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**“The Testimony of God”  
(1Jn 5:1-12)**

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2  **Overview of our passage**

Theme: God testifies that Jesus is the Son of God

☞ 1Jn 5:1-12

Doctrine: God’s testimony is true and is to be trusted. Man’s testimony is false and is to be rejected.

Application: Believe in the testimony God revealed in Scripture regardless of what man or the world might say about faith and religion

3  **Scripture Reading**

1 John 5:1-12 (NASB)

1 Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and whoever loves the Father loves the child born of Him. 2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments. 3 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome. 4 For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. 5 Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? 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 the 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; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.

4  **Exposit: 1Jn 5:1**

1 Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and whoever loves the Father loves the child born of Him.

☞ “Whoever believes may be rendered “all who believes”

☞ In the confession: Jesus is the Christ, the Anointed One of God

☞ Those who are united in this confession: is born of God

☞ Those who are not united in this confession: is not born of God

☞ “whoever loves the Father” may be rendered “whoever loves God” will also love God the Son

☞ The Father/Son/Holy Spirit is a package deal

- ☞ The triune God is the only living and True God
- ☞ All other religions who do not accept or believe in the trinitarian God is not of God, but of Satan

#### 5 **Exposit: 1Jn 5:2**

2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments.

- ☞ "By this" is tied to latter part of v. 2 "when we love God and observe His commandments"
- ☞ 'know' is 'ginōskō' more intimate and relational knowledge
- ☞ 'observe' is 'poieō' which means to commit, practice, to demonstrate adherence
- ☞ "His commandments"

☞ OT:

- ☞ Love God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength
- ☞ Love your neighbor as your self

☞ NT:

- ☞ Love one another (believers) as Jesus loved us

#### 6 **Exposit: 1Jn 5:2**

2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments.

- ☞ As believers our ambition is to love and obey God
- ☞ God commands us to love Him, love our neighbor, and love believers
- ☞ When we pursue our love for God, we will come into fellowship and love other believers!

#### 7 **Exposit: 1Jn 5:3**

3 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.

- ☞ "For this" referring to the "love of God"
- ☞ John gives us a biblical definition of what it means to love God
- ☞ It's one thing to say someone loves God, it's another thing to show (through ones actions) that one loves God
- ☞ We covered this in principal in our study "In Deed and Truth"
  - ☞ Actions speak louder than words
- ☞ True love for God is in the "keeping" of His commandments
  - ☞ We covered this when we went covered chapter 2, verses 3-4
  - ☞ "keep" means to watch over, guard, observe
  - ☞ True love for God is desiring to obey His precepts and commands
    - ☞ A great example of this is in the Parable of the Sheep and Goats Judgment
- ☞ "His commandments are not burdensome" [more on this]

#### 8 **"His commandments are not burdensome"**

- ☞ This struck me for sometimes it feels like obeying God's Word is difficult, and therefore, His commandments are burdensome
- ☞ However, Scripture says that keeping His commandments are not burdensome... so how can we reconcile this?
- ☞ It really boils down to our lack of faith
- ☞ If we rely 100% in our faith in Christ
  - ☞ Then although we do not love God perfectly we are still accepted by God on behalf of Christ's atonement
  - ☞ If we rely on faith alone, including our rely on faith in our efforts to obey God's commandments, then it's not burdensome, because Christ carried the burden for us!... Jesus spoke on this in Matthew chapter 11...

### 9 **"His commandments are not burdensome"**

Matthew 11:28-30

28 "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. 30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

Case in Point:

- ☞ If we live in full faith in the work of Christ, then our efforts to keep and obey His commandments are not burdensome, because Jesus fulfilled what the commandments require and have given us a share of His righteousness!
- ☞ Anything short of full faith will feel like keeping and observing His commandments is not a joy, but a burden (this is not God's will)

### 10 **Exposit: 1Jn 5:4**

4 For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.

- ☞ "For whatever" may be rendered "For whoever"
- ☞ "is born of God overcomes the world"
  - ☞ True born again believers will overcome the world
- ☞ "this is the victory that has overcome the world – our faith" [more on this]

### 11 **"this is the victory that has overcome the world – our faith"**

- ☞ "this" is referring to "faith"
- ☞ How will born again believers overcome this world?
  - ☞ We covered this in past studies
  - ☞ What is the key to our victory over sin, the world, Satan?
- ☞ John answers it in this verse, "our faith"!
- ☞ John also reiterates it in a couple of places in Revelation...

