



The First Epistle of JOHN

Chapter 5:6-13

"The Witness!"

I) THE WITNESS! (v6-8)

(v6) The **SPIRIT** bears witness - **The Spirit is truth!** - John 4:23-27- *"But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." The woman said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When He comes, He will tell us all things." Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am He."*

(**Insight:** The water and blood refer to Christ BAPTISM (water) and DEATH (blood).)

(v7-8) The witness of the TRINITY:

- **WHAT IS THE TRINITY?** – While the doctrine of the Trinity is a central fact of Christian faith, it is also beyond human comprehension and has no parallel in experience. It is best defined as holding that, **while God is one, He exists as three persons.**

These persons are equally worthy of adoration, worship, and faith. Yet the doctrine of the unity of the Godhead makes clear that they are not three separate gods, like three separate human beings, such as Peter, James, and John.

The persons of the Trinity, while having equal attributes, differ in certain properties. Hence, the First Person of the Trinity is called the Father. The Second Person is called the Son, and is sent forth by the Father. The Third person is the Holy Spirit who is sent forth by the Father and the Son. This is called in theology, the doctrine of procession..."

Rob Bowman of the Christian Research Institute states: "The three persons, consequently, are not three parts of God, but three personal distinctions within God, each of whom is fully God."

> GOD'S EXISTENCE:

- **In the Bible** – The Bible does not seek to prove the existence of God. The fact that there is a God is assumed throughout the Scriptures. The first verse in the Bible, Genesis 1:1, is an example; "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" God's existence is presented as a statement of fact that needs no proof. "The fool has said in his heart, 'there is no God'" (Psalm 14:1)

- In nature – Even apart from the Bible, there are certain evidence for the existence of God:

(1) Mankind has always believed in a universal being.

(2) Creation must have a creator. The universe could not originate without a first cause.

(3) The wonderful design, which we see in creation demands an infinite design.

(4) Since man is an intelligent being, his creator must have been of a much higher order to create him. Let's read Romans 1:18-32 for insight.

> GOD IS ONE; GOD IS PLURAL:

(a) GOD IS ONE – Deuteronomy 6:4 – *"Hear O Israel; the LORD our God, the LORD is one!"* The Hebrew word *echad*, meaning "one" in the sense of a compound UNITY, used always to describe the divine unity. *"This is what the LORD says--Israel's King and Redeemer, the LORD Almighty: I am the first and I am the last; apart from me there is no God. Who then is like me? Let him proclaim it. Let him declare and lay out before me what has happened since I established my ancient people, and what is yet to come-- yes, let him foretell what will come. Do not tremble, do not be afraid. Did I not proclaim this and foretell it long ago? You are my witnesses. Is there any God besides me? No, there is no other Rock; I know not one." (Isaiah 44:6-8). "I am the LORD, and there is no other; apart from me there is no God. I will strengthen you, though you have not acknowledged me." (Isaiah 45:5) – "For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." (1 Timothy 2:5) "...there is no God but one" (1 Corinthians 8:4).*

(b) GOD IS PLURAL – The divine name "God" is a plural word; plural pronouns are used of God. The Hebrew word for God (*elohim*) is used most frequently in the plural form. God often uses plural pronouns in speaking of Himself, e.g.: *"Let US make man in our image"* (Genesis 1:26); *"And who will go for US?"* (Isaiah 6:8); *"The man has now become like one of US."* (Genesis 3:22)

- Three persons in One:

Let me illustrate:

G = FATHER

O = SON

D = HOLY SPIRIT

- Man is a tri-unity: Body – Soul – Spirit

> THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD (*found in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit*)

- *Omnipresent* - Jeremiah 23:23, 24;

- *Omnipotent* - Jeremiah 32:17, 27;

- *Omniscient* - Job 34:21;

- *Eternal* - Genesis 21:33, Isaiah 40:28;

- *Holy* (free from all defilement, absolutely pure) - Isaiah 6:3;
- *Righteous* - Psalms 145:17;
- *Merciful* (does not give us what we deserve) - Deuteronomy 4:31;
- *Faithful* - Deuteronomy 7:9;
- *Immutable* (He does not change) - Malachi 3:6;
- *Truthful* - Titus 1:1,2;
- *Awesome* - Deuteronomy 7:21.

> **TRINITY IN CHURCH HISTORY:** The early church fathers, such as Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Hippolytus, Origen, believed and taught the Trinity. However, the doctrine of the Trinity was disregarded by several *FALSE* religious systems, which emerged during the 18th and 19th centuries. These false religions (which call themselves Christians) include Unitarianism, Mormonism, New Thought/modern spiritism (New Age), and Jehovah's Witnesses.

> **THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY IN THE OLD TESTAMENT:**

- **Four-Fold Way:**

(1) **The plural name of the deity is Elohim;**

(2) **Personal pronouns used of the deity** is found in Genesis 1:26 – “*Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, in our likeness.’*”

Genesis 11:7 – “*Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other.*”

Isaiah 6:8 – “*Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, ‘whom shall I send? And who will go for us?’*”

(3) **Theophanies** (“appearances of God”), especially the “Angel of the Lord” – Genesis 16 and 18.

