

# Witness of God

## 1 John 5:5-12

### Introduction

Here John talks about the witness of God or God bearing witness. He says this phrase about 9 times in this passage alone. Last week, we looked at that Christians were overcomers. It is through God that they have overcome the world. Here in **verse 5**, John says, "Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?" He then focuses on Christ Jesus. John wants Christians to know that God bears witness to His Son, and through His Son, we have eternal life. John emphasizes that it is God that brings it all together.

The word "witness" simply means to bring to remembrance and share with others about it. Here John says that God is the witness to His Son. We can make the statement that the whole Scripture is God's witness to His Son. God told Satan and the first couple that He will send a deliverer that will crush the devil's head. Jacob said that Shiloh, the Ruler, will come out of the line of Judah, whose kingdom will last forever. God told David, in **2 Samuel 7**, that a greater Son will come and reign forever. Isaiah foretold of a virgin birth. Micah tells people that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. Hosea said that the Messiah will go to Egypt and that God will call Him out of Egypt. Jeremiah talks about the killing of babies in Bethlehem. **Psalms 22** talks about the King on the cross. **Isaiah 53** talks about the King's sacrifice for our sins. **Psalms 16** talks about the resurrection.

Jesus said that all Scripture (the OT) talks about Him. **John 5:39** *You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me.* God reveals His Son in the Scripture so that when He arrives, they will know who He is.

The NT writers also tell us Jesus' work on earth and explain the meaning of His work. The Gospel is God's witness to His Son. Acts is God's witness to the power of the Truth of His Son moving in the world. The epistles are God's testimony of His Son's life, death, resurrection, ascension and His Second Coming. Revelation is God's witness to the final plan of His Son.

John writes the threefold witness during the life of Christ that God reveals to us: the Spirit, water, and blood. It is through the three witnesses that He reveals to us the purpose and how we should respond to those witnesses.

### I. The Three Witnesses (5-8)

- This is He who came by water and blood
  - Came—the Incarnation of Christ

**Titus 2:11** *For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men,*

**Titus 3:4** *But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared,*

- Water and blood meaning—three common interpretation
  - Water and blood represent Baptism and Lord's Supper
  - Water and blood represents blood and water from His side

**John 19:34** *But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out.*

- Water—Jesus' baptism and blood—Jesus' death
- Which one is best interpretation? (the third)
- Not only by water, but by water and blood
  - Defense against false teaching
    - False teaching—Christ spirit came upon Jesus at baptism
    - False teaching—Christ spirit left Jesus before crucifixion
    - John says that Jesus is Christ even through death (and resurrection)
- How do the Spirit, water, and blood bear witness to Christ?
  - Spirit

**Luke 1:35** *And angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.*

**Mark 1:12** Immediately the Spirit drove Him into the wilderness.

**Acts 10:38** How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.

**Matthew 12:24-32** Now when the Pharisees heard it they said, "This fellow does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons." (31) "Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven men. (32) Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come.

**Note:** Jesus performed all the miracles through the Holy Spirit. This was the direct fulfillment to the prophecy of **Isaiah (61:1-2, cf Luke 4:17-20)**. Not only that, but the Holy Spirit is still bearing witness to the Son today through Scripture and regeneration. It is important to understand that the Father bears witness to the Son through the Holy Spirit. The Father bears witness to the Son through two historical acts: Jesus' baptism and His death.

- Water

**Matthew 3:13-17** 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."

**Note:** God showed Himself to John the Baptist as a witness to Jesus the Son of God, the Messiah, the Promised One of Israel. See **John 1:29-34**. God did this because John the Baptist was to prepare the way for the coming of the Messiah. Not only that but God's pleasure is also in the cross, as evident in **Isaiah 53:10**:

*Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, And the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand.*

- Blood

**Matthew 27:45-51, 54** Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land. (46) And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" (47) Some of those who stood there, when they heard that, said, "This Man is calling for Elijah!" (48) Immediately one of them ran and took a sponge, filled it with sour wine and put it on a reed, and offered it to Him to drink. (49) The rest said, "Let Him alone; let us see if Elijah will come to save Him." (50) And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. (51) Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split, (54) So when the centurion and those with him, who were guarding Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that had happened, they feared greatly, saying, "Truly this was the Son of God!"

**Note:** It is the darkness and the veil torn that signified God's witness. First, the darkness was a witness of God's wrath being poured out on His Son. Second, the veil was torn to show God's witness to all that the way to the Holy of Holies is open only through Jesus Christ.

**Note:** For **verse 7** in KJV and NKJV: "For there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one." This is not found in Greek manuscripts, except for three very late manuscripts (fifteenth century, sixteenth century, and seventeenth century) that were translated into Greek from Latin translations. This statement was only in the margins of a Latin translation after the 5<sup>th</sup> century. It was not added to the Vulgate until AD 800. None of the early church fathers ever quoted this verse in defense of the Trinity or for the Athanasian Creed, Chalcodean creed, or the Nicea Creed, which **the creeds** defended and expounded on the Trinity.

## II. Purpose of the Witness (11)

- God has given us eternal life

**Note:** John stated this purpose of writing 1 John that we might know that we have eternal life. In the Gospel of John, John states that we know that Jesus is the Christ, and that by believing in Him, we might have life in His name. Eternal life is the gift of God

- This life is in His Son

**Note:** Exclusivity of the Gospel. There is no other name under heaven that is available for salvation except through Jesus Christ.

## III. The Response to the Witness (10, 12)

- Why should we believe all His words?
  - Because God's witness is greater

**Note:** His witness is infallible, unassailable, and irrefutable. It is all based on His character. We accept man's testimony, so how much more can we accept God's testimony?

- Because God's witness brings us to faith

**Matthew 16:17** *Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.*

- Believe
  - The believer has the witness in himself
    - Hold on to—lifelong grip to Jesus Christ (and eternal life)
  - Has eternal life
- Do not believe
  - Make God a liar
  - You've told God that you don't believe what He says about His Son

**Titus 1:2** *in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began,*

**Number 23:19** *"God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?"*

**John 5:40** *But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.*

- Unbelievers do not have life