

The Witness of Christ # 17

1 John 5: 6-12

As I read these verses I was reminded of the difficulties of that day. John lived during the early days of the church, while she was yet in her infancy. The Gospel was being shared and many were saved, but false doctrine and heresy abounded as well. Many denied the finished work of Jesus, refusing to embrace Him as the Christ. Others rejected any mention of the true and living God. The world was under Roman dominance, influenced by the philosophies and doctrines of the many gods they worshipped.

John knew the truth; he was settled on the Gospel message, and yet he realized others were skeptical. He boldly and confidently presents Jesus as the Christ. He emphasizes the irrefutable evidence to substantiate his message. The world looked for truth and assurance and John sought to provide that for them.

We live in a world that shares many of the same similarities. The Gospel is embraced by many, and even accepted as truth by others even if they aren't born again in Christ. However, many other faiths and doctrines are being promoted and taught today. Some question the Gospel truth and wonder how it is possible to know for sure. As believers we are settled in our faith, but we must realize all are not as we are. Many have more questions than answers. This passage provides the evidence that substantiates our claim.

Let's consider the [assertions](#) John makes as we think on: [The Witness of Christ](#).

I. Christ's Gracious Ministry (6a) – [This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood.](#) John speaks of the testimony of Christ's ministry here on earth. Consider:

A. His Service (6a) – John refers to Jesus coming by water and by blood. His coming by water speaks of His baptism of John the Baptist in the Jordan River. This marked the beginning of His public ministry here on earth. Jesus lived His life in service to others, not having a place to call His own, meeting the needs of those He met rather than having others wait upon Him. It is impossible to study the life of Christ and miss the great service the Son of God rendered to humanity.

- The life our Lord lived here on earth bears testimony of His being who He claimed to be. Clearly He performed miracles and spoke with wisdom mere humans could never obtain. Every action, gesture, and word spoken revealed His position as the Christ. Doubters remain today, but the evidence proves Jesus was the Christ. His earthly ministry bears witness to that fact.

B. His Sacrifice (6a) – We also find reference to His coming by blood. There can be no doubt John refers to His great sacrifice as He bled and died upon the cross. Many in John's day were skeptical of Jesus, but His crucifixion bears irrefutable evidence of His genuinely being the Christ. Had He been an imposter, He could've denied He was the Son of God and been released. We know He could've escaped the cross if He had desired, but He chose to die for our sin. He could've called legions of angels to free Him, but He chose the suffering for our salvation.

- John doesn't specifically mention the miracles surrounding Calvary, but they are substantial. There was darkness over the earth in the middle of the day. The great veil of the Temple was rent in twain. The earth shook and trembled, breaking great rocks in pieces. The tombs were opened and the dead walked within the city of Jerusalem. These were not haphazard events, but great miracles that testified the Son of God had fulfilled the work of redemption!

II. Christ's Glorious Deity (6b-8) – Here John refers to the witness of the deity of Christ. It is confirmed through many witnesses. Notice:

A. The Heavenly Witness (6b-7) – *And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.* ^[7] *For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.* This testimony is declared by three witnesses. It is declared by:

- **The Father** – There is no doubt God the Father affirmed Jesus as the Christ. He was His only begotten Son. We know that God affirmed Christ at His baptism and on the Mount of Transfiguration. The Father bore witness of Christ's deity throughout His ministry on earth. *John 8:18 – I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me. John 12:28 – Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.*

- **The Word** – John declares the Word also bears witness of Christ. This comes as no surprise because we know Christ is the embodiment of the Word. He is the incarnate Word. *John 1:1 – In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* ^[14] *And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.* Jesus came as the Word in flesh and completely fulfilled every prophecy concerning the first advent. As the living Word and continuing today with the written Word, the Word of God bears witness of Christ!

