opposite the reason he refused to baptize the Sadducees and the Pharisees. They were phony but Jesus was sinless and had nothing to repent of. I believe that there were two main reasons Jesus asked John to baptize Him:

1. He was identifying Himself with the people He came to save. On the cross He would take their sins and there He identifies with them and gives them an example of obedience.
2. This baptism pictured His future baptism on the cross. Several times Jesus called His suffering and death on the cross His *baptism*. Luke 12:50: "But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how distressed I am till it is accomplished!" This baptism in water pictured the time about three years later that He would be immersed into the waters of suffering the wrath of God for our sins.

At the time of His baptism, God gave witness that Jesus was indeed the Son of God. First, the Holy Spirit descended on Him in the form of a dove. This was the Father's visual testimony to the fact that Jesus Christ was indeed His Son. After the Father's visual testimony of the Spirit descending on Jesus, God the Father Himself gave verbal testimony as to the person of Christ. He was no mere man; Matthew 3:17b (NKJV) "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

## II. The Testimony of His Crucifixion (v 6-8)

The blood spoke of the cross of Christ and the sacrifice made there. The public ministry of the Savior was initiated at His baptism and was culminated on a bloody cross. One interpretive key to this passage is to look at something that was going on when John wrote the book of 1 John. A prominent heresy in John's day was propagated by a branch of the group called Gnostics (literally, "those with the knowledge"). Satan has recycled this Gnostic heresy again in relatively recent years. This heresy was associated with a Gnostic named Cerinthus. He taught that Jesus was born a normal human being but became "God's special agent" when the Holy Spirit descended on Him at His baptism. However, just before the crucifixion was carried out, the "Christ spirit" abandoned him and went back to Heaven. It was only the man Jesus that was crucified, and thus his death had no redemptive value. John boldly says, "No!" The

baby in the manger was the God man, Jesus Christ. The one who died on the cross was not a man only; it was the God man, Jesus Christ. He was God from eternity past, and He was God when He took the Father's wrath for our sins and shed His blood to atone for them at Calvary. New Testament scholar I. Howard Marshall said,

As soon and we reduce the death of Jesus to that of a mere man, so soon do we lose the cardinal point of the New Testament doctrine of the atonement, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself; in the last analysis, the doctrine of the atonement means that God Himself bears our sins and shows that the final reality in the universe is sin-bearing, pardoning love, but if Jesus is not the Son of God, His death can no longer bear this significance.

[I. Howard Marshall quoted in Danny Aiken's sermon *Why Should You Believe Jesus Is the Son of God?*]

At the crucifixion, God provided several witnesses of a supernatural nature that said, "Something amazing is going on here." There was the darkness across the land from noon-3:00 p.m. (Matthew 27:45). The curtain in the Temple that separated the holy place from the "Holy of Holies" was torn in two from the top to the bottom, signifying that through His crucifixion, all who trusted in Him would have access to the Father (Matthew 27:51). There was an earthquake (Matthew 27:51), and a number of Old Testament Saints were raised and appeared to many as the first fruits of resurrection life that is for all who will savingly believe on Jesus (Matthew 27:52-53).

The crucifixion of Christ evidences that Jesus shed blood has provided salvation for all will savingly believe on Him alone for their salvation. 2 Corinthians 5:19: "that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation."

Whereas the baptism gave evidence of the person of Christ, the crucifixion gave witness to the work of Christ.

### **III. The Testimony of the Holy Spirit (v 6-8)**

Remember the principle from Deuteronomy 19:15b: "...by the mouth of two or three witnesses the matter shall be established." In verse 6 we are told that the Spirit gives testimony to Christ, and in verse 8 we are told that His testimony is in agreement with the testimony of the water (baptism) and the blood (the cross). Let's examine this testimony or witness of the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit gives testimony to the truth of Christ and indeed to all the Word of God. It is not the eloquence or the oratorical ability of a human being that makes the truth real to us; it is the Holy Spirit who *is* truth. It is the Spirit who testifies of truth to lost people in bringing them to a saving knowledge of Jesus, and it is also true in revealing the great truths of Scripture to believers.

I remember several years ago sitting beside one of the very dedicated men in our church at a seminar conducted by a friend of mine I had invited. The speaker was teaching truth from Scripture related to our identity in Christ and the truths relating to the cross for Christians and what really happened when we were baptized into Christ. What he was teaching were the truths I had majored in ever since coming to the church and the man I was sitting by had set under my preaching scores of times when I had been preaching the same truths. The man next to me looked at me with his eyes open wide and said something like this, "That is absolutely amazing truth. Why have I never heard it before?"

