

Jesus is the Christ of God

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Well, let's grab our Bibles and go to 1 John 5. I'm gonna try to finish that up in the next week or two. We were in 1 John on Sunday night and when I finished 1 Timothy, we just moved it over to Sunday morning.

I love singing about, I love studying about the holiness of God. That's a character trait that's really a composite of all of God's attributes and I like the fact that it's too great for our comprehension. This notion today that we suddenly sort of bring God down to where he's a lot like us, just bigger and more powerful, is blasphemy. He's not a lot like us in any way. He's holy. He transcends everything that we are and everything that we can understand or contemplate, like he's spirit and he's eternal and he's omnipresent, and on and on we could go. That's why when you really study the Bible or you really preach the word, things should come out about God where you say, "That shocks me. I didn't know God was like that." As if God leaned out of heaven and said, "I'm not like you. I'm not like what you think." And aren't you glad we've got the perfect record of the revelation of God in these Scriptures? This is where we find out who is God and what is he like.

Well, in our text today, John is wrapping up his letter. John's an older apostle. He's writing to the churches. He's combating the error, the heresy, the false teaching that's trying to creep into the church and he's trying his best to keep the churches anchored in truth. I like that phrase. That's where he's trying to keep them and it's, uh, and it's an unending vigilance that we have to have to keep out these creeping, uh, uh, liberal unbiblical ideas. We have a couple of African American pastors coming to the conference, the True Church Conference this year. Uh, you may have heard of the "Just Thinking" podcast, y'all know who I'm talking about? And, uh, these two brothers are, I think they're brilliant and they leave no stone unturned as they expose the unbiblical aspects of a lot of what's called Christian wokeism or the social justice movement or the Black Lives Matters movements, and these guys are straightforward, thoroughly biblical, and they're gonna help us at the conference understand how to keep outside what outta stay outside of the church, the kind of doctrines, and that's part of what John's doing here. There's, there's stuff floating around out there in the culture much of which calls itself Christianity and it keeps trying to get into the church. I don't know if I can say without fail but almost always without fail anytime a false teaching begins to stir around, when it comes to its final resting place, it rests usually right here, rejecting the deity of Christ, rejecting the oneliness of Christ as Savior, those two aspects. Now they may start way

over here and the teaching, "Well, we're not real sure. That might, that's probably not bad. That's a new emphasis. It's probably not that big a deal." Then you open the door and you let it in and when it gets done, you have whole denominations ruined as the foundational doctrines are undermined eventually, including the deity of Christ and the oneness of Christ as our salvation.

Alright, let's look at it together. John 5:6-13. John writes,

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 these 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; and he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. 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.

Now John says here there are three that testify, the Spirit, the water and the blood, but I'd like to back up and point out from the text that actually there are four testimonies given here that all center in this truth: Jesus is the Christ of God, and that's what we entitled this. All four testimonies set forth the premise, if you will, the un, the un, the unthwartable, unchangeable, foundation rock that Jesus is the Christ of God. Christ, the anointed one, that is, he is the Savior. The, the, the word "Christ" does not mean his name, it means the office he holds. I'm Jeff the pastor, you might say. Well, he's Jesus the Christ. He holds the office of the Christ, the only true Savior of the world.

Now, first of all, let's break it down this way. I. The Son's testimony. In effect, the Son came, he lived on the earth and testified himself that he is, of course, the Christ. The text words it this way, "This is the One who came by water and blood." There's some discussion over now what does it mean he testified through water and through blood? Well, I believe it's his baptism and his death. At his baptism, he inaugurated his work in the office as the Christ. I'm not saying he wasn't the Christ before that point but that is the point when he began, he initiated his work through the office of Christ, and then the climactic aspect of his work as the Christ was his death, his blood being shed on the cross. So the, the water, his baptism which initiated his work as the Christ, his death on the cross which was the pentacle, pinnacle, if you will, of his work as the Christ on behalf of his children.

