

Lesson 15 – 1 John 5:6-12

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Review/Introduction

John is writing so we might know that we have eternal life (1 John 5:13). John presents tests to determine if true saving faith has been exercised or are the readers (and ultimately us) deceived. He makes it very clear that a profession of possessing salvation without the evidences that flow from salvation is self-deception.

He presents the objective truths (1 John 5:11-13) and subjective evidences that give assurance of salvation.

The objective basis of assurance is the finished work of Christ and His promise to those who exercise true saving faith. John's inspired writings give a plethora of objective truths (John 3:15-16; 3:36; 5:24; 6:47; 11:25-26; 1 John 5:1).

The Scriptures are clear that true salvation is accompanied by a changed life. The subjective evidence for assurance includes the witness of the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:16; 1 John 3:24), fellowship with God's people (1 John 1:3), walking in the light (1 John 1:6-7), hatred and confession of one's own sin (1 John 1:5-2:2), walking in obedience (1 John 2:5; 3:5-6), walking like Christ (1 John 2:6), not loving the world (1 John 2:15), purity (1 John 3:3), love (1 John 3:14; 18-19), overcoming the world (1 John 5:4), etc.

John presents his tests in four spirals laying out doctrinal and conduct tests or evidences of true, real, actual regeneration. John uses repetition to present his simple, yet profound, truths to encourage his readers and us.

- I. Introduction – Christ is the way of fellowship (1:1-4)
- II. Evidence of true saving faith – Spiral 1 (1:5-2:17)
 - A. Doctrine – Hold fast to truth – The way of salvation from sin (1:5-2:2)
 - B. Conduct – Obedience (2:3-6)
 - C. Conduct – Love (2:7-11)
 - D. Conduct – Sin (Don't love the world) (2:12-17)
- III. Evidence of true saving faith – Spiral 2 (2:18-3:24)
 - A. Doctrine – Hold fast to truth – Don't Apostatize (2:18-27)
 - B. Conduct – Christ's coming is a purifying fixed hope (2:28-3:3)
 - C. Conduct – Sin/obedience (3:4-10)
 - D. Conduct – Love (3:11-18)
 - E. Conduct – Confidences (3:19-24)
- IV. Evidence of true saving faith – Spiral 3 (4:1-21)
 - A. Doctrine – Hold fast to truth – Test false teachers (4:1-6)
 - B. Conduct – Love (4:7-21)
 - C. Conduct – Obedience (5:1-5)
- V. Evidence of true saving faith – Spiral 4 (5:6-21)
 - A. **Doctrine – Hold fast to truth – Christ is the way of salvation (5:6-12)**
 - B. Conduct – Confidences (5:13-20)
- VI. Conclusion (5:21)

John has been referring to Christ throughout the epistle, starting at the beginning.

¹What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life— ²and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us— ³what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. ⁴These things we write, so that our joy may be made complete. (1 John 1:1-4)

Throughout, he is making sure his readers understand the nature of Christ, His deity and humanity, along with His work. This is important due to the Gnostic false teaching that had influenced his readers. Gnostics believed that matter is evil and spirit is good. Therefore, they invented heretical views on how Christ could be God, yet take on human flesh. So John is writing over and over again about denying that Jesus is the Christ (God-man), believing in God's Son Jesus Christ (God-man), every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God (God-man), whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God (God-man), whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ (God-man), and he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God (God-man).

²²Who is the liar but **the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ?** This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son. ²³Whoever **denies the Son** does not have the Father; the one who confesses the Son has the Father also. (1 John 2:22-23)

^{8b}The **Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil.** (1 John 3:8b)

²³This is His commandment, that **we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ**, and love one another, just as He commanded us. (1 John 3:23)

²By this you know the Spirit of God: **every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God;** ³and **every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God;** this is the *spirit* of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world. (1 John 4:2-3)

⁹By this the love of God was manifested in us, that **God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him.** ¹⁰In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and **sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.** (1 John 4:9-10)

¹⁴We have seen and testify that **the Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.** ¹⁵Whoever **confesses that Jesus is the Son of God**, God abides in him, and he in God. (1 John 4:14-15)

¹**Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ** is born of God, and whoever loves the Father loves the *child* born of Him. (1 John 5:1)

John will now delve deeper into this Jesus the Christ, the Son of God, whom he had just referred to as the reason believers have a lifestyle of overcoming the world.

