

“The Testimony of God”

(1 John 5:6-12 ~ Part 2)

Introduction

➤ One truth that we must grasp, one fact that we must embrace, is this: God does not need us for anything, nor does he need our help with anything. God did not create us because He was lonely. God did not create us because He was bored. God did not create us because He needed someone to love. God did not create us because He needed worshipers or needed to be worshiped. God has no needs, no deficiencies, no imperfections.

Acts 17:24-25 ~ “The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, ²⁵nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything.”

Ps 16:2 ~ “I say to the Lord, ‘You are my Lord; I have no good apart from you.’” (see Jer.17:9; Rom.3:10-12)

Job 41:11 ~ “Who has first given to me, that I should repay him? Whatever is under the whole heaven is mine.”

➤ While this is universally a difficult truth for every unrepentant sinner to accept – those who arrogantly reject and rebel against God – I think it can be soundly argued that it is an especially difficult truth for us as Americans – even for Christians – to acknowledge. For we tend to be – even pride ourselves on being – independent, self-sufficient, self-reliant, and free-willed.

This is one reason why the true Gospel – that a person is saved by God’s grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone – is so offensive and intolerable to unbelievers and false believers. For the Gospel insults our independence, it violates our self-sufficiency, it assaults our self-reliance, and it undermines our free-will.

➤ The true Gospel of Jesus Christ is pride-crushing. To truly receive Jesus Christ (alone) as Lord and Savior is to humbly recognize your absolute and unmerited need of His saving grace. For God does not partially save (expecting us to earn or complete the rest of our salvation), God does not merely make salvation possible (hoping that we would find Him and secure our own salvation), and God does not save based on the goodness or merits of the sinner (for there is none).

✓ **Illust:** “The gospel is not a help-wanted ad. It is a help-available ad. God is not looking for people to work for Him but people who let Him work mightily in and through them” (John Piper).

✓ **Illust:** “You contribute nothing to your salvation except the sin that made it necessary” (Jonathan Edwards).

➤ The sinner is totally dependent on God’s saving grace in order to be saved. And in His Word, God makes it absolutely clear that this salvation comes only by His grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. For, as is repeatedly and plainly stated throughout Scripture, “*There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved*” (Acts 4:12).

This is the central message of the Gospel, and the central message of the passage we are studying this morning (continuing from last Sunday):

1 John 5:6-12 ~ “This is he who came by water and blood – Jesus Christ; not by the water only but by the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. ⁷For there are three that testify: ⁸the Spirit and the water and the blood; and these three agree. ⁹If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater, for this is the testimony of God that he has borne concerning his Son. ¹⁰Whoever believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself. Whoever does not believe God has made him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has borne concerning his Son. ¹¹And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. ¹²Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.”

- These verses can be divided into two main sections, each centered upon the fact that Jesus is indeed the Christ, the Son of God.

1. The Truth: Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God (vs.6-9)

- This passage begins with John reiterating the truth that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God: *“This is he who came by water and blood – Jesus Christ”* (vs.6). Implicit in this verse is the coming of Jesus Christ (*“he who came”*, vs.6; i.e.): *“Jesus Christ has come in the flesh”* (1Jn.4:2); *“God sent His only Son into the world”* (1Jn.4:9); *“[God] loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins”* (1Jn.4:10); *“the Father has sent His Son to be the Savior of the world”* (1Jn.4:14); *“we know that the Son of God has come”* (1Jn.5:20).
- This truth affirms that Jesus is infinitely more than “a good moral teacher” (infinitely greater than some 1st century Gandhi or Mother Teresa). It teaches that although Jesus was fully man – conceived by the Holy Spirit through the virgin Mary – He was also fully God (see Col.1:19; 2:9). This is essential doctrine and is indelibly tied to truth of the Gospel.

John 1:1-3, 14 ~ “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. ... ¹⁴And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

John 3:16-18 ~ “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.”

Gal 4:4-5 ~ “But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, ⁵to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.”

2 John 7 ~ “For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. Such a one is the deceiver and the antichrist.”

- To further prove this essential Christian doctrine, the apostle John showed – as if he were in a courtroom – how various witnesses testify to the fact that Jesus is the Christ, the one and only Son of God. In fact, John used variations of a Greek word (*marturia/martureo*) translated “testimony” ten times in this seven-verse passage. The word, from which our English word “martyr” is derived, refers to someone who acts as a witness (“martyr”), giving testimony to what they believe (or know) to be true.