I hit him over the head with my notebook (not really). It hurt my feelings until I began to think about it. What had happened? The Spirit had opened His eyes to see the truths of Scripture; the Spirit had given testimony or witness to the truth this man was hearing. I started rejoicing that he *got it*. Sometimes people hear the Gospel scores of times and then their eyes and ears are opened and they really hear it for the first time and are saved. The Spirit testifies to us of the truth about Jesus. John 15:26: "But when the Helper

comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me.”

Just as the compass always points north, the Holy Spirit always points to Jesus. That explains why we can share the Gospel confidently with others. It is the Holy Spirit who gives witness to the truth; He is the Spirit of truth!

What great and consistent witnesses we have to give testimony about Jesus. We have the baptism of Christ, the cross of Christ and the Holy Spirit. How could anyone say there is not enough evidence to convince?

#### **IV. The Testimony of the Father (V9, 10b)**

If we can accept the testimony of two or three witnesses (Deuteronomy 19:15), how much more should we accept the testimony of God. John is using an argument from the lesser to the greater. Actually, it was God who was providing all the witnesses/testimonies. It was God who was testifying at Jesus’ baptism that Jesus was God’s Son. It is God who was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself (2 Corinthians 5:19). It is God the Father who sends His Spirit to testify to the truth about Jesus.

Martyn Lloyd Jones opens up this point to us well.

So why should I believe on Jesus Christ? Well, if you have no other answer, God has told you that this is the Messiah. It is not merely the testimony of man, but the testimony of God, and over above all other testimony our case rests on this fact – that this is a revelation from God. This is not a philosophy. This is not something that man thinks. It is not human imagination; it is not a myth. We claim that we have here a revelation from God, and the reason for believing this message is that it is the witness and testimony of God Himself. But John puts it negatively as well as positively. 1 John 5:10b: “...he who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given of His Son.”

[Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Life in Christ*, pages 632-633]

God has given testimony to the fact that Jesus is the Son of God. To refuse that testimony is to call God a liar. What a scary thought! Oh, the foolishness of calling the One who is the source of all truth a *liar*. Titus says of God in Titus 1:2b: “...God, who cannot lie...” It is not that God will not lie; God cannot lie. God cannot act in a way that is opposed to who He is. To call God a liar is deliberate unbelief. This stubborn unbelief is not a misfortune to be pitied; it is a sin to be hated. Verse 9 in the NIV says “We accept man’s testimony.” He is referring back to a courtroom setting. With two or three human witnesses we deem what they say as true. How much more reliable is the testimony of God than a million human witnesses or testimonies.

#### **V. The Testimony of Your Heart (v 10a)**

1 John 5:10a (NIV) “Anyone who believes in the Son of God has this testimony in his heart.” This inward testimony as to the truth that Jesus is the Son of God compliments the historical witness of the water (His baptism) and the blood (His crucifixion), and the heavenly witness of the Father. I believe that what John is speaking of here is what Paul called the witness of the Holy Spirit. Romans 8:16: “The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit [heart] that we are children of God.” When the Holy Spirit is not grieved or quenched, He bears witness with our spirit that we are in God’s family as God’s adopted child. The word translated “bears witness” means to testify or give assurance.

What is this witness of the Holy Spirit to our spirit or heart? It is the Holy Spirit convincing us, showing us that indeed Jesus the Son of God does save! How does the Holy Spirit accomplish that? I think that there are two primary ways.

First, the Spirit applies the tests of 1 John to our life and shows us that we pass the tests. In other words, He gives illumination of a specific section of the Word of God and also of the true pattern of our heart and life. We don't even know our own heart and we have the Holy Spirit to testify to us what is in our heart and how it lines up with what the Word of God says about a true Christian in 1 John.

Second, the witness may be just an unexplainable assurance that goes deeper than a mystical feeling to that place that we know that we know that we know that God's Word is true and that we are God's child because the indwelling Spirit in our heart is giving us that assurance in a way that passes understanding. Actually, the witness of the Holy Spirit may be a combination of both of these. This much I know: The norm is that a wholly surrendered, Spirit filled, daily in the Word of God, having daily communion with God disciple will not have long bouts with the lack of assurance of their salvation.

## **VI. The Testimony of Eternal Life (v 11-12)**

Let me share a truth we have focused on time and time again. Eternal life is not just living forever. Eternal life is Christ's life. His life is the only eternal life. Eternal life has no end, but it also has no beginning. We have no end, but we did have a beginning.

John 1:1: "In the beginning was the Word..." In the beginning, He was already there because He had no beginning.

1 John 1:2: "the life was manifested." What life was that? "That eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us." John is obviously speaking of Christ's life!

1 John 5:20b: "... His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life."

### **Conclusion**

What a glorious assurance we have available to us to know that this Jesus, who we savingly believe in and have committed our lives to, is who the Bible says He is. We have the testimony of His baptism, the cross, the Holy Spirit, the Father, of our own heart, and the testimony of His eternal life that we now partake in through our union with Him. Oh, glorious assurance that these witnesses bring.