

INTRODUCTION

1. We currently working our way through 1 John.
2. This morning we are in chapter 5 and verses 6-12.
3. Please take your bibles and turn with me to 1 John chapter 5.
4. In verse 5 John says that the one who has overcome the world is the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.
5. Now in verses 6-12 he says not only is He the Son of God but “This is the One who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ; not with the water only, but with the water and with the blood. It is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. 7 For there are three that testify: 8 the Spirit and the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement. 9 If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater; for the testimony of God is this, that He has testified concerning His Son. 10 The one who believes in the Son of God has the testimony in

himself; the one who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has given concerning His Son. 11 And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. 12 He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.”

6. All of us know what a witness is.
7. He is one who testifies about something they saw or heard.
8. John has been testifying about what he saw and heard from Jesus.
9. The false teachers have been testifying too but their testimony is false.
10. John addresses the subject of testimony or witness in verses 6-12.
11. In fact he uses the word “testimony” or “witness” 6 times in vv.9, 10, 11.

12. He uses the word “testify” or “to witness” 3 times in vv.6, 7, 9.
13. So “testimony” or “witness” is the theme of these 7 verses.
14. Whose testimony are we talking about? God’s.
15. In verse 6 he mentions the testimony of the Holy Spirit.
16. In verse 9 he mentions the testimony of God that He has testified concerning His Son the Lord Jesus Christ.
17. He sums it up in verse 11 by saying, “And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.”
18. So the testimony is from God about Jesus.
19. Why is this important?
20. Because the gnostics or false teachers have been giving their testimony but it wasn’t true.
21. Their testimony began in chapter one.

22. In verses 1-2, they questioned the gospel of Jesus as well as His physical life.
23. And John said of both, “we have seen with our eyes...looked at...touched with our hands” (v.1), He was “manifested and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you” (v.2).
24. In verses 6, 8, and 10 the gnostics said they had “fellowship with Him” (v.6), “no sin” (v.8) and “have not sinned” (v.10).
25. In all three cases John said they “lie and do not practice the truth” (v.6), they’re self-deceived (v.8) and “His word is not in [them]” (v.10).
26. Not only this but they didn’t keep God’s commandments (2:4), love other believers (2:9) but loved the world (2:15-17).
27. They even eventually “went out from us” (2:19).
28. John says that was because “they were not really of us” (2:19).

29. So when you look at the lives of the gnostics and listening to their testimony, their testimony is not true.
30. They “practice sin” (3:4), follow after their father the devil (3:8), live lives of hate (3:10), don’t confess Jesus as coming in the flesh (4:3).
31. They are “antichrists” (2:18).
32. Now John contrasts all this against the lives of true believers who love the Father and one another (5:1) and “keep His commandments” (5:3).
33. And the reason for this is because their faith is in “the Son of God” (5:5).
34. John begins verse 6 of chapter 5 by talking about...

LESSON

I. The Testimony of the Holy Spirit (v.6)

Building off the last part of verse 5, John says, “This is the One who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ; not with the water only, but with the water and with the blood. It is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth.”

A. The Spirit Says Jesus Came By Water and Blood

1. What some say this means

- a) Some believe this refers to Jesus' natural human birth.¹
- b) Others believe that water speaks of our own baptism, and blood speaks of receiving communion, and that John writes of how Jesus comes to us in the two Christian sacraments of baptism and communion (Luther and Calvin had this idea).
- c) Augustine believed the water and blood describes the water and blood which flowed from Jesus' side when He was stabbed with a spear on the cross.
- d) Still others believe the water spoke of Jesus' first birth, being born of the "waters of the womb," and blood speaks of His death. If this is the case, John would be essentially writing, "Jesus was born like a man and died like a man. He was completely human, not some super-spiritual being who had no real

¹ Gerard Chrispin, The Bible Panorama, Day One, p.552

contact with the material world.” The Gnostics in John’s day thought of Jesus as just such a super-spiritual being.

