

Deep Practice Discipleship Guide

1 John 5:1-12 — “*By Water and Blood*”

Opening Reflection (Looking Back)

Begin by inviting participants to reflect on the **practice they committed to last week**.

- What did you intentionally practice this past week?
- What did you notice—internally or externally—as you tried to live it out?
- Where did you experience resistance, growth, or clarity?
- What did this reveal about your faith, habits, or reliance on God?

(Encourage honesty. Faithful practice includes imperfect follow-through.)

Scripture Focus

1 John 5:1-12 (NRSV)

Invite someone to read the passage aloud slowly.

Optionally, read it a second time with a different voice.

Sermon Overview (Head – Understanding the Text)

Big Idea

We live victorious lives because we believe Jesus is the Son of God—and God Himself has testified to that truth through **water, blood, and Spirit**.

Movement of the Text

1. Faith That Conquers (5:1–5)

- Faith is not mere belief but trust rooted in who Jesus is.
- Disciples live from victory, not toward it.

2. God’s Threefold Testimony (5:6–8)

John presents the case like a courtroom with three witnesses:

- **Water** – Jesus’ baptism
 - God publicly affirms Jesus as His Son.

- Jesus' ministry begins here—fulfilling God's promises, not human expectations.
- **Blood** – Jesus' death
 - Justice is satisfied, redemption is accomplished.
 - The cross testifies to who Jesus is, who God is, and how deeply God loves.
 - “*Double cure*”:
 - Blood justifies
 - Water sanctifies
- **Spirit** – God's ongoing witness
 - The Spirit confirms truth through transformed lives.
 - Sanctification itself becomes evidence.

3. Faith Built on Public Truth, Not Private Feeling (5:9–12)

- Our assurance rests on God's testimony, not our emotions.
 - Historical witness + theological truth + lived experience form mature faith.
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Discussion Questions (Bloom's Taxonomy)

Remember / Understand

1. What are the three witnesses John names, and what does each testify about Jesus?
2. Why does John emphasize God's testimony rather than human opinion or experience?

Apply

3. Where are you most tempted to ground your faith in feelings rather than truth?
4. How does understanding both **water (calling)** and **blood (cross)** reshape what it means to follow Jesus?

Analyze

5. Why do you think John connects victory with obedience rather than ease or success?

6. How does the Spirit's witness through sanctification guard us from shallow or performative faith?

Evaluate

7. Which witness—water, blood, or Spirit—do you tend to overlook in your discipleship?
8. In what ways might modern Christianity drift toward “calling without the cross” or “experience without transformation”?

Create

9. If your life were called as a “witness” to Christ, what would it currently testify to others?
 10. What would need to change for your obedience and holiness to more clearly point to Jesus?
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Storying Exercise (Heart – Entering the Story)

Bible Story: Jesus' Baptism

Mark 1:9–11

1. Have one person read the story aloud.
2. Close Bibles.
3. As a group (or individually), retell the story from memory:
 - What happens?
 - Who is present?
 - What is said?
 - What stands out?

Repeat the retelling once more, allowing others to add details.

Story Reflection Questions

1. Why do you think God chose Jesus' baptism as a public moment of testimony?

2. What does it say about discipleship that Jesus' ministry begins with obedience, not action?
 3. How does this story connect with the idea of **calling before cost**?
 4. In what ways does this moment anticipate both the cross and the Spirit's work?
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Deep Practice Commitment (Hands – Living It Out)

This Week's Practice: Living from Victory

Take time in silence to reflect and write.

Choose **one intentional practice** for the coming week:

Options (choose one or create your own):

- Ground assurance in Scripture rather than feelings (daily reading of 1 John 5:1–12).
- Practice obedience in one specific area you've been resisting.
- Reflect daily on both your **calling** and your **cross** as a disciple.
- Ask: *How is the Spirit shaping holiness in me right now?* Journal brief observations.

Write it down clearly:

- What exactly will I practice?
- When and how will I do it?
- How will this help me live from Christ's victory?

Close by reminding the group:

We do not fight for victory—we live from it.

Christ has conquered.

Now we walk in holiness, so the world may see Him alive in us.