**The Testimony of God**

Based on [1 John 5](https://biblia.com/books/esv/1Jn5)

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Lenten Midweek 5

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First John is a profound and richly composed letter written by John the apostle. He writes, not just as a teacher, or as a leader of the church. **John writes and speaks to the church as a loving Father speaks to children.** He even calls them “my little children” and encourages them toward maturity in faith. He instructs them in how faithful children of God walk or “live” in the world. Chapter 5 of this letter instructs us in *what it means to walk in the faith according to the testimony of Jesus*.

John writes, “**And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? 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.”**

The whole world lies in the power of the devil. There is nothing from the world or of the world that can overcome the devil. Money cannot overcome the devil. Fame cannot overcome the devil. Family cannot overcome the devil. **A stable job, safe neighborhood, and food on the table, cannot overcome the devil.** Health and happiness are treasured by all people, but they are of the world and cannot overcome the devil. Only faith can overcome the world, and have the victory.

We are saved by faith alone, but faith is never alone. Just as lungs exist to breath or they will die; faith exists to obey God or it will die. Faith without works is *dead*. But when you keep his commandments, you faith is given breath, and by this you know that you love the children of God, because all of God’s children love his commandments.

Faith is never alone, because it is always faith “in” something. The faith that saves is the faith that is faith “in” Jesus as the Son of God. **And this faith is created when we receive the testimony of the spirit, because the Spirit is the truth. We learn about the son of God through the testimony of the Spirit.** We learn of his commandments through the testimony of the spirit. We learn of his love through the testimony of the Spirit. And the testimony of the Spirit is not a feeling, it is the Word of God.

John writes, **For there are three that testify: the Spirit and the water and the blood; and these three agree.** These three give the same testimony concerning the Son of God. He was given the Holy Spirit in his baptism, and He gave up His Spirit in death on the cross. His baptism was the testimony of water, from the heavenly Father, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” His crucifixion was the testimony of his blood which poured out his spirit for the church.

The *water* testifies that Jesus is the son of God. The *blood* testifies that he is the sacrificial lamb of God. These testimonies agree and they are one testimony. **Jesus who is the son but not the lamb saves nobody. Jesus who is the lamb but not the son redeems nobody. Jesus who is the son and the lamb without the spirit convinces nobody.** But water, blood, spirit together; son, lamb, spirit together, these three testify and these three agree. Three testify to one testimony--that Jesus is the son of God who is come in the flesh.

And these three continue to testify through the body of Christ, the church. Every time anyone is made God’s adopted son in baptism, the water continues to testify that Jesus is the *son* of God. Every time we share the Lord’s Supper, the blood continues to testify that Jesus is the *lamb* of God. “**For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes” (1 Cor 11:26).** And every time the water testifies and the blood testifies, the spirit also testifies that Jesus is the Son of God who is come in the flesh. And we walk in faith when we receive this testimony from God.

John writes, “**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. 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.**

Water, blood and spirit, these three testify, and their testimony is from God, and this testimony is greater than the testimony of men. Certain Christian confessions put a very high premium on the testimony of men. **Pentecostal and evangelical churches call individual Christians forward in the church to give their testimony. And they testify that Jesus has done *this* or *that* for *them* in *their* life.** And they give *their* testimony so that men would believe *them* and believe in Jesus through *their* own testimony. Sometimes their testimony is true, sometimes it is false. But even if it is true and even if you believe it, it is only the testimony of men.

But the water, the blood, and the spirit testify from God Himself, and their testimony is always true, and God never lies. **This is the testimony upon which the church is built: not the testimony of men, but the testimony of God--baptism, communion, preaching the word these three testify; water, blood, spirit these three agree.** This is the testimony that God bears concerning His Son; these three testify and give us the victory of faith that overcomes the world. And this testimony is true.

John writes, **And this is the testimony that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life”** By water, blood and spirit we have the Son of God. And when we have the son of God we have eternal life. This is eternal life—to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ, the one whom He has sent (John 17:3). To know him is to love him; to love him is to obey his commandments; to obey his commandments is to love his children; to love his children whom we are and whom we have seen, is to love Him who we have not seen, but who we know through the testimony that we have received from Him.

Now that we have received that testimony, we walk in the testimony. We put off all false and deceitful ways; we turn away from sin and from idols that lead to death. **We have the true God and eternal life because we have Jesus Christ. And when we are troubled in any way, or tempted in anything, we may ask him anything according to his will, and he will hear us and he will help us**. Just as we have heard his testimony, he hears us. For we are born of him and love him, because he first loved us by giving us His Son.