### 12 **"this is the victory that has overcome the world – our faith"**

Revelation 3:20-21 (letter to Laodicean church)

20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me. 21 He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.

☞ How do we overcome sin, the world, death? – Faith in the One who overcame sin, the world and death.... Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ!

☞ Jesus shares His victory with us through faith! We can even sit on His throne!

Revelation 12:11-12 (during the 7<sup>th</sup> trumpet after Satan was cast out of heaven)

11 And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death. 12 For this reason, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has only a short time."

☞ "the word of their testimony" can be rendered "the Word of God's testimony"

☞ The elect believers here during the reign of Antichrist will overcome him and prevail through faith in the Son of God!

☞

### 13 **Exposit: 1Jn 5:4**

4 For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.

Back to v. 4

☞ "For whatever" may be rendered "For whoever"

☞ "is born of God overcomes the world"

☞ True born again believers will overcome the world

☞ "this is the victory that has overcome the world – our faith"

☞ And this verse could very well be prophetic concerning reign of Antichrist when he rules the entire world!

☞ And this prophecy flows smoothly into v. 5....

### 14 **Exposit: 1Jn 5:5**

5 Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

☞ Although the one who overcomes the world applies to believers

☞ Prophetically it directly applies to the elect here during Antichrist's rule and reign

☞ The way to overcome sin/the world/Satan/Antichrist (and the spirit of antichrist) is through faith in the victory Christ obtained for us!

☞ TRUTH REFLECTION: what keeps people from being saved is their view on who Jesus Christ is

15  **Exposit: 1Jn 5:6**

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.

- ☞ This verse has interpretive challenges
- ☞ "water and blood" [more on this]
- ☞ "the Spirit who testifies" [more on this]

16  **"water and blood"**

There are 3 common interpretations:

☞ Interpretation A:

☞ water = baptism

☞ blood = Lord's Supper

☞ Rationale:

☞ Two sacraments of Scripture

☞ Baptism: Jesus "came" by the "water" of baptism

☞ Communion: Blood was used to describe the cup of the New Covenant

☞ Interpretation B:

☞ water = baptism or spiritual cleansing

☞ blood = crucifixion

☞ Rationale:

☞ Followed by many scholars

☞ Jesus "came" by the "water" of baptism, Jesus is the "Living Water"

☞ Water is synonymous with life or descriptive of the need for us to be washed clean of our sin

☞ Jesus "died" by the cruel cross and atoned for our sin

☞

17  **"water and blood"**

☞ Interpretation C:

☞ "water and blood" is in reference to the spear thrust into Jesus's side

☞ Rationale:

☞ Combatting Gnosticism (Jesus wasn't really a man, but a spirit that looked human"

☞ This undermined the atonement

☞ So which view is right?...

☞

18  **"water and blood"**

☞ Here's what we'll take into consideration

☞ Nowhere in this epistle does John ever talk about baptism or Communion

☞ Interpretation A loses its luster for me

- ☞ Since part of Interpretation B attributes “water” with “baptism” loses its luster for me as well

- ☞ We’re really left with Interpretation C (refers to Jesus being speared)

- ☞ Let’s see if it holds up...

- ☞

#### 19 “water and blood”

- ☞ Let’s also take into consideration

- ☞ Context of letter

- ☞ When did John use in any of his epistles:

- ☞ “water and blood” together

- ☞ “water” by itself

- ☞ “blood” by itself

- ☞ And let’s see where we land...

