Do You Believe The Witness About Christ?
I John 5:6-8

Introduction

Do you believe in God? Believing in God makes sense.

John gives four tests in this section of Scripture. We have looked at the test of being born again (vv.1-5) and now we look at the test of believing the witness about Christ (vv.6-8).

The Witness of the Life of Christ (v.6a)
The Witness of the Holy Spirit (v.6b)
The Witnesses of Heaven (v.7)
The Witnesses of Earth (v.8)

John invites you to believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, and that Jesus is God; the promised Jewish Messiah revealed in the Scriptures, proclaimed by the prophets. Can we know; can we be certain that Jesus Christ is Lord?

"Whoever is deserving of death shall be put to death on the testimony of two or three witnesses; he shall not be put to death on the testimony of one witness." (Deuteronomy 17:6, NKJV)

"One witness shall not rise against a man concerning any iniquity or any sin that he commits; by the mouth of two or three witnesses the matter shall be established." (Deuteronomy 19:15, NKJV)

Are there unimpeachable sources, genuine witnesses who can attest to the identity, the mission, the ministry of Jesus Christ?

Before you condemn someone you want to make sure they are guilty! Some people suggest coming to Christ is a blind leap of faith. Christians are not afraid to say; “I know the truth about Jesus Christ”. The word “know” occurs thirty-nine times in John’s brief letter. The word “know” occurs nine times in this closing chapter. The word “witness” occurs eight times.

What does it mean to be a witness? A witness gives testimony of something seen, or heard or experienced first hand. Another meaning of the word witness is one who furnishes evidence or something that is evidence. Certain characteristics are desirable for a witness: (1) The witness should have a knowledge of the facts. (2) The witness should have a reputation for honesty. (3) The witness should be willing to tell the truth. John parades a series of witnesses to testify to the certainty of the identity of Jesus Christ, the mission of Jesus Christ.

“The life that is real is built on the divine certainties that are found in Jesus Christ” (Warren Wiersbe; TBEC; Vol. 2; p.527). John invites the Christian to trust Jesus
Do You Believe The Witness About Christ?
I John 5:6-8

for salvation, for friendship, for fellowship for relationship with God. A person who
trusts Jesus is born of God and overcomes the world (1John 5:1-5). Give a man a dollar,
and you cheer his heart. Give him a dream, and you challenge his heart. Give him
Christ, and you change his heart.

The Witness of the Life of Christ (v.6)

"This is He who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ; not only by water, but by water
and blood. And it is the Spirit who bears witness, because the Spirit is truth." (1 John 5:6,
NKJV)

What a strange way to begin the testimony or the witness of Jesus. We have to go back to
verse five; “who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the
Son of God?” John doesn’t want anyone to doubt that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.
Jesus was declared to be the Son of God by His baptism (water) and by His death (blood).

How can we be sure Jesus is God? We cannot ignore Jesus. He is the most compelling
person in history. Philip Yancey wrote; “How would telling people to be nice to one
another get a man crucified? What government would crucify Mister Rogers or Captain
Kangaroo?” Just a nice guy? Jesus made startling, even disturbing claims about himself.
Jesus made the faith He taught center on Himself; not some moral program or religious
activity. Jesus asked His disciples; “But who do you say that I am?”(Mark 8:29).

The religious leaders of the first century condemned Jesus as a fraud and a liar.

"saying, “Sir, we remember, while He was still alive, how that deceiver said, ‘After three
days I will rise.’ " (Matthew 27:63, NKJV)

Who was Jesus? “This is He who came by water and blood”

The ancient Greeks believed the gods had different blood. It consisted of a watery
substance known as ichor. Ichor was said to be present in ambrosia or nectar that the
gods and goddesses would drink. When a god or goddess was injured and bleed, the
ichor made their blood poisonous to mortals.

John continues to battle the false teacher Cerenthus who alleged that Jesus became the
Christ at his baptism and the Christ conscious left him at his crucifixion.