(4) **The work of the Holy Spirit** – Genesis 1:2 – “*Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.*”

Judges 6:34 – “*then the Spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon.*”

> **THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT:**

- **Five-Fold Way:**

(1) **The baptism of Christ** – Matthew 3:16, 17 - “*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. And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.’*”

(2) In the baptismal formula – Matthew 28:19 - “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, “teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.

(3) The Apostolic Benediction – 2 Corinthians 13:14 - *The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.*

(4) Christ Himself teaches it – John 14:16 - *The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.*

(5) The New Testament sets forth:

- A FATHER who is God – Romans 1:7 - *To all who are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

- A SON who is God – Matthew 1:23 - “Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,” which is translated, “God with us.”

- Hebrews 1:8 - *But to the Son He says: “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom.”*

- A SPIRIT who is God – Acts 5:3,4 - *But Peter said, “Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself? “While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God.”*

- The Father is all the fullness of the Godhead invisible (John 1:18)

- The Son is all the fullness of the Godhead manifested (John 1:14-18)

- The Spirit is all the fullness of the Godhead acting immediately upon the creature (1 Corinthians 2:9,10).

> THE TRINITY IN THE WORK OF SALVATION:

- The FATHER is presented as electing, loving, and bestowing.

- The SON is presented as suffering, redeeming, and upholding the universe.

- The HOLY SPIRIT is presented as regenerating, indwelling, baptizing, energizing, and sanctifying. (1 Peter 1:2; Ephesians 1:3,14)

> **THE TRINITY AND YOU!** - The most distinctive characteristic of the persons of the triune family is their selfless love for one another. Each esteems and defers to the other in a way that makes the original family of the trinity a model for the Christian family of believers in the church. The Father gives all authority to the Son and bears witness to Him, as does Jesus to Himself (**John 8:18**). Yet the Son claims nothing for Himself; He gives all glory to the Father who has sent Him (**John 12:49-50**). The key to unlocking the mystery of the trinity is to observe how the persons of the triune family give themselves to one another in selfless love. They are always at one another's disposal. The Father serves the Son; the Son serves the Father; Father and Son defer to the Holy Spirit, who in turn serves and defers to the Father and Son in a oneness that is eternally dynamic and inexhaustible.

The mutual love of the triune persons spills over into the creation and is seen in their generous cooperation in saving the lost (**John 14:15-17,25-26**). Since God is the original family-in-unity, so Christians are urged by Jesus and the apostles to imitate the divine family in the believing fellowship, as Jesus taught so clearly when He washed the disciples' feet (**John 13:14-15**). The principal trait of the triune family is speaking the truth in love; this encourages a spirit of generosity among Christians as they reflect the divine family in calling the lost to come home. (from Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Copyright © 1986, Thomas Nelson Publishers)

II) THE TESTIMONY! (v9-13)

> **God's threefold testimony:**

(v9) #1 - **God's testimony through the SCRIPTURES** – Luke 24:44-49 - *Then He said to them, "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me." And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures. Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, "and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. "And you are witnesses of these things. "Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high."*

(Jesus fulfilled over four hundred prophecies!)

(v10) #2 - **God's testimony by the HOLY SPIRIT** - Romans 8:14-17 - *For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs--heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.*

(v11-13) #3 - God's testimony in the CHRISTIAN - *Hope* (eternal life), *Faith* (life in His Son) & *Love* (to know & believe in the Son of God)!

- Acts 1:8 - *But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."*

> More Scriptural references for:

The Trinity

- Doctrine proved from Scripture. Matt 3:16,17; 28:19; Rom 8:9; 1 Cor 12:3–6; 2 Cor 13:14; Eph 4:4–6; 1 Pet 1:2; Jude 1:20,21; Rev 1:4,5.

- Divine titles applied to the three persons in. Ex 20:2; John 20:28; Acts 5:3,4.

- Each person in, described as

Eternal. Rom 16:26; Rev 22:13; Heb 9:14.

Holy. Rev 4:8; 15:4; Acts 3:14; 1 John 2:20.

True. John 7:28; Rev 3:7.

Omnipresent. Jer 23:24; Eph 1:23; Ps 139:7.

Omnipotent. Gen 17:1; Rev 1:8; Rom 15:19; Jer 32:17; Heb 1:3; Luke 1:35.

Omniscient. Acts 15:18; John 21:17; 1 Cor 2:10,11.

Creator. Gen 1:1; Col 1:16; Job 33:4; Ps 148:5; John 1:3; Job 26:13.

Sanctifier. Jude 1:1; Heb 2:11; 1 Pet 1:2.

Author of all spiritual operations. Heb 13:21; Col 1:29; 1 Cor 12:11.

Source of eternal life. Rom 6:23; John 10:28; Gal 6:8.

Teacher. Is 54:13; Luke 21:15; John 14:26; Is 48:17; Gal 1:12; 1 John 2:20.

Raising Christ from the dead. 1 Cor 6:14; John 2:19; 1 Pet 3:18.