Now the context here is Gnosticism. Gnostics, well, there's a lot of complication and dynamic to all Gnostic doctrines of antiquity but one thing that seems to be a common

doctrine of the Gnostics of this day was that the true Christ could not have had a physical body; that the real Christ was this spirit-being that came on Jesus when he was baptized and then the spirit-being left Jesus or left Jesus when he died. And what John is saying is that's pure heresy. God sent his Son to be the Christ and he had to become fully wholly a human being to be the Savior of the world. He had to become man. Now we know as the theologians teach us and the Bible teaches very clearly, that Jesus was God as if he were not man at all, and at the same time he was man as if he were not God at all, he was both at the same time, the God-man. But John here, I think, is wanting to emphasize his humanity. He was in a human body. He received the baptism to initiate his earthly ministry. In a human body, he, he hung and he suffered and he bled and he died as a human man, and therefore he could redeem the children.

So John testifies to the historical veracity of Jesus Christ. Jesus was born a little baby. He lived and grew up as a literal boy and a teenager. He lived as a literal young man in the earth. He slept like a literal person. He rose up in the morning and had to eat like a literal person. He suffered and bled and died like a literal person. That's who he was. And all of these teachings, John says, that are circling around there, they want to chip away at the humanity of Christ are wrong. Jesus had to be fully human.

A couple of cross-references in, uh, 1 John 1:1, notice how John begins, again attacking this Gnostic heresy that Jesus didn't have a true physical body. 1 John 1:1, "What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes," notice the, the specificity here, "what we have looked at," what we have, "touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life." He wasn't just a spook, he was a literal person.

Hebrews 2:14, "Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil." So here we have Christ's testimony, the Son's testimony that he is the Christ. He fulfilled the office through his initiating in beginning the office through baptism and his dying on the cross through water and through blood.

Now let's go to the second thing here. II. The Spirit's testimony. He says here in the last part of verse 6, "it is the Spirit who testifies because the Spirit is truth." Now we know the Spirit continually testifies that Christ or Jesus rather is the Christ of God. The Holy Spirit is active on the earth today and he was active when Jesus was ministering on the earth 2,000 years ago. He simply says it is the Spirit who testifies. Just a few, uh, uh, historical aspects of this. We know in Matthew 1:20 the Spirit bore witness to Jesus' birth to Joseph. He said, "Joseph, the child will be born of the Holy Spirit." And to Mary in Luke 1:35. And then the Holy Spirit told Simeon in Luke 2 that he himself would see the Christ. And then in Matthew 3 and in Luke 3 during Jesus' baptism we have the Spirit descending on Jesus, the Bible says, like a dove. Jesus said himself in John 6:63, "The words I speak are Spirit and are life." So during his earthly ministry, the Spirit was testifying over and over and over again, "This One, this is the only One who is the Christ, the promised Savior sent from God."

Uh, a couple of cross-references here. John 15:26, "When the Helper comes," that's the Holy Spirit, "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." Well, the Helper has come and he to this day, even to you sitting here at this moment, in this building, the Spirit of God is working to testify to you that Jesus is the Christ of God.

Romans 8:15 and 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 testifies with our spirit that we are the children of God." So we as believers in Jesus Christ have the Holy Spirit living inside of us and it is he, the third person of the Godhead, who continually bears and affirms to us – now listen – using the Scripture, using the Bible to say to us over and over, "Christ, Christ, Christ is your hope and Jesus is the Christ of God." Now sometimes you can go out in this world and you can kinda get a little wishy-washy, you can kinda waver a little bit in your faith, but you open the Bible again and the Spirit that resides in you affirms in your soul again Jesus is the Christ of God. There's no one outside of him. There's no hope outside of him.

The Bible says here in verse 6, "because the Spirit is the truth," and notice the union with Jesus in that statement. The Spirit is the truth. Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." Both the Spirit and Jesus have their essence in truth.