⁵Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that **Jesus is the Son of God?** (1 John 5:5)

Today we will look at the doctrine test in the last (fourth) spiral – Christ.

Spiral 4 – Doctrine – Hold fast to truth – Christ is the way of salvation (5:6-12)

1. The testimony (5:6-9)

⁶This 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. ⁷For there are three that testify: ⁸the Spirit and the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement. ⁹If 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.

⁶This 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. ⁷For there are three that testify: ⁸the Spirit and the water and the blood; and these three agree. ⁹If 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. (ESV)

Regarding the text itself, if you have the KJV or NKJV you will notice additional text in verses 7 and 8.

⁷For there are three that bear witness *in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one.* ⁸*And there are three that bear witness on earth: the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three agree as one.* (NKJV)

This was not a part of John's originally penned letter. There are no Greek manuscripts with this additional phrase before the 15th century. It appears to come from a margin comment that was incorporated into the text of a 5th century Latin manuscript.

John has provided eye witness testimony concerning the God-man, Jesus Christ, the Son of God (1 John 1:1-4). Even in his gospel, John testified about Jesus.

³⁴But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out. ³⁵**And he who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you also may believe.** ³⁶For these things came to pass to fulfill the Scripture, "Not a bone of Him shall be broken." (John 19:34-36)

²⁴**This is the disciple who is testifying to these things and wrote these things, and we know that his testimony is true.** ²⁵And there are also many other things which Jesus did, which if they were written in detail, I suppose that even the world itself would not contain the books that would be written. (John 21:24-25)

"Testify" means to give evidence or affirming the truth regarding something. John has given his own testimony concerning the person and work of Christ in the epistle. He has also given the objective evidences of Christ's work in a person's life. But he does not want either of these testimonies to stand alone. So, he hearkens back to the OT (as well as the NT) concept that more than one trustworthy witness is required to confirm a testimony. He gives testimony from three: the Spirit, the water, and the blood.

⁶**On the evidence of two witnesses or three witnesses**, he who is to die shall be put to death; he shall not be put to death on the evidence of one witness. ⁷The hand of the witnesses shall be first against him to put him to death, and afterward the hand of all the people. So you shall purge the evil from your midst. (Deuteronomy 17:6-7)

¹⁵“A single witness shall not rise up against a man on account of any iniquity or any sin which he has committed; **on the evidence of two or three witnesses a matter shall be confirmed.** (Deuteronomy 19:15)

¹⁵“If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother. ¹⁶But if he does not listen *to you*, **take one or two more with you, so that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every fact may be confirmed.** ¹⁷If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. (Matthew 18:15-17)

¹This is the third time I am coming to you. **Every fact is to be confirmed by the testimony of two or three witnesses.** (2 Corinthians 13:1)

¹⁹Do not receive an accusation against an elder except **on the basis of two or three witnesses.** ²⁰Those who continue in sin, rebuke in the presence of all, so that the rest also will be fearful *of sinning*. (1 Timothy 5:19-20)

“This is the One” who “came”. The Son of God “came” indicating a past, historical event. This coming was with clear, irrefutable evidence. There are witnesses to this event; witnesses that are in addition to and beyond human eyes. The first two to testify are “water” and “blood”.

One commentator notes that this passage is one of the most “perplexing” passage in the epistle, if not the NT. Unfortunately, when we have perplexing passages, we also have no end to the number of people who desire to come up with a correct or perhaps new, novel interpretation.

John’s original readers know what he meant by “water and blood”. There wasn’t a confusion regarding the meaning. For us, 2000 years removed, we need to do some more investigation. Context helps. As we just saw, John is desiring to show throughout his letter that Jesus is the eternal God-man in refutation of Gnostic teaching. He does this by showing that Jesus Christ, God very God, “came” historically, truly, in human flesh.

What historic event(s) detailed in Scripture are connected to “water” and “blood” which bear witness to Jesus’ divinity and humanity? Both His baptism and the passion/crucifixion are historic events that bear witness to Jesus’ divine-human person. His baptism being the “water” and the crucifixion being the “blood”. These events were bookends to Christ’s earthly ministry where the Father testified concerning the Son.

The events at Christ’s baptism bear witness to the God-man. The Father and Spirit intervened in dramatic ways at the baptism.

