

Jesus Is God

1Jn 5:5-12
June 11, 2017

1Jn 5:5 Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? **6** 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.

5:5 Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

In 1Jn 5:1-5, emphasis is placed on trusting Jesus Christ. A person who trusts Christ is born of God and is able to overcome the world. Faith in Jesus Christ leads to victorious, overcoming living.

To believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God is basic to Christian experience.

5:6 "This is the One who came"

This emphasizes a specific event in history - the Incarnation (God becoming man) and His sacrificial death.

"by water" and blood, Jesus Christ

Water referring to Jesus' **natural, physical birth**

Jn 3:5 Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. (Jn 3:1-9)

Water could refer to **washing or cleansing**; many believe it refers to the waters of baptism.

Jn 7:38-39 "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.'" 39 But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

Eph 5:25-27 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, 26 so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, 27 that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless.

Tit 3:5-6 He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, 6 whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,

"and (by) blood, Jesus Christ;"

Blood stands for life poured out in sacrifice - the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross.

Jn 19:34-35 But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out. 35 And he who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you also may believe.

The blood of Jesus:

1Jn 1:7 but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. (Rom 3:23-25; 5:9; Eph 1:7; 2:13)

Heb 9:14 how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

Heb 12:22-24 But you have come to ... 24 and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel. (Mt 26:28; Mk 14:24; Lk 22:20)

Heb 13:20 Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, even Jesus our Lord,

1Pt 1:1-2 ... who are chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood: ...(Jn 6:53-56)

Rev 7:14 I said to him, "My lord, you know." And he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Gnosticism:

Some of His contemporaries called Him a liar and a deceiver (Mt 27:63). Others have suggested He was a religious fanatic, a madman, or perhaps a Jewish patriot who was sincere but sadly mistaken. The people to whom John was writing were exposed to a popular false teaching that Jesus was merely a man on whom "the Christ" had come when Jesus was baptized. On the cross, "the Christ" left Jesus ("My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?") and so He died like any other human being.

The false Gnostic teachers (Cerinthus) denied either one or both of these truths; the Incarnation and His sacrificial death. They said that "water" refers to Jesus' baptism and "blood" to His physical death. They taught that water and blood summarize and reveal His humanity, asserting that the "Christ spirit" came upon the man, Jesus, at His baptism (water) and left before the man Jesus' death on the cross (blood).

"not with the water only, but with the water and with the blood."

The statement stresses that Jesus' death is as important as his birth. It seems to be a refutation of opinions held by the false teachers.

Both 'water' and 'blood' are signs of **cleansing from sin**. John emphasizes both water and blood, Water is a symbol of spiritual cleansing, the shedding of blood is how sin is actually dealt with, cancelled and covered.

In John's Gospel, **'blood and water' flow from Jesus on the cross** (John 19:34). A soldier had pierced Jesus' side with a spear, to make sure he was dead. The result was a sudden flow of blood and water - the fluids which had separated and congealed in death.

For the soldiers, the blood and water were proof that Jesus was dead. For the witness who stood there (John himself?), the blood and water were a sign that the sacrifice of Jesus was complete (John 19:35). It was the Holy Spirit who showed him the meaning of Jesus' death.

Witness: John says that 'the Spirit, the water and the blood' are the three witnesses who testify that Jesus is the Christ. They are the witnesses that God himself has provided, and their word is more reliable than any human evidence.

First witness - the water.

Jesus came "by water and blood." Some say that the water refers to His baptism in Jordan, when the Father spoke from heaven and said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Mt 3:13-17). At the same time the Spirit descended like a dove and rested on Him. This was the Father's attestation of His Son at the beginning of Jesus' ministry.

Second witness - the blood.

God gave further witness as the time drew near for Jesus to die. The Father spoke audibly to Jesus from heaven, and said, "I have both glorified [My name], and will glorify it again" (Jn 12:28). Furthermore, the Father witnessed in miracle power when Jesus was on the cross: the supernatural darkness, the earthquake, and the rending of the temple veil (Mt 27:45, 50-53). No wonder the centurion cried out, "Truly this was the Son of God!" (Mt 27:54)

Jesus did not receive "the Christ" at His baptism and lose it at the cross. On both occasions, the Father witnessed to the deity of His Son.

Third witness - the Spirit.

The Spirit was given to bear witness to Christ (Jn 15:26; 16:14). We can trust the Spirit's witness because "the Spirit is truth." We were not present at the baptism of Christ or at His death, but the Holy Spirit was present. The Holy Spirit is the only Person active on earth today who was present when Christ was ministering here. The witness of the Father is past history, but the witness of the Spirit is present experience. The first is external, the second is internal - and both agree.

