

Series: 1 John
Title: The Greater Witness
Text: 1 John 5: 5-9
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Some hearing my words see no *evidence* why you should believe my gospel: you see and hear *no facts* to convince you this is the word of God, *no witnesses* to persuade you that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Yet, some man comes along telling you some mystifying philosophy and you will receive that. They have no facts, no witnesses, they simply tell you something that tickles your ears and you receive their word.

Not only that, in everyday life, we receive the witness of men: concerning history, concerning the food we eat, concerning the medicine we take. We simply believe what men tell us without looking into these things in great depth. We simply receive things as true without having verification that what they tell us is true.

What about in a court of law? What is required in a court of law before we receive the witness of men? One, there must be more than one witness—there must be two or more persons and/or documents that bear witness to the facts. Two, they must be credible witnesses—they must be truthful, of good character or their testimony can be torn to shreds. Three, there must be corroborating witness—each testimony must agree with the other to verify the facts. When these things all agree then we receive the witness of men. We do not doubt. We do not question. When these things all agree we believe their witness to be true and we receive it.

Why then do we not believe the witness of God—**1 John 5: 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.**

Subject: The Greater Witness

Proposition: We should receive the witness of God because it is greater—this is the witness of God which God himself has testified of his Son.

I want to do two things in this message. One, I want to comfort you who believe by showing you what great witness God has given us that the Lord Jesus is indeed the Son of God, the Savior of his people. Two, for those who are skeptical, I want you to behold how great the witness of God is which testifies that the Lord Jesus is the Son of God. ***“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!”***

Divisions: I will use the three things required in a court of law: 1) Has God provided two or more witnesses? 2) Are the witnesses of God credible? 3) Do all the witnesses of God corroborate, do they all agree in their testimony?

HAS GOD PROVIDED TWO OR MORE WITNESSES?

In the law of God, God requires there must be more than one witness.

Deuteronomy 19: 15: One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established.

For this point, we will simply note the number of witnesses God has provided. Has God provided more than one witness to testify that the Lord Jesus is the Son of God, the Christ, the Savior of his people?

One, witness is the Lord Jesus himself—**1 John 5: 6: This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood.** We will look more at this witness in a moment.

Two, is the witness of the Holy Spirit—**1 John 5: 6...And it is the Spirit that beareth witness.** The Spirit beareth witness by speaking through a host of men that he used to record the word of God.

2 Peter 1: 21: For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost.

2 Timothy 3:16: All Scripture is given by inspiration of God

The way the Spirit of God used men to write this book is a witness that they were moved by the one Holy Spirit of God. Men who did not know each other, living on two separate continents, in separate countries, hundreds of miles apart, without modern communication, wrote in three different languages, over the span of 1600 years. Yet, this book has one unified, harmonious message that fits together as if they were sitting across the table from each other in the same room speaking one language. Why? It is because they all wrote by the same Spirit of God. He gave them all what to write.

Men will say, “Prove to me the Bible is the Word of God”. But the burden of proof is on the infidel to prove it is NOT the word of God! The next time someone says to you, “Prove to me the Bible is the Word of God”. You say to them, “Prove to me it is not”.

Also, the Spirit of God bore witness when he descended on our Lord Jesus at his baptism. By the Holy Spirit, the Man, Christ Jesus, spoke like never a man spoke. He did what no man ever did before or since. This is one way that *“It is the Spirit that beareth witness”* that he is the Christ!

Furthermore, the Spirit of God came upon the Apostles on the day of Pentecost confirming that Christ is indeed the exalted King. He made them all speak in foreign languages which they had never learned prior to that day. They spoke those languages so well that the people understood as they preached the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. And the Spirit of God confirmed the Gospel preached with signs and wonders. It is the Spirit who has maintained the preaching of the gospel throughout history unto this day.

In addition, the Spirit of God also bears witness within his people—*the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.* He testifies in us that Jesus is indeed the Christ, the Son of the living God. It is through the Spirit of God that *“of God is Christ made unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification and Redemption”* (1 Cor 1: 30)

Three, our text declares where the witnesses of God are. There are three witnesses in heaven—**1 John 5: 7: For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost.** There are three distinct persons in the Godhead. We do not worship three gods. We worship one God in three distinct persons. It is not that he is merely manifest in three distinct persons, he is one God in three distinct persons. The three persons of the godhead are God the Father, God the Son (here he is called the Word because he is the revelation of the Godhead—*John 1: 1: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God*) and there is God the Holy Ghost.

Four, our text declares that God has provided three witnesses in the earth—**1 John 5: 8 And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.** This is the unified testimony of THE GOSPEL. Through his preachers preaching the gospel *the Spirit of God*

bears witness that Jesus is the Christ the Son of the living God, all our Salvation, by washing us by *the water* of the word and sprinkling *the blood* of Jesus Christ on our conscience in regeneration.

Now, to any who are skeptics, here we have far more than one witness! When we have this many witness of men in a court of law we receive their testimony. So why do you not believe the testimony of God? *“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”*.

HAS GOD PROVIDED CREDIBLE WITNESSES?

In a court of law, the witnesses must be truthful and of good character. If they are not then cross-examination can destroy their testimony. So, has God provided credible witnesses?