- ☞

- ☞

#### 20 “water and blood”

- ☞ Context of letter

- ☞ Overall: John is combatting false teaching, including the Deity and Humanity of Christ

- ☞ Gnosticism (gnosis = knowledge, cism = belief or branch of thought)

- ☞ Mystical secret knowledge

- ☞ Matter is evil, including the human body, therefore, God could not have become a man

- ☞ Immediate: John is affirming that we overcome the world through our faith and testimony that Jesus is the Son of God

- ☞ The testimony of God is in view in 1Jn 5

- ☞ Now let’s look to see when did John use in any of his epistles:

- ☞ “water and blood” together

- ☞ “water” by itself

- ☞ “blood” by itself

- ☞

#### 21 “water and blood”

- ☞ “water and blood” together

- ☞ Besides our passage (1Jn 5), John uses both of these words together in his gospel:

- John 19:34-37 (after the soldiers saw that Jesus was dead)

- 34 But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water. 35 He who saw it has borne witness—his testimony is true, and he knows that he is telling the truth—that you also may believe. 36 For these things took place that the Scripture might be fulfilled: “Not one of his bones will be broken.” 37 And again another Scripture says, “They will look on him whom they have pierced.”

- ☞ Note: some will say because of the order “water and blood” vs. “blood and water” they’re not talking about the same thing (lets put a pause on that for now)

- ☞ In Jn 19:35: John is bearing witness on his eye witness account
- ☞ In Jn 19:36-37: Scripture is bearing witness on the testimony concerning Jesus
- ☞ In 1Jn 5:6: the Holy Spirit is bearing witness of the testimony concerning Jesus
- ☞ Collectively, John/The Holy Spirit/Scripture all bear the same testimony
- ☞
- ☞
- ☞
- ☞
- ☞

## 22 “water and blood”

☞ “water ” by itself

- ☞ John uses it several times, more notably
  - ☞ To refer to the waters of baptism
  - ☞ To refer to the new birth
    - ☞ We must be born of “water and Spirit”
  - ☞ To refer to Jesus as the “Living Water”
  - ☞ Water of Life

☞ “blood” by itself

- ☞ John uses it several times, more notably
  - ☞ Physical birth (born not by blood nor the will of flesh or man – Jn 1:13)
  - ☞ Spiritual drink (Jesus’s body is true food and blood true drink – Jn 6:55)
  - ☞ Cleansing (“the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin” – 1Jn 1:7)
  - ☞ Spiritual currency (purchased with blood of the Lamb – Rev 5:9)

☞

☞ With these in mind, let’s re-look at v. 6

☞

☞

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## 23 **Exposit: 1Jn 5:6**

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.

☞ Jesus is the One who came by “water and blood”

- ☞ To come (arrive) by water (baptism) is plausible
- ☞ To come (arrive) by blood (Communion) is not plausible
- ☞ To come (arrive) by blood (crucifixion) is plausible

☞ To come (arrive) by "water and blood" (humanity) is certainly plausible!  
 ☞ As for "the Spirit who testifies"...

#### 24 "the Spirit who testifies"

☞ This could be a reference to the baptism account (Interpretation B)  
 ☞ Holy Spirit descended on Jesus like a dove  
 ☞ But again, given John does not address baptism in this letter, although true, I don't think is the strongest interpretation  
 ☞ When harmonizing Jn 19 and 1Jn 5, the Spirit who testifies can also mean  
 ☞ The Holy Spirit in John is testifying as to who Jesus truly is  
 ☞ The Holy Spirit who authored Scripture (including John's writings) also is a testimony as to who Jesus truly is  
 ☞ Thus "the Spirit who testifies" can also mean "The Holy Spirit is a witness to the deity and humanity of Jesus"  
 ☞ With these in mind we can begin to cross cancel...  
 ☞

#### 25 **Exposit: 1Jn 5:6**

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.