The Spirit is God himself bearing witness to his Son. God proves that Jesus is true by giving eternal life to all who believe in him. Jesus is life. Without faith in him, there is no way to receive eternal life.

How does the Spirit witness within the heart of a believer? His witness is our inner confidence that we belong to Christ - not a confidence that we "work up" for ourselves, but a confidence that God gives us.

Rom 8:15-16 "For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons, by which we cry out, 'Abba! Father!' The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God"

The Spirit also witnesses to us through the Word. As we read God's Word, He speaks to us and teaches us. A Christian feels "at home" with God's people because the Spirit dwells in him. This is another way the Spirit bears witness.

"It is the Spirit who testifies"

The discourse turns now to the Spirit. There is a close connection between the Divine Sonship and the Spirit, for example

Jn 1:32-34 John testified saying, "I have seen the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven, and He remained upon Him. 33 "I did not recognize Him, but He who sent me to baptize in water said to me, 'He upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him, this is the One who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.' 34 "I myself have seen, and have testified that this is the Son of God."

Jn 3:34 "For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God; for He gives the Spirit without measure."

"witness" is in the present tense, lit. "the witnessing/testifying one". The present tense expresses continuation. This refers to the continuing witness, or testimony, of the Spirit in the congregation.

The verb is used here in the sense of "to affirm," "to assert as valid," "to say that something has really happened so."

Jn 14:26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, ... will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.

Jn 15:26 When the Helper comes, ... that is the Spirit of truth ... He will testify about Me,

He bears witness to the fact that Jesus is the Son of God in the **following ways**:

At the baptism of Jesus. (Mt 3:16-17).

He does it in our hearts at conversion (1Cor 12:3).

He causes the new birth (Isa 34:16; Jn 3:5-6; Rom 8: 15-16; 1Pt 1:3).

The Spirit baptizes us into the body (1Cor 12:13).

He communicates with us (Jn 14:17; Mt 10:20; Phil 2: 1 Rev 2:7, 29, 3:6; 14:13; 22: 17).

He bears witness (confirms) in our hearts ((1 Jn 3:24; 5:6-8; Rom 8:16).

He gives instruction (Neh 9:20; Isa 7:2)

He leads and guides (Rom 8:14; Gal 5: 18; Ac 16:9-10; 21:4; Ps 143:10)

He admonishes (Ne 9:30)

He gives truth (1Jn 5:6; Jn 14:17; 15:26; 16:13).

He teaches (1Cor 2:12-13)

He gives revelation (Eph 3:5).

He gives wisdom (Isa 11:2; Dt 34:9; Ac 6:10).

"because the Spirit is the truth"

In order to stress that the Spirit's testimony about the circumstances of Jesus' coming can be trusted the author adds, because the Spirit is the truth, that is, because all which the Spirit does or says has the quality of divine truth.

Jn 14:6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.

Jn 14:17 that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you.

Jn 16:13 But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.

1Jn 4:6 We are from God; he who knows God listens to us; he who is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

Sometimes the absoluteness of this assertion can be better brought out by a negative wording such as, 'because the Spirit cannot be a lie (or a liar).'

5:7 "For there are three that testify"

In the OT **two or three witnesses** were needed to confirm a matter (Dt 17:6; 19:15; Mt 18:16; Heb 10:28); this principle was also true for settling matters in the NT church (2Cor 13:1; 1Tim 5:19).

We also are called to be witnesses.

Ac 1:8 but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth." (Lk 24:47-48; Ac 2:32; 3:15; 5:32; 10:39-42; 13:30-33;

The deity of Jesus Christ was confirmed by three witnesses:

The Spirit (the Spirit witnesses today within the believer)

The water (The Father witnessed at the baptism)

The blood (The Father witnessed at the cross, at His death)

We receive the witness of men, so why should we reject the witness of God?

People often say, "I wish I could have faith!" But everybody lives by faith! All day long, people trust one another. They trust the doctor and the pharmacist; they trust the cook in the restaurant; they even trust the fellow driving in the other lane on the highway. If we can trust men, why can we not trust God? And not to trust Him is to make Him a liar!

Jesus is God. This is foundational to everything else. Faith rests on the reality of a historical Jesus, who was both man and God, who died and rose again for us. The Spirit, the water, and the blood settles the matter, Jesus is God.

5:8 "the Spirit and the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement"

Here, the historical events of Jesus' life are given as a witness to His full humanity and deity. In this verse, "water" and "blood" are mentioned again along with "the Spirit."

5:9 "If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater"

If - has factual force, the clause can, therefore, also be rendered, 'we receive the testimony of men, but ...'.

The churches John was writing to were confused because they apparently had heard the preaching of the Gnostic teachers.

we receive, that is, 'we accept (as true),' or more emphatically, 'we never doubt.' The pronoun has inclusive force.