1 John 5:6-12 ~ “This is he who came by water and blood – Jesus Christ; not by the water only but by the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one who testifies [vb., *martureō*], because the Spirit is the truth. ⁷For there are three that testify [vb., *martureō*]: ⁸the Spirit and the water and the blood; and these three agree. ⁹If we receive the testimony [n., *marturia*] of men, the testimony [n., *marturia*] of God is greater, for this is the testimony [n., *marturia*] of God that he has borne [vb., *martureō*] concerning his Son. ¹⁰Whoever believes in the Son of God has the testimony [n., *marturia*] in himself. Whoever does not believe God has made him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony [n., *marturia*] that God has borne [vb., *martureō*] concerning his Son. ¹¹And this is the testimony [n., *marturia*], that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. ¹²Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.”

- First, John declared the “three witnesses” that testify to the truth that Jesus is the Christ, and then he presented the one Witness that is greater than all.

A. The three witnesses (vs.6-8)

➤ However, as John reiterates this truth (in 1Jn.5:6-8) it admittedly gets a little confusing:

1 John 5:6-8 ~ “This is he who came by water and blood – Jesus Christ; not by the water only but by the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. ⁷For there are three that testify: ⁸the Spirit and the water and the blood; and these three agree.”

➤ As we read these verses, one question typically rises to the surface: “What is meant by *“the water”* and *“the blood”* and *“the Spirit”* (vs.6, 8)? While we need not be dogmatic on our interpretation of these, I think the simplest explanation is probably the best.

♦ “water” (vs.6^{3x}, 8) ~ This seems to be a reference to Jesus’ baptism, where God audibly spoke confirming Him as God’s Son (Matt.3:13-17; Mk.1:9-11).

♦ “blood” (vs.6^{2x}, 8) ~ The blood refers to the blood Jesus shed when He was crucified. That is, the atoning sacrifice – substitutionary atonement of – Christ’s crucifixion. God again confirmed the deity of Jesus in and through His crucifixion – indisputable evidence that Jesus’ crucifixion was no normal death (Rom.5:9; Eph.1:7; 1Pet.1:19; 1Jn.1:7).

♦ “Spirit” (vs.6^{2x}, 8) ~ The Spirit refers is *“the Spirit is the truth”* (vs.6), i.e., the Holy Spirit of God. As we saw last Sunday, the Spirit of God literally (visibly) bore witness to Jesus as the Christ at His baptism (Jn.1:29-34).

➤ It is important to note that the affirmation of these testimonies concerning Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, is not merely hearsay or speculation. The OT law required “the testimony of two or three witnesses” to establish the truth of a particular matter (Deut.17:6; 19:15; cf. Jn.8:17, 18; 1Tim.5:19). Through *“the water”* and *“the blood”* and *“the Spirit”*, the testimony that Jesus is the Christ was undeniably confirmed. Jesus’ baptism and His crucifixion were bookends of His public ministry, and in both of them the Father testified concerning the fact that He is the Christ the Son of God.

B. The divine Witness (vs.9)

➤ While these three witnesses fulfilled the requirement of the law, giving legal validity to the truth that Jesus is the Christ, there is one Witness that stands supreme. It is the witness of God Himself.

1 John 5:9 ~ “If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater, for this is the testimony of God that he has borne concerning his Son.”

➤ As we saw last Sunday, God gave verbal and visible confirmation to the truth that Jesus is the Christ, God’s one and only Son. At Jesus’ baptism, God testified audibly from heaven saying, *“This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased”* (Matt.3:1). At Jesus’ transfiguration, God again spoke from heaven: “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him” (Matt.17:5). At Jesus’ crucifixion God gave visible testimony to the validity of Jesus as the Christ in the various supernatural events that occurred when Jesus was crucified. In addition, as Peter made clear (2 Pet.1:16-21), God has given countless testimonies that Jesus is the Christ, His one and only Son, throughout Scripture (Jn.5:31-39). For God’s Word is inerrant (without error), infallible (without failing), and eternal (without ending). Scripture confirms that God does not lie (Tit.1:2), because God cannot lie (Heb.1:18). God cannot cease to be God (2Tim.2:13).

1 John 5:9 ~ “If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater, for this is the testimony of God that he has borne concerning his Son.”

➤ Simply put, Jesus is God’s Son because God said so!

2. The Response: to receive or reject Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God (vs.10-12)

➤ The testimony concerning Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, is legally and divinely irrefutable. The only “negotiable” aspect of this is truth is how we respond to it – we can either receive it as the truth of God, or reject it as a lie.

And make no mistake, every single person makes a response to the truth that Jesus is the Christ. Everyone either receives Jesus as the Christ or rejects Jesus as the Christ. There is no non-response; no neutral territory. Everyone who hears the truth of the Gospel responds to the truth of the Gospel.

1 John 5:10-12 ~ “Whoever believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself. Whoever does not believe God has made him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has borne concerning his Son. ¹¹And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. ¹²Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.”