¹³Then Jesus arrived from Galilee at the Jordan *coming* to John, to be baptized by him.

¹⁴But John tried to prevent Him, saying, “I have need to be baptized by You, and do You come to me?” ¹⁵But Jesus answering said to him, “Permit *it* at this time; for in this way it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.” Then he permitted Him. ¹⁶After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, **the heavens were opened**, and he saw **the Spirit of God descending as a dove and lighting on Him**, ¹⁷and behold, **a voice out of the heavens said, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.”** (Matthew 3:13-17)

The miraculous events at Christ's passion also bear witness to the God-man.

²⁷“Now My soul has become troubled; and what shall I say, ‘Father, save Me from this hour’? But for this purpose I came to this hour. ²⁸Father, glorify Your name.” **Then a voice came out of heaven: “I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.”** ²⁹So the crowd of people who stood by and heard it were saying that it had thundered; others were saying, “An angel has spoken to Him.” ³⁰Jesus answered and said, “This voice has not come for My sake, but for your sakes. ³¹Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. ³²And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself.” ³³But He was saying this to indicate the kind of death by which He was to die. (John 12:27-33)

⁴⁴It was now about the sixth hour, and **darkness fell over the whole land until the ninth hour,** ⁴⁵**because the sun was obscured;** and the veil of the temple was torn in two. (Luke 23:44)

⁵⁰And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. ⁵¹And behold, **the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom;** and **the earth shook and the rocks were split.** ⁵²The **tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised;** ⁵³and coming out of the tombs after His resurrection they entered the holy city and appeared to many. ⁵⁴Now the centurion, and those who were with him keeping guard over Jesus, when they saw the earthquake and the things that were happening, became very frightened and said, ***“Truly this was the Son of God!”*** (Matthew 27:50-54)

During the passion week, the Father spoke confirming the God-man. In addition, at the crucifixion the Father miraculously worked confirming the God-man.

“It is the Spirit who testifies” has multiple possible overlapping meaning. The most probable is that the Spirit testifies concerning the Son through Christ's earthly ministry as He was empowered for supernatural ministry.

³⁸*You know of* Jesus of Nazareth, how **God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power,** and *how* He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him. (Acts 10:38)

¹Jesus, **full of the Holy Spirit,** returned from the Jordan and was led around by the Spirit in the wilderness. (Luke 4:1)

¹⁴And Jesus returned to Galilee **in the power of the Spirit,** and news about Him spread through all the surrounding district. (Luke 4:14)

¹⁸“The **Spirit of the Lord is upon Me,** Because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, And recovery of sight to the blind, To set free those who are oppressed, ¹⁹To proclaim the favorable year of the Lord.” ²⁰And He closed the book, gave it back to the attendant and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him. ²¹And He began to say to them, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.” (Luke 4:18-21)

Additionally, the Spirit testifies through the completion of the canon, the empowering of the apostles for the disciple-making mission, and His work of regeneration and sanctification in the elect.

²⁶“When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, *that is* the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me, ²⁷and you *will* testify also, because you have been with Me from the beginning. (John 15:26-27)

⁵He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, (Titus 3:5)

All three of the witnesses’ (Spirit, water, and blood) testimony is in agreement. The beginning and ending of Christ’s earthly ministry testify to His divinity and humanity. The Spirit through Christ’s early ministry, the completed canon, and the apostle’s empowerment testifies to His divinity and humanity. All are in agreement.

These three constitute the “testimony of God” which is greater than any supposed higher knowledge that was coming from the Gnostics as the “testimony of men”. God’s testimony is greater because He Himself has testified concerning His Son; and God cannot lie (Titus 1:2).

❖ Are you a doubter or do you fully accept God’s testimony?

2. Accepting and rejecting the testimony (5:10)

¹⁰The 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.

¹⁰Whoever 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. (ESV)

Here is the reality of salvation. It is only found by entering the narrow gate (Matthew 7:13-14). It is found only in Christ. Regardless if ~90% “believe” in God, only those that exercise true saving faith in Christ alone are saved. Only those that surrender their life to Christ have eternal life.

