

Subject: *Straight Talk about God's Witness*

Scripture: *1 John 5:6-12*

The first part of chapter 5 tells us that all who believe in Jesus Christ overcome the world. That's very encouraging. But how do we know to believe in Jesus? What evidence do we have that He is the Christ, the Son of God? Are we just supposed to take anybody's word for it? Are we to believe it just because our parents believe it or other people believe it?

Faith is not a leap in the dark. It is a step into the light. God doesn't expect us to have blind faith. He wants us to have informed faith. He gives us evidence and testimony and we have the choice to believe or reject the testimony. We are free to choose, but we are not free to choose the consequences of our choice. John Chancellor, who for many years was anchor of NBC Nightly News, said, "Facts are stubborn things." I also remember CBS anchor Walter Cronkite used to say this at the end of every broadcast: "And that's the way it is."

The main idea in verses 6-12 is the idea of witness, bearing witness, testifying, and giving a record of something. All of these words translate the same Greek word from which we get the English word "martyr." A martyr is someone who is the ultimate witness, someone who is willing to die for what he believes. God has given us all the evidence we need and He cannot lie, so we can be assured we know and believe the truth concerning Jesus. There are six things we should know about God's witness (testimony) that proves Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

1. The witness of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit bears witness to the person and ministry of Jesus Christ. There were many who never saw Christ personally. We were not there when Jesus was born, when He did His great miracles, when He died and rose again, but the Holy Spirit inspired men to write these things down. Jesus spoke of the Holy Spirit who would speak the truth about Him. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth. He is a trustworthy witness.

- **John 15:26** *But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me.*
- **John 16:13-14** ¹³ *Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come.* ¹⁴ *He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you.*

Even those people who saw Jesus and heard Jesus including His disciples would not always have Him in person. For this reason the Holy Spirit would need to remind them what He said and did.

- **John 14:26** *But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*

When I think of the testimony of the Holy Spirit in written Word I think about the words to that great old hymn: "How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord, is laid for your faith in His excellent Word. What more can He say, than to you He hath said, to Jesus who for refuge to Jesus have fled." The witness of the Holy Spirit is an unmistakable witness.

2. The witness of the water

This refers to Christ's baptism in the Jordan River. When Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist God gave a special witness in two ways.

- The visible witness (the dove) – The Holy Spirit descended on Jesus in the form of a dove.
- The audible witness (the voice from heaven) – God the Father spoke from heaven, “This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased” (Mt. 3:17)

This was the double witness that Jesus was the Christ (the anointed One) and the Son of God given at the beginning of His earthly ministry. This was an unmistakable witness.

3. The witness of the blood

This refers to Christ's death on the cross. When Jesus died God gave a special witness to prove that this was no ordinary man's death but this was His own dear Son dying on the cross. This was an unmistakable witness.

- The supernatural darkness (from noon until 3:00 p.m.)
- The earthquake
- The veil of the temple torn from top to bottom
- ***Matthew 27:54*** *Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God.*

John was aware of the false teaching that said Jesus was merely a man who was anointed as the Christ at His baptism and then the anointing left him on the cross when he said, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” John refuted that false teaching with the witness that Jesus was and is the Christ, the unique Son of God.

4. The greater witness of God

As Moses taught, every testimony was established as credible at the mouth of two or three witnesses (Deut. 17:6; Mt. 18:16). So we have the witness of the Spirit, the water, and the blood that all agree Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

Then John makes the powerful point that if we receive (believe) the witness (testimony) of men, the witness of God is greater. People sometimes say, “I wish I could live by faith.” They already do. Everybody lives by faith. We trust what the doctor says and then we trust what the pharmacist gives us. We trust the cook who has prepared something to nourish us and not poison us. We trust the person behind the wheel of an oncoming car on a two-lane highway. Talk about faith! If we trust people how much more should we trust God.

5. The internal witness in the believer

The other witnesses John mentions are external witnesses, but there is one internal witness, the Holy Spirit inside the believer.

- ***Romans 8:15-16*** ¹⁵ *For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.* ¹⁶ *The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:*

How do we know the internal witness of the Spirit? Could someone move into your house and start living there and you not know it? Is it possible for the third person of the Holy Trinity to move into your life and you not know it? Well, that's exactly what happens when you receive Christ as Lord and Savior. The Holy Spirit comes into your life to live permanently. Your heart is not a hotel, but a home.

The only alternative to a believer is an unbeliever. To be an unbeliever is a very serious thing because it makes God a liar.

6. The exclusive witness of life in the Son

This is a summary and a climax to everything else John has written. This is God's record (witness, testimony) that He has given to us eternal life and this life is in His Son. This life is exclusively in His Son and in no other person, philosophy, or religion. Again John takes aim at the false teachers who claimed that Jesus may have been a good man, but He was not God's eternal Son, and he certainly was not the exclusive and only way to God. They claimed to have higher knowledge and inside information that was necessary for salvation.

Verse 12 is a definitive statement that having Jesus is having eternal life and not having Jesus is to be without eternal life. No matter how good or moral or intellectual or persuasive a person may be, there is only one person who has eternal life, and that person is Jesus Christ. No matter how helpful, noble, positive, or appealing a religion may be, there is only one person who has eternal life, and that person is Jesus Christ. We talk about the plan of salvation, but it's even better to talk about the man of salvation.

- **Acts 4:12** *Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.*
- **John 14:6** *Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*

Jesus is not a way to eternal life. He is the not the best way to eternal life. He is the only way to eternal life. He is eternal life.

- **John 3:16-18** ¹⁶ *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.* ¹⁷ *For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.* ¹⁸ *He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.*
- **John 3:36** *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.*