So we have the Son's testimony. He came himself and testified and preached and taught, and through his water baptism and through his blood has testified, "I am the Christ of God." The Holy Spirit of God during Jesus' earthly ministry and continuing up to this moment is testifying to the world, to individuals, that Jesus is the Christ of God. And actually we come to III to the one who's in back of all of this, the Father's testimony, because in really in reality in the flow of the context, you could say the, these are all parts of the Father testifying that his Son Jesus is the Christ of God. It's, it's both/and, it's not one or the other but he is, he is, uh, or rather all the truths we've unfolded so far are included in the Father's testimony.

Now look at verse 8 of the Father's testimony, "the Spirit and the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement." Now how he breaks it down in those three aspects, the Spirit and the water and the blood and they're all in agreement, what he's saying is the Father is behind all of these and all of these agree to that one grand truth, Jesus is the Christ of God. I think one of the reasons it's mentioned like this is John's a Jewish man and in Jewish tradition all facts were to be confirmed by two or three witnesses. Sometimes they would use inanimate objects. We have an example from Genesis 31 of Jacob and Laban putting together this monument of stones as a witness of their agreement or their covenant between themselves. And so the Bible lays out you have not only the water, you have the blood, and a continual testimony of the Holy Spirit. You have three witnesses from God the Father that Jesus is the Christ of God.

We know in the Old Testament if you were going to bring a charge against someone, you had to have two or three witnesses. And then in the New Testament in the practice of church discipline, before someone could be brought before the church you had to have

two or three witnesses. Before bringing an accusation against a church elder, you can't just take this statement or that statement or this rumor or that rumor. The Bible requires two or three witnesses and so the Bible says God has also offered these concerning his Son.

Now an important cross-reference here, uh, John 5:32-37. Now look at this, a very very important insight, I think, to this text. In John 5:32-37, here's what Jesus says. "There is another who testifies of Me, and I know that the testimony which He gives about Me is true. You have sent to John, and he has testified to the truth." Now what he's saying is, "John's testified of Me and that's important, you ought to believe John the Baptist." But Jesus goes on and says, verse 34, "But the testimony which I receive is not from man, but I say these things so that you may be saved. He," John, "was the lamp that was burning and was shining and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his life, in his light," rather. Now 36, "But the testimony which I have is greater than the testimony of John; for the works," notice that's a key word, "the works which the Father has given Me to accomplish--the very works that I do--testify about Me, that the Father has sent Me." Now here's what Jesus is saying, "These works that I have done, these are the works the Father gave Me to do to fulfill the office of Christ, Messiah or Savior. It is these that are the Father's very witness to you that I am He." He has perfectly or rather Christ has perfectly fulfilled the office of Christ so he must be God's sent one, God's Savior, God's Christ. And what the text is saying is in this way, since Christ perfectly performed the works required of the one in the office of Christ, he therefore has to be the one sent from the Father. He did it. He fulfilled it. He accomplished it. He did it perfectly so he must be sent from this perfect Father.

Through the Spirit, the water and the blood plus the voice of the Father at, at Jesus' baptism, his transfiguration, and right before his triumphal entry into Jerusalem, um, God has borne this witness and matter of fact, John in our text here uses the perfect tense which means there is a continual witness or testimony of God about his Son Jesus being the Christ of God. Brothers and sisters, when anybody, anytime, anywhere, with any kind of, uh, powerful or persuasive, uh, discourse tries to get you away from – listen to me – simple faith in Christ and Christ alone, they are denying the testimony of God himself. That's the point of the text. That's the point of the text.

Now in verse 10 of 1 John again, we're back in 1 John 5:10, "The one who believes in the Son," now this isn't just a shallow intellectual consent, this is a full trust and confidence in Jesus Christ and, by the way, it means continual. When you come to Christ in faith, you didn't just do something, you became something. You didn't just place faith in Christ – listen to me – you became a faither in Jesus Christ. That means that as we live our lives, we are constantly casting our hope, our hearts, and our minds back on Jesus. I don't know if you're like me, actually that's a lie, it's rhetorical. I do know you're like me and that is as we live our lives, we constantly have to say, "O Christ, O Christ, if You're not my hope today every moment, I'm sunk again. I fail again. I fall short again. I'll fall again. I'll stumble again. I'll have that dirty attitude again. I'll have that ugly spirit again. O Christ, I look to You continually in faith to be the remedy, the propitiation for my sins, the Savior of my wicked sinful soul." We didn't just believe, we started believing. We didn't just

pay, place faith, we began to be a father in Jesus Christ. That's what the tense here means, a continual abiding rest or belief in Jesus Christ, and it is the Holy Spirit who bears witness from without us that now has begun to bear with, witness within us that we are the children of God.