➤ To be sure, there are consequences no matter how we respond. In the closing verses of this passage (vs.10-12), the apostle John highlighted three results of receiving Jesus as the Christ and three results of rejecting Jesus as the Christ.

A. The results of receiving Jesus as the Christ

➤ The results of receiving Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior are many and are massive. In his Gospel, the apostle John summarized the benefits of receiving Jesus as the Christ in this way:

John 1:11-13 ~ “He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. ¹²But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.”

➤ In the book of “1 John”, the apostle described this eternal, awesome, blessing in three ways.

1 John 5:10-12 ~ “Whoever believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself. Whoever does not believe God has made him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has borne concerning his Son. ¹¹And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. ¹²Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.”

1) “has the testimony in himself” (vs.10)

First, the one who receives Jesus as the Christ “*has the testimony in himself*” (vs.10). This is in reference to the power and presence of God’s Holy Spirit which abides in all true believers (see Jn.14:16, 26; 15:26; cf. Acts 2:4). The testimony of Christ dwells in every true Christian through the indwelling presence of God’s Holy Spirit.

Rom 8:15-17 ~ “For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, ‘Abba! Father!’ ¹⁶The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷and if children, then heirs – heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.” (see Gal.4:6; Mk.14:36)

This comes to all true believers, to “*whoever believes in the Son of God*” (vs.10). From the moment of true conversion, the Christian is indwelt with the power and presence of God’s Holy Spirit – who testifies to the truth of Jesus Christ, and works to make the Christian more and more like Christ.

2) “has the Son [of God]” (vs.12; see vs.11)

Secondly, those who receive Jesus as the Christ have Christ! The importance of this cannot be overstated. Those who believe that Jesus is the Son of God (vs.10) have Jesus as the Savior from God. In verse twelve John simply referenced the true believer as one who “*has the Son*” (vs.12).

However, as we see in verse eleven, only those who have been saved by Christ truly have Christ: *“And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son”* (vs.11).

To have the Son of God is synonymous with “abiding in Christ” and having “Christ abiding in you” (see Jn.15:1-11). This is in stark contrast to being “in sin”, or “*dead in ... sin*” (Eph.2:1). It has been rightly said that “if you are ‘in Christ’ you get all that Christ can give, but if you are ‘dead in sin’ you get all that your sin can give you.”

Rom 8:1 ~ “There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”

To those who have truly received Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior – those who truly believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God – they have Christ and all the blessings that come from having Christ (Christ in them, and they in Christ)!

Eph 1:3-8 ~ “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love ⁵he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, ⁶to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. ⁷In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, ⁸which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight”

3) *“has life”* (vs.12; see vs.11)

Thirdly, and consequently, we see that those who believe in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, not only have the testimony of God’s Spirit within them, and Christ in them, but also spiritual life in them. John wrote, *“Whoever has the Son has life”* (vs.12). The word *“life”* (*zōē*) certainly refers to *“eternal life”* (vs.11), but also refers to much more. The life that Christ gives is not just a future expectation, but a present reality as well.

John 10:10 ~ “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.”

As we have seen, and will see again, those who reject Jesus as the Christ are spiritually dead in sin and face the condemnation of eternal death (see Jn.3:3; Eph.2:1). But those who receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior have been “born again” into spiritual life, and will one day experience the glory of eternal life with God. *“And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. ¹²Whoever has the Son has life”* (vs.11-12). Notice that this is a present reality, and not merely a future hope.

1 John 5:13 ~ “I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life.”

John 3:16-18 ~ “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.” (see vs.15)

John 17:3 ~ “And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.”

Eph 2:4-5 ~ “But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ – by grace you have been saved”

This is the crux of the Gospel: to those who believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior – as the one and only Son of God and one and only Savior from God – God gives them spiritual life and eternal life in Christ.

B. The results of rejecting Jesus as the Christ

➤ Simply put, those who reject Jesus as the Christ receive none of the spiritual and eternal blessings that come from receiving Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. This, the apostle John makes abundantly clear: *“Whoever believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself. Whoever does not believe God has made him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has borne concerning his Son. ¹¹And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. ¹²Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life”* (vs.10-12).

Again, it is important to note that everyone who does not receive Jesus as the Christ – everyone who does not sincerely believe that Jesus is the one and only Son of God and the one and only Savior sent from God – automatically reject Jesus as the Christ. This is true whether their rejection of Christ is militant, vocal, and venomous, or passive, silent, and apathetic. A person either receives Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, or they reject Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

➤ In these verses (vs.10-12) we find three results that come from rejecting Jesus as the Christ.