2. What best fits the text

- a) Probably the best explanation is the oldest recorded Christian understanding of this passage (first recorded by the ancient Christian Tertullian). Most likely, John means the water of Jesus’ baptism, and the blood of His crucifixion.
- b) When Jesus was baptized, He was not baptized in repentance for His own sin (He had none), but because He wanted to completely identify with sinful humanity. When He came by water, it was His way of saying, “I am one of you.”
- c) When Jesus died on the cross, He did not die because He had to (death could have no power over Him), but He laid down His life to identify with sinful humanity and to save us from our sin.

- d) When He came by . . . blood it was to stand in our place as a guilty sinner, and to take the punishment our sin deserved.
- e) This explanation also probably connects the best with what Jesus said in John 3:5: Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. The being born of water in this passage speaks of the cleansing waters of baptism.
- f) Some taught (and still teach) that Jesus received the “Christ Spirit” at His baptism, and the “Christ Spirit” left Jesus before He died on the cross.
- g) But John insisted that Jesus did not only come by the water of baptism, but also by the blood of the cross. He was just as much the Son of God on the cross as He was when the Father declared, You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased (Luke 3:22) at the baptism of Jesus.²

² David Guzik

B. John Says the Spirit is the One Who Testifies and Cannot Lie (v.6b)

1. It is the Spirit who testifies

“Testifies” (martureo, “to witness”)

- a) Verses 7-8 says the Spirit testifies
- b) Matthew 3:16 says, “After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and lighting on Him.”
- c) Acts 5:30-32 says, “The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you had put to death by hanging Him on a cross. 31“He is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a Prince and a Savior, to grant repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. 32“And we are witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him.”
- d) 1 Timothy 3:16 says, “By common confession, great is the mystery of godliness:

He who was revealed in the flesh, was vindicated in the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory.”

Taken up in glory.

- e) Hebrews 2:3-4 says, “How will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard, 4 God also testifying with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will.”

2. The Spirit is the truth

- a) Jesus said the Spirit would testify about Him in John 15:26, “When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me.”
- b) In John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13 He is called “the Spirit of truth.”

3. Charles Spurgeon said, “A priest was always ordained by sacrificial blood, cleansing water,

and oil that spoke of the anointing of the Holy Spirit. So Jesus also had these three witnesses to His priestly ministry.”

John now uses his argument of the Spirit, water and blood and forms it into...

II. The Testimony of Three Witness (vv.7-8)

John says, “For there are three that testify: 8 the Spirit and the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement.”

Deuteronomy 19:15 states that “on the evidence of two or three witnesses a matter shall be confirmed.”

John now confirms the matter about Jesus, the Son of God, and now gives the evidence of three witnesses.

He mentions in verse 8:

A. All 3 Testify of Jesus’ Baptism and Crucifixion (v.7)

“A few late mss add...in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit, and these three are one. And there are three that testify on earth, the Spirit...”

If you have a KJV, you will see them included in verse

7 but they occur in no Greek manuscript until the fourteenth century, except for one eleventh century and one twelfth century manuscript in which they have been added to the margin by another hand.

It is probably best to regard these words as the work of an over-zealous copyist who thought that the New Testament needed a little help with the doctrine of the Trinity, and he figured this was a good place to do it. Or perhaps the words just started as notes written in the margin of a manuscript, but the next person who copied the manuscript thought they must belong in the text itself.³

1. The Spirit (v.8)
2. The Water (v.8)
3. The Blood (v.8)

B. All Three Are in Agreement (v.8)

These three witnesses are said to be in “agreement” or “one.”

By this phrase John is “implying that the Spirit, water and blood converge on the same point, and work together toward the same result: that of establishing

³ Ibid., Guzik

the truth that Jesus is Messiah and Son of God.”⁴

We have the testimony of the Holy Spirit, the testimony of three witnesses, verse 9 now includes...

III. The Testimony of God (v.9)

John begins verse 9 saying, “If we receive the testimony of Men.”