Notice in verse 10 again, "The one who believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself." At the first it was outside of us shouting at us, "Jesus is the Christ. Jesus is the Christ." Now within us there is the witness of the Spirit saying, "Jesus is the Christ."

Now the last part of verse 10, "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." Now he says anyone who does not believe. Now listen, he does, he doesn't say anyone who does not believe Jesus, he says anyone who does not believe God. You see, your problem's not Jesus, your problem's God. God has clearly borne witness Jesus is the only Savior. It's God the Father you're rejecting when you reject his Son Jesus Christ because there would be those who say, "Now I love God and I believe in the Old Testament Scriptures but I can't go with Jesus being the true and only Christ of God." Then you reject God, you reject the God you claim you embrace. You cannot reject his Son and not reject him because he is the one who bears witness of his Son. Anyone who does not believe in Jesus has rejected God's testimony concerning Jesus. When he rejects God's testimony he says, in effect, "God is a liar." This is a serious offense to reject God's royal authority. The false teachers of this day rejected the birth of the Christ and the death of the Son of God. We need to remind ourselves that unbelief is not a misfortune to be pitied, it is a sin to be deplored. Friend, your unbelief this day is not ignorance, your unbelief this day is rebellion. Your unbelief is not because you can't believe, it's because you won't believe. And you're, you're taking an affront to God himself, that's what John's saying who said, "This is My Son, the Christ of God."

What's the foundational issue when someone rejects Jesus Christ as their only Lord and Savior? What's the foundational issue? Three simple words: I love sin. That's it. It, it's because we love sin. We love the sins that we want to coddle and embrace and worship and enjoy, and we push away Christ. John Calvin said in his commentary on this text, "A man in other parts of his life may be an angel, yet his sanctity is diabolical as long as he rejects Christ." Now ladies will use this language sometimes, "She is so sweet. She is the kindest and most thoughtful person. She is such, so wonderful and, and unselfish." But if she rejects Christ and Christ alone as Lord and Savior, she's a demon, and so is any man. The key is do you know Christ? The greatest form of evil is our good works that we substitute for the new birth and believing in Jesus Christ. Did you hear me? The greatest form of evil is good stuff that people rely on in the place of casting themselves as bankrupt sinners at the feet of a bloody cross and trusting in Jesus Christ.

So it's the Father who bears witness but I want to amplify this a little bit. God the Father has not only adequately, substantially borne witness concerning his Son, that his Son Jesus is his Christ, his only Savior, God has also borne substantial witness against you as a sinner. He's given you the testimony of creation. The Bible says you can look at creation itself and see there's a God that you fall short of, that you need to make right

with, but yet you can't do that. The Bible says he's given you the conscience, your conscience condemns you that you've broken God's law, combined with the fact that he's written the law of God in every man's heart to testify against you that you're a sinner, that you've fallen short, that you transgressed his laws, that you stand guilty before him. He's given us the holy Scriptures which bear out very clearly that we're dead in trespasses and sins. No one who does good, the Bible says, no not one. And by the way, this is a continual process. The witness keeps going. The witness keeps going. The witness keeps going. And then there's the Holy Spirit that's constantly bearing witness with your conscience, with the law that's written in your heart, with the holy Scriptures saying, "You're guilty. You're fallen short. You're owing to God. You're a transgressor. You are guilty and God's judgment abides upon you still." You may leave this service saying, "I'm glad I got away from that loud, red-faced preacher," but when you get in your car, the Spirit of God says, "You're guilty. Your conscience is defiled. You're not right with God." You go home and you eat your lunch and the Spirit says, "You're guilty." You go turn on the television and the, and the Dallas Cowboys come on to lose again and your conscience says, "You're a loser too. You're guilty. You're defiled. You're unclean." And God holds you accountable. I'm telling you, it does not end until it's too late, and when it does end, you're done if you haven't turned to Christ. I don't care if you're the sweetest 10 year old boy or girl in this auditorium, or the most respected senior gentleman or society lady in our town that's loved and admired, I'm telling you if you haven't settled with Christ, the Spirit of God testifies you are guilty and under the judgment of God. If you reject Christ, you reject God's testimony, you call God a liar, John says. When God says, "You're a sinner. You need My only hope, My Son Jesus who is the Christ," you say, "I'm not sure I want to do that." Then what you're saying is, "God, I think You're a liar. I think I'm right and You're wrong." You call God a liar. These are not my words, these are John's words.