1) *“has made [God] a liar”* (vs.10)

Since God Himself has testified to the fact that Jesus is His one and only Son (and the one and only Savior), to reject Jesus as the Christ is tantamount to calling God a liar: *“... Whoever does not believe God has made him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has borne concerning his Son”* (vs.10). In his typical “black-and-white” fashion, the apostle gives no middle-ground.

1 John 1:10 ~ “If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.”

1 John 2:4 ~ “Whoever says ‘I know him’ but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him”

1 John 2:22 ~ “Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son.”

1 John 4:20 ~ “If anyone says, ‘I love God,’ and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen.”

As we saw last time, God not only does not lie but He cannot lie (for if God lied, He would cease to be a holy God; see Heb.6:18; Tit.1:2; 2Tim.2:13). Just as God cannot die, God cannot lie.

Therefore, to call God a liar (or think of Him as a liar) is the deepest degree, and severest form, of human self-deception, depravity, and blasphemy. Specifically, this is in regard to rejecting Jesus Christ as God’s one and only Son, and one and only Savior for mankind. It is, in effect, saying to God: “You are a liar – I am not a sinner, I do not need a Savior, I can find my own salvation; and I specifically do not need to receive your Son as my Savior.”

Obviously, such a response to God’s gracious offer of salvation is a rejection of Jesus as the Christ, and a rejection of God’s saving grace in Christ.

2) *“does not have the Son of God”* (vs.12)

Likewise, those who reject Jesus as the Christ do not have Jesus as their Savior. As we have seen, the only way to “have the Son” is to receive Jesus as Lord and Savior – to believe that He is Christ, the Son of God (Jn.1:11-12; 3:15-18). Therefore, whoever rejects Jesus as the Christ *“does not have the Son of God”* (vs.12).

1 John 2:23 ~ “No one who denies the Son has the Father. Whoever confesses the Son has the Father also.”

Luke 10:16 ~ "... the one who rejects me rejects him who sent me."

John 5:23 ~ "... Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him."

John 14:6 ~ "Jesus said ... 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'"

John 15:23 ~ "Whoever hates me hates my Father also." (see Jn.10:30)

Rom 8:9 ~ "You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him."

This is extremely simple and unambiguous. Since Jesus Christ is the only Savior from God, to reject Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior leaves the sinner with no savior – no salvation. Since they do not have the Son (the one and only Savior), and therefore remain in sin, they do not have any of the blessings that come from having received Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

3) *"does not have life" (vs.12)*

Furthermore, those who refuse to believe that Jesus is the Christ remain spiritually dead and (if they persist in unbelief) to be destined to the condemnation of eternal death.

John 3:36 ~ "Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him."

Rom 6:23 ~ "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." (see Rom.5:12)

Spiritual life, and eternal life, come only in and through Jesus Christ. To reject Jesus as the Christ is to forfeit spiritual life (on this earth) and eternal life (in heaven).

✓ Illust: "The unbeliever has no spiritual life; he neither laments his soul's need, nor rejoices that it may be supplied; he lives without prayer, and he knows nothing of secret fellowship with God, because he has no inward life to produce these priceless things, consequently, he will have no eternal life; he will exist for ever, but his existence will be a protracted death – of life he will not taste; he will have none of the joys of paradise, no sight of God's face; he will not swell the song of eternal happiness, nor drink of the river of ever-flowing bliss. He is a walking corpse, a moving carcass, a body in which death holds the place of life. He hath not the Son of God – that is, he has never trusted in Jesus to save him, and never submitted himself to the guidance and governing of the King of Zion" (Charles Spurgeon; sermon: "Alive or Dead – Which?", June 16, 1867).

Conclusion

➤ This is the Gospel of Jesus Christ: those who believe that Jesus is the Christ (the Son of God) are eternally saved, and those who reject Jesus as the Christ (the Son of God) remain eternally condemned. Again, we can ask the question: "How do we know?" That is, how do we know that those who receive Jesus as the Christ are eternally saved, and how do we know that those who reject Jesus as the Christ are eternally condemned? The answer: because God said so!

As we saw last Sunday, God's testimony (His Word) is perfect, unfailing, and eternal. God does not lie because God cannot lie. And in the inspired Word of God, the Scriptures, we discover that salvation comes only through believing in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, and that condemnation comes (by default) from rejecting Jesus as the Christ.

John 3:16-18 ~ "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God."

John 3:36 ~ “Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.”

➤ Every unbeliever, every unrepentant sinner, needs to come to the point in their life where they sincerely ask what the Philippian jailer asked the apostle Paul and Silas: “*What must I do to be saved?*” (Acts 16:30). The answer they gave that day, is still true today: “*And they said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household”*” (Acts 16:31).

The only way to have true spiritual life, and eternal life, is by receiving Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior – putting your faith in Him as the one and only Son of God, and the one and only Savior from God.