- **The Spirit** – The Spirit also bears witness of Christ. Many deny it, but Christ was conceived of the Spirit within a virgin womb. The Spirit bore witness of Christ as His baptism, descending upon Him as a dove. *Mat.3:16 – And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the*

water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: Our Lord lived His life a sinless, Spirit filled man. The Spirit continues to bear witness of Christ within the world. He brings conviction to the hearts of unbelievers, leading them to salvation in Christ. He opens our understanding of the Word of God, also bearing witness of Christ, the living Word. He leads us in worship of our Lord and Savior. The Spirit remains active in His testimony of Christ. Acts 5:31-32 – Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. ^[32] And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.

B. The Earthly Witness (8) – And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one. Again John mentions the witness of the Spirit, the water, and the blood. We have discussed these at length, but it is important to note their witness stands in absolute agreement. There is undeniable witness in heaven, and the evidence on earth bears confirmation of Jesus as the Christ as well.

III. Christ's Genuine Clarity (9-12) – In our remaining verses, John discusses the absolute clarity of Christ's witness. It is undeniable for those who look by faith. Consider:

A. The Declaration (9) – If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son. John challenges the reader concerning Christ. He suggests they should not simply take his word or just believe his witness, but consider the witness of sovereign God. He also testifies of His only begotten Son as the Christ. He continues to reveal Christ as the means of salvation to the hearts of those lost in their sin.

- The same holds true for us. I am unashamed of what Christ has done for me and I rejoice in the testimony of others. Human witness is wonderful and effective, but God's witness is much greater. He works within the heart in ways we cannot. Aren't you glad God still deals with the hearts of humanity?

B. The Discernment (10a) – He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself. John encourages all believers in the faith. Those who are born again in Christ, reconciled to God through Him, have the witness we have spoken of within. God works through many ways to confirm our salvation and provide us with assurance. We are not saved by works, emotions, or feelings. We are not kept by them either. We are saved by the grace of God through faith in Christ. When we are discouraged or challenged in our faith, we have the witness of God. He is faithful as promised and He will keep His Word.

C. The Denial (10b) – [he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son](#). Sadly not all who hear the Gospel will receive it and believe. Many will reject it and deny the grace of God. This puts such rejection in its perspective. Those who deny Christ and reject the Gospel not only reject Christ, the accuse God of being a liar. They refuse to affirm His witness and believe His Word. This reminds me there is no access or relationship with God apart from Christ. If one can't embrace Christ, they will never be received of God the Father.

D. The Distinction (11) – [And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son](#). This reveals the great significance and benefit of receiving the witness of Christ and believing in Him by faith. We are cleansed of our sin, reconciled to God, and promised eternal life. The enmity with God is replaced with forgiveness and acceptance. You might argue this verse only speaks of eternal life and I would agree with you. However we know we are all born in sin. The wages of sin is death. In order to escape death and inherit eternal life, sin must be forgiven, cleansed in the blood of Christ. We have all in Christ. Our relationship with Him sets us apart from the world.

E. The Destiny (12) – [He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life](#). It doesn't get any clearer than that. Those who have the Son, those who are born again in Christ have life; those who do not have the Son, those who remain in their sin apart from Christ, do not have life. John is speaking of life in an eternal sense. Many today are apart from Christ and live physically, but they are dead spiritually. Only the saved have the assurance of eternal life. Those who die physically without Christ will face eternal death in hell.

- There is only one source of salvation: Christ the Lord. We either have life in Him or not. We are saved or lost and our eternal destiny depends on the spiritual condition at death. Those in Christ will enjoy life eternal and those apart from Christ must endure eternal death.

Conclusion: I am truly thankful for the witness of Christ. I rejoice for the day I was shared the Gospel and offered the opportunity of salvation. I agreed with the evidence God presented and trusted Christ by faith. I saw my desperate need, repented of my sin, and received salvation.

This passage challenges me to bear witness of Christ as well. God does in numerous ways and He desires us to testify of the Savior also. Your personal witness may urge someone to consider the evidence God presents.

You have heard the witness of Christ today. If you are unsaved, will you accept it and believe on Christ by faith?