⁶Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; **no one comes to the Father but through Me.** (John 14:6)

¹²And **there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved.**” (Acts 14:12)

⁴³Of Him all the prophets bear witness that **through His name everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins.**” (Acts 10:43)

(Jesus to the disciples) ⁴⁶and He said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day, ⁴⁷and that **repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations,** beginning from Jerusalem. (Luke 24:46-47)

If you believe in Christ, the Son of God, then you have the testimony in you. The Spirit of God abides in you permanently. The Spirit is truth and enlightens you to understand and apply the Spirit-inspired Scripture. The Spirit confirms with your inner person that you are a child of God. And the Spirit brings about subjective evidence in your life.

¹⁶The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, (Romans 8:16)

³²And we are witnesses of these things; and *so is* the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him.” (Acts 5:32)

❖ What work of the Spirit do you see in your life?

God has testified concerning His Son. He has testified to the uniqueness of His Son in person and work. All those who do not surrender to Christ make God a liar because He has given true testimony concerning His son.

³³He who has received His testimony has set his seal to *this*, that God is true. (John 3:33)

❖ Do you stand in awe of Christ?

3. The two groups of people (5:11-12)

¹¹And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. ¹²He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.

¹¹And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. ¹²Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life. (ESV)

John has been writing in extremes. The reason is clear, the gospel is extreme. Salvation is extreme. True saving faith and denying are extremes. Eternal destinies are at stake. What could be more important?

Here then is that testimony that is received and confirmed: “that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son”. “Has given” means to give and in context is based on decision of will of giver and no merit of the recipients. Its usage marks the historic fact that God gave the gift of eternal life in His Son and the believer possess it now in time and forever in eternity.

“Eternal life” (emphatically placed in the Greek) includes:

– **Quantity** of life (forever in heaven)

²⁹And He said to them, “Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, ³⁰who will not receive many times as much at this time and **in the age to come, eternal life.**” (Luke 18:29-31)

²⁵Therefore **He is able also to save forever** those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. (Hebrews 7:25)

⁴and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be *any* death; there will no longer be *any* mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.” ... ³There will no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His bond-servants will serve Him; ⁴they will see His face, and His name *will be* on their foreheads. (Revelation 21:4; 22:3)

– **Quality** of life (regenerate, abundant life in Christ during this life)

³This is eternal life, that **they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ** whom You have sent. (John 17:3)

¹¹These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and **that your joy may be made full**. (John 15:11)

¹⁷Therefore **if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature**; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

²²But the **fruit of the Spirit is** love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. (Galatians 5:22-23)

Life eternal is only available “in the His Son”. It is the hope of believers.

¹Paul, a bond-servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the faith of those chosen of God and the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness, ²**in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised long ages ago**, ³but at the proper time manifested, *even* His word, in the proclamation with which I was entrusted according to the commandment of God our Savior, (Titus 1:1-3)

❖ **What (better who) is your hope?**

From an eternal perspective, God’s perspective, there are only those who are justified and those who are not; those who are covered in the righteousness of Christ and those who are covered in their filthy rags.

²¹He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. (2 Corinthians 5:21)

⁹and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from *the* Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which *comes* from God on the basis of faith, (Philippians 3:9)

⁶For all of us have become like one who is unclean, **And all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment**; And all of us wither like a leaf, And our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. (Isaiah 64:6)

Here are the extreme positions:

Have the Son --> Have eternal life

Do not have the Son --> Do not have eternal life

There is no place in-between which provides life eternal. You either surrender YOUR life to Christ and receive His life or you hold onto your life and reject eternal life.

²⁴Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. ²⁵**For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.** ²⁶For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? (Matthew 16:24-26)

⁷But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸More than that, **I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord**, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and **count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ**, ⁹and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from *the* Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which *comes* from God on the basis of faith, ¹⁰that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; ¹¹in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. (Philippians 3:7-11)

²⁴**But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself**, so that I may finish my course and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God. (Acts 20:24)

❖ **Have you lost your life?**

Conclusion

John is writing to present tests of true saving faith. His purpose is to ensure that his readers know if they have eternal life (actual, true, real regeneration) or not. Today, we looked at Christ as the only way of salvation.

Additional Study

1. Each time you come to the Scriptures, pray for the Spirit to give you understanding.
2. Read 1 John once this week a chapter at a time (one chapter a day for five days).
3. Pray that God would show you personal applications from today's passage.
4. Read today's passage noting repeated words/ideas and ask yourself what John means.
5. Re-read the notes from today and contemplate the thought questions.