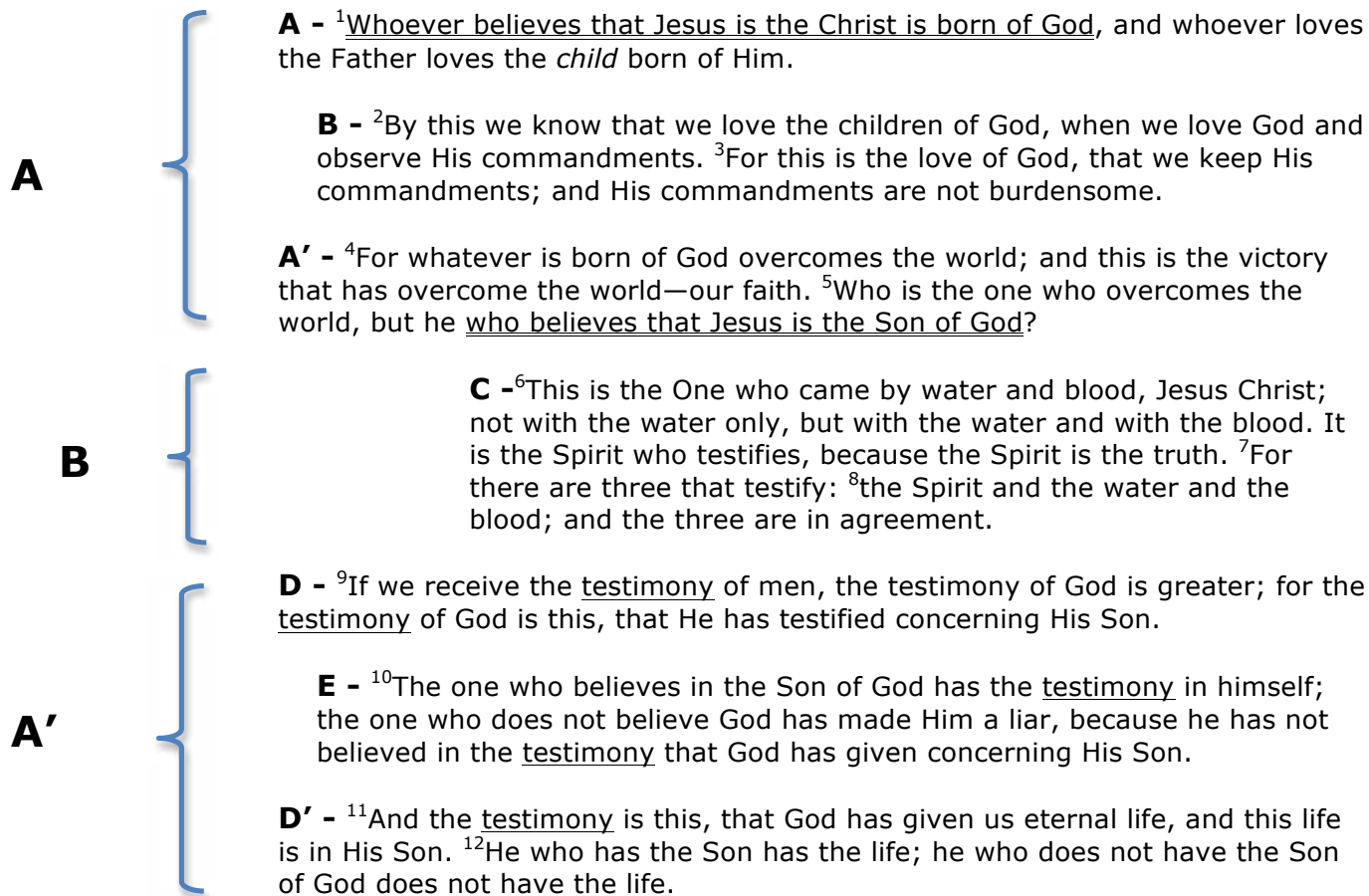


“Life, Love, and Victory” (1 John 5:1-12)



Analysis of the Text: Verses 1-5 are the first section of the text with bookends formed by the words, “Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God,” and “who believes that Jesus is the Son of God,” respectively. Verses 9-12 all speak of God’s testimony concerning His Son and form the third section of the text parallel to the first. The center section of the text, verses 6-8 speak of Jesus Christ coming by water and blood and the triple testimony of water, blood, and the Spirit. Water and blood do not likely refer to Christ’s natural birth. As verse 6 shows, water and blood are taken separately rather than together. Water and blood likely do not refer to the blood and water coming from Christ’s side when he was on the cross and pierced by the spear of the centurion. John 19:34 speaks of “blood and water” coming out rather than “water and blood.” Calvin and Luther take water and blood as references to the sacraments. Water may indeed refer to baptism but bread, not blood, is the symbol for the Lord’s. Water and blood bracket Christ’s earthly ministry. He was baptized with water to begin His earthly ministry and Christ shed His blood complete His earthly ministry. This interpretation goes back to Tertullian (c. 160—c. 225). The point is that the Son of God did become a man and carry out His ministry in this world as a man. The Spirit bears witness to this truth. The Law required testimony to be validated by two or three witnesses. The structure of the text points to this testimony as central.

Main Point of The Text:

1. What is the Text About? Answer: Those who have eternal life believe in Jesus Christ, the incarnate God, and in God’s Testimony concerning Him.
2. What does the text tell us about those who have eternal life, who believe in Jesus Christ, the incarnate God, and in God’s Testimony concerning Him? Answer: They overcome the world by loving God’s children and by keeping God’s commandments.
3. Main Point of the Text: Combine the answers to 1 and 2.

Those who have eternal life believe in Jesus Christ, the incarnate God, and in God’s Testimony concerning Him; they overcome the world by loving God’s children and by keeping God’s commandments.

Main Lesson of the Text:

IF you have eternal life by believing in Jesus Christ, the incarnate God, and in God’s Testimony concerning Him, THEN you overcome the world by loving God’s children and by keeping God’s commandments.

Food for Thought: Note how subjective faith and feelings affect objective actions and behavior. Is the reverse also true; do actions affect feelings?