Jesus did not receive the Christ at his baptism and lose it at the cross. On both occasions
the Father “witnessed” or testified concerning His Son’s mission and identity. Jesus was
God and is God and will forever be God.
Jesus was baptized in the river Jordan by John. The Father spoke from Heaven and said; “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (Matt.3:13-17). At the same time the Holy Spirit descended from heaven like a dove and rested upon Jesus. This was the Father’s attestation of His Son at the beginning of His ministry.

The Father’s witness did not end at Christ’s baptism. It continued when the death of Jesus drew near. The Father spoke audibly to Jesus from heaven and said, “I have both glorified (My name) and will glorify it again” (John 12:28). The Father testified at Christ’s crucifixion a supernatural darkness, an earthquake, and the tearing of the temple veil (Matt. 27:45; 50-53). The blood of Jesus, his death on the cross; took our judgment, suffered our punishment, bore our sins.

We are able to stand before God free from sin because Jesus died for us. John makes the point that the blood of Jesus (sacrifice) declare Him to be the Son of God who takes away the sins of the world.

The term “bear witness” comes from the Greek verb martureo (mar-too-reh-o). The English word “martyr” is one who bears witness by his or her death. A witness testifies to the truth of something seen or heard or the knowledge of some fact or circumstance. "And John bore witness, saying, ‘I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him. I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God.’" (John 1:32-34, NKJV)

John the Baptist testifies with force and emphasis; “I saw the Spirit” “He...said to me, “Upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining”; it was the voice of God who proclaimed Jesus Christ to be the Son of God. Matthew testified about the voice; “And lo a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (Matt. 3:17). Luke testified that God’s voice called Jesus Christ His Son; “And the Holy Spirit descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, “Thou are my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased” (Luke 3:22).

Jesus Himself said; “For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins” (Matt.26:28). The writer of Hebrews testifies; “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” (Heb.9:14).

Paul wrote; “Much more then, being justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him” (Rom.5:9).

“In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins” (Col. 1:14).
Do You Believe The Witness About Christ?
I John 5:6-8

The Witness of the Holy Spirit (v.6)

“And it is the Spirit who bears witness, because the Spirit is truth”.

The Holy Spirit guarantees the truth about Jesus. We can trust the witness or the testimony of the Spirit because the Spirit is the Spirit of truth.

We were not present at Jesus’ baptism or at his death. The Holy Spirit was active and present then, and active and present now. The Holy Spirit was present during the earthly ministry of Christ.

“The witness of the Father is past history, but the witness of the Spirit is present experience. The first is external, the second is internal—and both agree” (Wiersbe; TBE; Vol. 2; p.527). The Spirit instructs us and tells us the truth about Jesus. Remember the Law required two or three to agree exactly, and that settled the matter. John presents the water, the blood, and the Holy Spirit. What is their testimony? Jesus is God.

The Holy Spirit reveals our sin. The water or baptism shows the need of cleansing for sin; the blood shows the sacrifice for sin by which sin can only be cleansed (see 1 John Outline Notes; Chuck Smith; p.54).

"But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His. And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." (Romans 8:9-10, NKJV)

"But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you." (Romans 8:11, NKJV)

Someone might think; “I don’t know what you are talking about! I don’t see this Spirit. I can’t hear or feel this Spirit”.

"the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you." (John 14:17, NKJV)

The Holy Spirit bears witness by convicting the world of sin, righteousness and judgment:

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. And when
Do You Believe The Witness About Christ?
I John 5:6-8

He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they do not believe in Me; of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged." (John 16:7-11, NKJV)

The Holy Spirit bears witness by giving the believer assurance; that they are children of God (Rom.8:16). The Holy Spirit bears witness by teaching believers about Jesus (John 14:26); by showing us things to come;

"However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come." (John 16:13, NKJV)

The Witnesses of Heaven (v.7)

"For there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one." (1 John 5:7, NKJV)

The vast majority of Bible scholars believe this verse is a scribal interpolation. The text was not part of the original writing and was added centuries later.