"the testimony of men", or 'the witness that men give'; 'what human witnesses say'; 'what men declare to be true'
testimony - "what is said by a witness."

the testimony of God is greater, or 'the witness that God gives (what God declares to be true) is greater,' [implying, 'than that of men,']

In this context greater has often to be rendered by, 'more important,' 'more worthy of acceptance,' 'more enforcing belief.'

This testimony of God refers to both the Holy Spirit's witness and John's witness to the earthly life and death of Jesus.

"for the testimony of God is this, that He has testified concerning His Son"

This implies an action in the past that has come to a state of culmination and is abiding. This may refer to God's vocal affirmations -

at Jesus' baptism (Mt 3:17);

at His transfiguration (Mt 17:5; Jn 5:32-37; 8:18);

and the recording of Scripture (1Thes 2:13).

5:10 "The one who believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself"

The inner witness. Two ways to interpret this phrase:

1. The subjective internal witness of the Spirit in believers

Rom 8:16 The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God,

2. The objective witness of the Word of God. These three witnesses above are objective.
The Spirit performed miracles through Jesus.
The Father confirmed His identity at His baptism.
And the Son died an actual death on the cross, witnessed by many.

When a person believes the external witness to Jesus, God the Father gives us a witness - "in his heart." Faith serves as its own witness. In believing we somehow know the story of Jesus is true, and our certainty is confirmed by what God then does in our lives.

"the one who does not believe God has made Him a liar,"

Those who reject Jesus reject God (1Jn 5:12) because they make God a liar.

"because he has not believed in the testimony"

This emphasizes the settled condition of the unregenerate, non-Christian.

5:11 "And the testimony is this, that God has given concerning His Son."

This speaks of a past act or completed act.

Jn 3:16 For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

Rom 3:21-26 But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, 22 even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction; 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; 25 whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed; 26 for the demonstration, I say, of His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

Eternal life defined

Jn 17:3 "This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. (1Jn 1:2)

1Jn 5:20 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.

Eternal life is a gift from God

1Jn 2:25 This is the promise which He Himself made to us: eternal life.
(1Jn 5:11; Rom 3:24; 5:15-17; 6:23; 2Cor 9:15; Eph 2:8-9)

Eternal life is received through faith in Christ

1Jn 5:13 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.

You cannot be in fellowship with the Father without personal faith in the Son!

5:12 "He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life."

Note: There is some confusion in the English translations as to where verse 6, 7, and 8 begin and end. The portion of verse 7 that is found in the KJV which says "in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Spirit, and these three are one," is not found in the three major ancient uncial Greek manuscripts of the NT; It only appears in four late minuscule manuscripts. This verse is not quoted by any of the Early Church Fathers, even in their doctrinal debates over the Trinity. It is absent from all ancient versions except one late Latin manuscript. It is not in the Old Latin or Jerome's Vulgate. This verse is simply not part of the original inspired words of I John.

The **KJV** translation of 5:7 reflects some **late manuscripts** that **add** three witnesses in heaven:

the Father (Mt 3:17)
Jesus himself ("the Word," Jn 1:1)
the Spirit ("the Holy Ghost")

The three heavenly witnesses “are one” (5:7, KJV). They are a “Trinity” (Gen 1:26-31).
There is also the witness within the believer’s heart (1Jn 5:9-10).

Monotheism: The biblical doctrine of one God, but with three personal manifestations (Father, Son, and Spirit).
Although it is true that the Bible never uses the word “trinity,” many biblical passages:

Gen 1:26 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; ...

Dt 6:4 Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!

Jn 10:30 I and the Father are one.

Mt 28:19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the
Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,

References that show all three persons of the Godhead acting together:

At the baptism of Jesus (Mt 3:16-17)

The Spirit sent (Jn 14:26)

Peter’s Pentecost sermon (Ac 2:33-34)

Paul’s discussion of flesh and spirit (Rom 8:7-10)

Paul’s discussion of spiritual gifts (1Cor 12:4-6)

Paul’s travel plans (2Cor 1:21-22)

Paul’s benediction (2Cor 13:14)

Paul’s discussion of the fullness of time (Gal 4:4-6)

Paul’s prayer of praise to the Father (Eph 1:3-14)

Paul’s discussion of the Gentiles’ former alienation (Eph 2:18)

Paul’s discussion of the oneness of God (Eph 4:4-6)

Paul’s discussion of the kindness of God (Titus 3:4-6)

Peter’s introduction (1Pt 1:2)

Resources used in this study:

Study Guide Commentary Series; by RJ Utley

The Bible Exposition Commentary

Wilmington’s Bible handbook

The Bible Reader’s Companion

The Bible Guide by A Knowles

Barnes’ Notes