One, God bears witness by the Lord Jesus Christ himself. He is THE TRUTH! Christ said, *“I am the Way, THE TRUTH, and the life, no man cometh to the Father but by me!”* Not only is he truthful. Jesus Christ is THE TRUTH.

Two, the Spirit of God bears witness of Christ—**1 John 5: 6:...And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit IS TRUTH.**

John 16: 13: Howbeit when he, THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH, is come, he will guide you INTO ALL TRUTH: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. 14: HE SHALL GLORIFY ME: for he shall receive of mine and shall shew it unto you.

Three, of the witness in heaven, the triune God, he is holy, he is the Truth and he cannot lie.

Numbers 23:19: God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?

Titus 1: 2:...GOD, that CANNOT LIE...

John 1: 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.

Deuteronomy 32: 4: *He is* the Rock, his work *is* PERFECT: for all his ways *are* JUDGMENT: A God of TRUTH and WITHOUT INIQUITY, JUST and RIGHT *is* he.

Four, the witness in earth is the gospel whereby we are born again by the Spirit of God—the incorruptible seed.

Psalm 33:4: For the WORD of the LORD is RIGHT; and all his works are done IN TRUTH.

James 1: 18: Of his own will begat he us with the WORD of TRUTH.

John 17: 17: Sanctify them through THY TRUTH: thy WORD is TRUTH.

So, the witness of God is far more than one witness and the witnesses of God are all true because God is the Truth! Now sinner, you who receive the witness of lying men, why do you not believe the truth from the

true and living God? *“If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater because is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son”*.

HAS GOD PROVIDED CORROBORATING WITNESSES?

In a court of law, the witnesses must agree. Is that the case with the witnesses of God?

One, the Lord Jesus Christ bears witness by fulfilling the whole word of God. Christ is the fulfillment of all that is written. We see it by Christ fulfilling the scriptures even after his spirit had departed from his body.

John 19: 32: Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him. 33: But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake NOT his legs: 34: But one of the soldiers with a spear PIERCED HIS SIDE, and forthwith came there out BLOOD AND WATER. 35: And he that saw *it* [John] bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe. 36: For these things were done, that THE SCRIPTURE SHOULD BE FULFILLED A bone of him shall not be broken. 37: And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced.

In all the word, *the water* of washing declared Christ *our Sanctification* and *the blood* declared Christ *our Righteousness*. Christ made his people righteous by his obedience unto the death of the cross—*“without shedding of blood is no remission of sins.”*

Romans 3: 24: Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: 25: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, ...

Christ is our Sanctification. He said, *“Except I wash thee, thou hast no part in me.”*

Hebrews 2:11: For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,

Hebrews 10:10...we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all....14 For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

The water and blood flowed from his wounded side as scripture said it would; a bone of his was not broken as scripture said.

Two, the Spirit bears witness with Christ in full agreement that Christ is the salvation of his people—*“And it is the Spirit that beareth witness”* All the witness of men are in perfect agreement throughout the word of God which is the Spirit bearing witness with Christ that Christ is our righteousness and holiness. When the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, the Spirit of God recorded it and bore witness that Christ is the way into the holiest of all, God’s very presence (*Mt 27:51*). To punctuate his witness with Christ that Christ is all that he said he is, the Spirit made the soldier bear witness,

Matthew 27: 54: Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God.

Three, do the witnesses in heaven all agree that Christ is the salvation of his people? —**1 John 5: 7 For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.** Our triune God bore witness in perfect agreement when he spoke from heaven saying that this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased! The triune God testified in agreement from heaven when he

raised Christ from the dead and he sat down at God's right hand—"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. And we are His witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey Him". (Acts 5:31-32) What did God in three persons testify to us in full agreement with each other when Christ arose from the grave and sat down? "When he had by himself purged our sins he sat down at the right hand of God".

Four, do the earthly witness agree? —**1 John 5: 8: And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.** Oh, may he speak this gospel into your heart now. May the Holy Spirit wash you with the word and purge your conscience with the blood that you might see that these three agree in one—these three corroborate in full agreement that Christ is everything a sinner like you needs for acceptance with God.

Hebrews 10: 14: by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. 15: *WHEREOF THE HOLY GHOST* also is a witness to us.

Christ Jesus loved us and gave himself for us "That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the WASHING OF WATER BY THE WORD, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." (Eph 5: 26-27)

Hebrews 9: 14: How much more shall THE BLOOD OF CHRIST, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

For you who believe, bless God, here is why? **1 John 5: 10: He that believeth on the Son of God HATH THE WITNESS IN HIMSELF**

For you who will not receive his testimony—**1 John 5: 10...he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.** In the face of all these faithful, true, corroborating witnesses you go on calling God a liar by not believing the record God has given of his Son.

For us both this is the record—**1 John 5: 11: And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. 12: He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.**

This is the word to you who believe—**1 John 5: 13: These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.**

As we hear all these witnesses testify together that Christ is all our Salvation, I think, what more can God say to us! This is the song we will close with:

How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in His excellent Word:
WHAT MORE CAN HE SAY, THAN TO YOU HE HATH SAID
You who unto Jesus, for refuge have fled?

Amen!