Many Bibles omit this verse; and for good reason—it is not attested in the early manuscripts or quoted by the early church fathers. Under Roman Catholic pressure Erasmus inserted verse seven from the Latin Vulgate.

Even if the text does not belong in the Bible; it does not change the teaching in this section.
There really are three who witness in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one!

In John’s gospel (17:17) “Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.”

17:21; “that they all may be one, as you Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me”.

This describes a unity of thought, purpose, hope.

Other scriptures confirm the testimony of the Father; the Word; and the Holy Spirit.

How does the Father bear witness of the Son? Remember the Father planned and provided for salvation. The Father spoke and declared Jesus to be Lord at his birth; his beloved Son in his baptism (Matt. 3:17); he proclaimed Christ to be His Son by giving Him the Holy Spirit without measure so that Christ spoke the Word of God;
Do You Believe The Witness About Christ?
I John 5:6-8

"For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God does not give the Spirit by measure." (John 3:34, NKJV)

"If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; but if I do, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him."" (John 10:37-38, NKJV)

The Father proclaimed Christ to be His Son by raising Him from the dead;

"and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." (Romans 1:4, NKJV)

The Witnesses of Earth (v.8)

"And there are three that bear witness on earth: the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three agree as one." (1 John 5:8, NKJV)

Now John declares the witnesses upon the earth. You will note the witnesses all agree; they have one message that they declare—Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

We must believe Jesus is the Christ the Son of God. This is the only way we can overcome and conquer sin in our lives, this is the only way we can have hope after death, this is the only way we can have friendship and fellowship with God—on God’s terms.

There is again the witness of the Holy Spirit. The witness of the baptism of Jesus. There is the witness of the blood or the cross of Christ where Jesus died for sin.

We are quick to accept the witness of men and reject the witness of Heaven.

Have you ever said, “I wish I had more faith?” You do have faith. You have faith that cook doesn’t spit in your food. You have faith that when the light is red for you it is green for the other person.

"Whoever is deserving of death shall be put to death on the testimony of two or three witnesses; he shall not be put to death on the testimony of one witness." (Deuteronomy 17:6, NKJV)

Do you deserve to die? “I don’t deserve to die!”

God says; “all have sinned” and we believe.
God says; “the soul that sins shall surely die” and we begin to doubt.
God says; “the wicked shall be cast into hell” and we refuse to believe.
Do You Believe The Witness About Christ?
I John 5:6-8

God says; “the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses a man from all sin. We doubt and fail to act. You trust men, why won’t you trust God? If you fail to trust God, you in effect accuse Him of lying!

We can be sure Jesus is God. We are certain. And that certainty is the foundation to our Christian lives.

Conclusion

Instead of telling people to give up things, we are safer to tell them to "seek first the kingdom of God," and then they will get new things and better things, and the old things will drop off by themselves.

John Drummond (1851-1897)

What are you willing to accept as evidence that God exists, and Jesus Christ is Lord? Does your belief system correspond to reality? We have the evidence of existence; why is there something rather than nothing? We have evidence that the universe had a beginning, we have evidence that the universe was made fit for human life; we have evidence of intelligent design; we have evidence of a fallen world, we have evidence of the Bible’s reliability; we have evidence of the Bible’s accuracy; we have evidence that the Bible communicates prophecy; we have evidence of Jesus’ life; the most compelling life ever lived. Jesus claimed to be God. He did not leave us room to believe he was simply a good teacher. We have the evidence of Jesus’ death; a death that holds the key to His identity, His mission, His destiny. We have the evidence of Jesus’ empty tomb; a cold hard fact that even His critics couldn’t deny. We have the evidence of Jesus’ post resurrection appearances where He was seen alive by over five hundred witnesses. We have the evidence of those who lived for Christ, and died for Christ. We have the evidence of the uniqueness of Jesus Christ.