☞ Jesus is the One who came by "water and blood"  
 ☞ ~~To come (arrive) by water (baptism) is plausible~~, but not likely the context  
 ☞ ~~To come (arrive) by blood (Communion) is not plausible~~  
 ☞ To come (arrive) by blood (crucifixion) is plausible  
 ☞ To come (arrive) by "water and blood" (humanity) is certainly plausible!  
 ☞ Also given...

#### 26 **Exposit: 1Jn 5:6**

☞ John did not talk about baptism in this whole letter  
 ☞ The overall context of this letter (combatting false teaching, God's testimony)  
 ☞ John also used "water and blood" together on his eye witness account of what he saw when Jesus was speared...  
 ☞ Harmonizing 1Jn 5 with Jn 19  
 ☞ I favor...

#### 27 **Exposit: 1Jn 5:6**

☞ Interpretation C!  
 ☞ That when John says "This is the One who came by water and blood" John is referring to when Jesus was speared, and thus, confirming His humanity and upholding the atonement and the testimony of God!

#### 28 **AMP: 1Jn 5:6**

6 This is the One who came [physically and bodily] by water and blood, Jesus Christ; not with the water only [part physically and part bodily], but with the water and with the blood [that came out of him when I saw with my own eyes when He was pierced on the cross]. It is the

Spirit who testifies [as to the full humanity and Deity of Jesus], because the Spirit is the truth [and so is the testimony of God in Scripture].

☞ Interpretation C flows nicely into v. 7-8...

### 29 **Exposit: 1Jn 5:7-8**

7 For there are three that testify: 8 the Spirit and the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement.

☞ 'testify' is 'martyreō' which means to bear witness

☞ We get our English word "martyr" to describe those who bear witness to Jesus and paid for that witness by being killed for their confession

☞ Jesus was martyred!

☞ "the Spirit": bears witness that Jesus was born of a virgin and martyred!

☞ "the water": bears witness that Jesus was born as a man martyred!

☞ "the blood": bears witness that Jesus was born and died as a man who was martyred

☞ All 3 are in agreement that Jesus is the Son of God incarnate who was martyred to make full atonement for our sins!

☞ This testimony is in contrast with in the testimony of men in v.8...

### 30 **Exposit: 1Jn 5:9**

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.

☞ False teachers were bringing a false message

☞ Including the Person and Deity of Jesus Christ

☞ This is the "testimony of men"

☞ However, the greatest testimony is the "testimony of God"

☞ God testified in all of Scripture concerning the Person and Deity of Christ

☞ His birth, death, resurrection, and ascension

☞ God's testimony in Scripture is greater (megas) and far superior than the testimony from any man, including, those who claim to have secret knowledge or wisdom

### 31 **Exposit: 1Jn 5:10**

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.

☞ Pretty straightforward, those who believe in the Son of God has God's testimony in his heart

☞ We believe in the incarnation (the God Man)

☞ We believe in the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus

☞ We believe that He bore our griefs, sorrows, crushed for our iniquities

☞ Those who refuse to believe in the Son of God is making God to be a liar for the testimony

of Scripture is that Jesus is the Son of God  
 Rm 3:4 "...Let God be true, but every man a liar"

32  **Exposit: 1Jn 5:11**

11 And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.

☞ God testifies (bears witness) through Scripture that God "has given" (past tense) believers eternal life

☞ And this eternal life is sealed in Jesus's water and blood!

☞ Only faith in the testimony of God in Scripture concerning Jesus the Son of God who died for our sins to make full atonement for our sins can save us!

33  **Exposit: 1Jn 5:12**

12 He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.

☞ "He who has the Son" can be rendered "He who believes in the Son"

☞ He who believes in the Son of God has/possesses eternal life

☞ The opposite is true as well, he who does not believe in the Son of God does not have/possess eternal life

☞ John is repeating himself from his gospel:

John 3:18 Whoever 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.

☞ Eternal life and Jesus come together! Jesus is eternal life! If we have Jesus we have eternal life!

☞ Those who do not have faith in Jesus, do not have eternal life, for Jesus is eternal life and faith in Him is the only way to be granted eternal life

☞