This refers back to the testimony of two or three witnesses in Deuteronomy 19:15.

We receive the testimony of men on many issues. In this case, the testimony that comes from two or three witnesses, but what about God? “The testimony of God is greater.”

It’s “greater” (megas) “in importance or degree. It is more reliable and trustworthy, more demanding of our acceptance.”⁵

A. What is the Testimony of God?

“That He has testified concerning His Son.”

⁴ Akin, Daniel L. [1. 2. 3 John](#). Vol. 38. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2001. Print. The New American Commentary.

⁵ Hiebert, D. Edmond. [The Epistles of John: An Expository Commentary](#). Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University Press, 1991. Print.

B. What Did God Testify About His Son?

That He is the “Son of God” who “came by water and blood” or He began His earthly ministry at His baptism and concluded it at His crucifixion.

John’s point is that we should accept God’s testimony precisely because it is *God’s* testimony about *his Son*.⁶

1. God “cannot lie” (Titus 1:2)
2. “Let God be found true, though every man be found a liar” (Romans 3:4).

IV. The Acceptance or Rejection of God’s Testimony (vv.10-12)

John brings his audience to the same conclusion as he had done many times in this epistle.

You either “believe” or “not believe”

And there are consequences to both

⁶ Ibid., Akin.

A. The One Who Believes (v.10a)

He “has the testimony of God in himself.”

Why? Because God abides in Him (see 4:15).

1. He believes Jesus is the Son of God (vv.5, 10)

This is not all he believes according to this letter:

2. He believes “God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all (1:5)
3. He believes he is a sinner, confesses his sins, and God forgives and cleanses him from all unrighteousness (1:9)
4. He believes that Jesus is his advocate with the Father (2:1)
5. He believes that Jesus is the “propitiation for our sins” (2:1)
6. He “confesses the Son” (2:24)
7. He “knows that He (Jesus) is righteous” (2:29)

8. He knows that Jesus “appeared in order to take away sins; and in Him there is no sin” (3:5)
9. He “confesses that Jesus has come in the flesh” (4:2)
10. He “believes that Jesus is the Christ (Messiah)” (5:1)

B. The One Who Does Not Believe (v.10b)

1. He has made God a liar “because he has not believed in the testimony that God has given concerning His Son.”

According to 1 John:

2. He walks “in darkness” (1:6)
3. He says he has “no sin” (1:8)
4. He says he has “not sinned” (1:10)
5. He “does not keep His commandments” (2:4)
6. He “hates his brother” (2:9)

7. He loves “the world” and “the things in the world” (2:15)
 8. He “went out from us” i.e., the true fellowship (2:19)
 9. He “denies that Jesus is the Christ” (2:22)
 10. He “denies the Father and the Son” (2:22)
 11. He “deceives” Christians (2:24)
 12. He doesn’t “practice righteousness” (2:29)
 13. He will not “lay down his life for the brethren” (3:16-17)
 14. He “does not confess Jesus” has come in the flesh (4:3)
 15. He is “from the world” (4:5)
- C. The Testimony is This (vv.11-12)
1. God has given believers eternal life (v.11a)

- a) 1 John 2:25 (NASB) This is the promise which He Himself made to us: eternal life.
- b) 1 John 3:15 (NASB) Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.
- c) 1 John 5:13 (NASB) These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.
- d) 1 John 5:20 (NASB) And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding so that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.
- e) John 10:28 (NASB) and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand.

2. This life is in His Son (v.11b)

- a) John 5:21 (NASB) For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so

the Son also gives life to whom He wishes.

b) John 5:26 (NASB) For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself.

3. He who has the Son has life (v.12a)

4. He who does not have the Son of God does not have the life (v.12b)

CONCLUSION

1. We could sum up verse 12 by this verse: John 3:36 (NASB) He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.”
2. Do you have the life John is speaking about here?
3. Have you believed God’s testimony of Jesus?
4. You can right now.
5. Believing His testimony involves surrendering your life to Him by believing and turning from your sin. Let’s pray.