It's interesting, you think about the word "testimony," it comes, it comes in our mind a courtroom scene, a, a witness. Just in our mind's eye, there's a, there's a lawyer in a courtroom and he summons God to the stand to be a witness and the lawyer looks at him and the lawyer says, "Do You know this man that's before the court today?" And God says, "Yes, you know, I'm omniscient, I know everything. I know everything about his past. I know everything about his future. I know everything about him. I know things he doesn't know about himself because I'm God, I'm omniscient." But the lawyer says, "Well, do You know the facts of this case?" And God says, "Oh, yes I do. I'm, I'm not only omniscient, I'm omnipresent. I'm everywhere at one time. There's never a place where I'm not." You know God's in hell? God will never leave hell. He's only there in his wrath and fury in judgment but he's in hell. When you die, your problem's gonna be God.

The lawyer says, "Well, do You, do You have any responsibilities in this man's case before the court today?" And God replies, "Yes, because nothing happens without My permission. I'm omnipotent and in divine sovereignty I order all events of all things for all time and all eternity. I'm omniscient. I'm omnipresent and I'm omnipotent."

The lawyer says, "Well, do You Yourself bear any responsibility for the crimes in this case?" God says, "No. I am holy and I am righteous and no one can justly accuse Me of

guilt or sin." The lawyer bows his head and humbles himself and very sheepishly looks at God on the witness stand and says, "God, You know what? You shouldn't be the witness, You should be the judge." And God replies, "You're right but in My divine providence I have a set period of time for everything and right now I'm a witness in the world. Right now I'm in the world bearing witness that My Son Jesus is the Christ and men must turn to Him. But there is a day coming, it will not be long that I will put on the judge's robe and I will ascend to My throne and I will judge all men and everything on the earth through My Son Jesus Christ, Jesus who is the Christ, and all who are in Him will be judged worthy of everlasting eternal life in glory, and all who are outside of Him will be judged as worthy of eternal condemnation and of wrath. I am the judge and that day is coming but right now I'm in the world as a witness that My Son Jesus is the Christ."

One final thing, notice V., the saints' testimony. Verse 11, and this testimony, "And the testimony," rather, "is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. 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," it's in you now, "eternal life." The testimony is now in you. The word "know" is a strong word. It means "sure and certain." God wants you to know if you've rested your trust on Jesus, the Christ of God, you can know that everlasting life, eternal life, living forever has already been deposited in you. Matter of fact, you're now a testimony of it to the rest of the world. You can know you have the life.

Now it's initially there right now. The old Puritans and others used to use the word "germ," you have the germ of it in you right now. I like to use the word "seed." The new life is there maybe just in seed form but it's there and it begins to grow so throughout this earthly pilgrimage you have the life partially, so to speak, but then when Jesus returns and we're glorified with him, we will all have it perfectly.

Do you know Jesus? Now I don't mean know about him. I don't, I don't mean say, "Well, I respect the historical record of Jesus dying on the cross, buried, rose again, and gone back to heaven." That's not what I mean. Are you resting in him as the Christ of God as your only hope of salvation? If you don't, then God himself will bear witness against you on the last day. But if you do, God will be your advocate, lawyer, judge and defender on the last day. Jesus is the Christ of God. There is no other.