Inspiring the prophets, etc. Heb 1:1; 2 Cor 13:3; Mark 13:11.

Supplying ministers to the Church. Jer 3:15; Eph 4:11; Acts 20:28; Jer 26:5; Matt 10:5; Acts 13:2.

- Salvation the work of. 2 Thess 2:13,14; Titus 3:4–6; 1 Pet 1:2.

- Baptism administered in name of. Matt 28:19.

- Benediction given in name of. 2 Cor 13:14.

“Christ is God!” *(50 references)*

As Jehovah. Is 40:3; Matt 3:3.

As Jehovah of glory. Ps 24:7,10; 1 Cor 2:8; James 2:1.

As Jehovah, our Righteousness. Jer 23:5,6; 1 Cor 1:30.

As Jehovah, above all. Ps 97:9; John 3:31.

As Jehovah, the First and the Last. Is 44:6; Rev 1:17; Is 48:12–16; Rev 22:13.
As Jehovah's Fellow and Equal. Zech 13:7; Phil 2:6.
As Jehovah of Hosts. Is 6:1–3; John 12:41; Is 8:13,14; 1 Pet 2:8.
As Jehovah, the Shepherd. Is 40:11; Heb 13:20.
As Jehovah, for whose glory all things were created. Prov 16:4; Col 1:16.
As Jehovah, the Messenger of the covenant. Mal 3:1; Mark 1:2; Luke 2:27.
Invoked as Jehovah. Joel 2:32; Acts 2:21; 1 Cor 1:2.
As the Eternal God and Creator. Ps 102:24–27; Heb 1:8,10–12.
As the mighty God. Is 9:6.
As the Great God and Saviour. Hos 1:7; Titus 2:13.
As God over all. Ps 45:6,7; Rom 9:5.
As the true God. Jer 10:10; 1 John 5:20.
As God the Word. John 1:1.
As God, the Judge. Eccl 12:14; 1 Cor 4:5; 2 Cor 5:10; 2 Tim 4:1.
As Emmanuel. Is 7:14; Matt 1:23.
As King of kings and Lord of lords. Dan 10:17; Rev 1:5; 17:14.
As the Holy One. 1 Sam 2:2; Acts 3:14.
As the Lord from heaven. 1 Cor 15:47.
As Lord of the Sabbath. Gen 2:3; Matt 12:8.
As Lord of all. Acts 10:36; Rom 10:11–13.
As Son of God. Matt 26:63–67.
As the Only-begotten Son of the Father. John 1:14,18; 3:16,18; 1 John 4:9.
His blood is called the blood of God. Acts 20:28.
As one with the Father. John 10:30,38; 12:45; 14:7–10; 17:10.
As sending the Spirit, equally with the Father. John 14:16; 15:26.
As entitled to equal honour with the Father. John 5:23.
As Owner of all things, equally with the Father. John 16:15.
As unrestricted by the law of the Sabbath, equally with the Father. John 5:17.
As the Source of grace, equally with the Father. 1 Thess 3:11; 2 Thess 2:16,17.
As unsearchable, equally with the Father. Prov 30:4; Matt 11:27.
As Creator of all things. Is 40:28; John 1:3; Col 1:16; Heb 1:2.
As Supporter and Preserver of all things. Neh 9:6; Col 1:17; Heb 1:3.
As possessed of the fulness of the God head. Col 2:9; Heb 1:3.
As raising the dead. John 5:21; 6:40,54.
As raising himself from the dead. John 2:19,21; 10:18.
As Eternal. Is 9:6; Mic 5:2; John 1:1; Col 1:17; Heb 1:8–10; Rev 1:8.
As Omnipresent. Matt 18:20; 28:20; John 3:13.
As Omnipotent. Ps 45:3; Phil 3:21; Rev 1:8.
As Omniscient. John 16:30; 21:17.
As discerning the thoughts of the heart. 1 Kin 8:39; Luke 5:22; Ezek 11:5; John 2:24,25; Rev 2:23.
As unchangeable. Mal 3:6; Heb 1:12; 13:8.
As having power to forgive sins. Col 3:13; Mark 2:7,10.
As Giver of pastors to the Church. Jer 3:15; Eph 4:11–13.
As Husband of the Church. Is 54:5; Eph 5:25–32; Is 62:5; Rev 21:2,9.
As the object of divine worship. Acts 7:59; 2 Cor 12:8,9; Heb 1:6; Rev 5:12.

As the object of faith. Ps 2:12; 1 Pet 2:6; Jer 17:5,7; John 14:1.

As God, he redeems and purifies the Church to himself. Rev 5:9; Titus 2:14.

As God, he presents the Church to himself. Eph 5:27; Jude 1:24,25.

Saints live to him as God. Rom 6:11; Gal 2:19; 2 Cor 5:15.

Acknowledged by his apostles. John 20:28.

Acknowledged by the Old Testament saints. Gen 17:1; 48:15,16; 32:24–30; Hos 12:3–5; Judg 6:22–24; 13:21,22; Job 19:25–27.¹

¹John F. MacArthur, Jr., *The MacArthur Study Bible*, (Dallas: Word Publishing) 1997.