

Series: The Confident, Loving Church – week 23

CDOBC – beginning on 2/14/10

Title: “God’s Testimony About Christ”

1 John 5:6-12 ~ August 29, 2010

OBJECTIVE: To give believers increased confidence in their faith and to clearly present the Gospel.

Announcements

- Welcome / guests – communication cards
- All-church social at the YMCA – Today!
- Men’s Ministry - Men’s Breakfast on 9/11 – 7 a.m. – Great Adventure Men’s Conference 9/25
- Fall Festival Cookbooks for sale - \$12.00
- Budget Workshop – 9/11 & 9/18
- Women’s Ministry Bible studies begin on 9/7

From the beginning of humanity, God gave promises of a future deliverer that would save people from their sin. God testified to this occurrence hundreds...even thousands of years before it became reality. He did this through the various prophets and writers of Scripture – who *prophesied* of the coming Messiah.

1500 B.C. - **Genesis 3:15b** – the promise of a deliverer (Luke 1:35, Mt 1:18-20)

“...He (*Jesus/Messiah*) will crush your (*Satan*) head, and you will strike His heel.”

1500 B.C. - **Genesis 49:10** – Messiah a descendent of Judah (Luke 3:33)

“The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he comes to whom it belongs and the obedience of the nations is his.”

900-800 B.C. - **1 Sam. 2:10** – Hannah’s song – where she prophesies of Messiah (Matt. 28:18; Jn. 12:15)

“He (*God*) will give strength to his king (*Messiah*) and exalt the horn of his anointed.”

900-800 B.C. - **2 Sam. 7:12-16** – Messiah from the ‘house’ of David (Matthew 1:1)

“...I will establish the throne of his (*Messiah*) kingdom forever...Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever.”

740-680 B.C. - **Isaiah 7:14** – Messiah would be born of a virgin (Matthew 1:21-23)
“Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.”

740-680 B.C. - **Isaiah 9:1-2** – Messiah would minister in Galilee (Matthew 4:12-16)
“Nevertheless, there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress...but in the future he will honor Galilee of the Gentiles, by the way of the sea, along the Jordan--The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.”

700 B.C. - **Micah 5:2** – Messiah would be born in Bethlehem – (Luke 2:4-7)
“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.”

710 B.C. - **Hosea 11:1** – Messiah would be called out of Egypt (Matthew 2:14-15)
“...out of Egypt I called my son.”

627-585 B.C. - **Jeremiah 31:15** – prophecies of the attempt to murder Messiah (Matt. 2:17-18)
“A voice is heard in Ramah, mourning and great weeping, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because her children are no more.”

450-400 B.C. - **Malachi 4:5-6** – John the Baptist would prepare the way for Messiah (Matthew 3:1-3)
“See, I will send you the prophet Elijah (*John the Baptist*) before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes. He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers; or else I will come and strike the land with a curse.”

Various dates – most 1000 B.C. - **Psalm 41:9** – predicts betrayal by a close friend (Luke 22:3-4; John 13:18)
“Even my close friend, whom I trusted, he who shared my bread, has lifted up his heel against me.”

Various dates – most 1000 B.C. - **Psalm 22:6-7** (Matt. 27)

“But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by men and despised by the people. All who see me mock me; they hurl insults, shaking their heads...”
Vs. 14-18 - “I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint. My heart has turned to wax; it has melted away within me. My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth; you lay me in the dust of death. Dogs have surrounded me; a band of evil men has encircled me, they have pierced my hands and my feet. I can count all my bones; people stare and gloat over me. They divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing.”

740-680 B.C. - Isaiah 53:3-5 (Matt. 27)

“He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.”

Vs. 7 - “He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.” (Matthew 27:12-14)

Vs. 9 - “He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth.”

Vs. 11-12 - “After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light of life and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities...For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.”

This is just a sampling of the prophecies in the O.T. that speak / prophecy about Jesus – the promised Messiah. It’s difficult to come up with an exact number, but there are over 100 prophecies in the O.T. about the Messiah. These prophecies were written over a period of 1500 years – and they were written by numerous authors...and Jesus fulfilled all of them.

During His ministry, Jesus criticized the religious leaders – because they were blind to the Scripture’s testimony about Him.

John 5:39-40

“You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me,⁴⁰ yet you refuse to come to me to have life.”

A common human sin is to think God is pleased by religious behavior. The religious leaders of Jesus’ day thought they were pleasing to God because they studied God’s Word. However, Jesus points out that having great knowledge about God is not the goal...the goal is having a life-changing faith in the person the Scripture’s point to...Jesus Christ.

In 1 John 5, the Apostle John is helping us to realize this same truth...namely, that we can have great confidence of our faith in Christ because of the many witnesses that testify to the truth about Christ.

One of the battles we will always face in the church is making sure people understand the truth about Jesus – who He was – what He did in His ministry, death, burial, and resurrection – and what He promises for those who have faith in Him.

This is the focus of our verses this morning

1 John 5:6-12 – Read vs. 6-9

These days, it seems rare to find someone who gives good – honest – truthful testimony. It seems that if there is a high-profile trial or inquiry – that you can count on some good, old-fashioned lying to take place under oath!

But when God testifies...you know His testimony will be true.

The details of God’s testimony about Christ vs. 6-9

Over the centuries, this passage has confused many people due to the unfamiliar nature of the terms that John uses.

However, it's helpful to realize that these verses were not confusing to the original readers. In fact, John was writing these things to *clarify* and *explain* who and what Jesus did. He wasn't trying to add to their confusion. However, for the rest of us – this is a bit confusing. We know what water and blood are – but we're not sure of the exact nature of how they testify of Jesus.

Another reason for the confusion is an uncertainty among many as to how the Spirit testifies.

John had to write these letters to the various churches to correct and combat the false teaching they had experienced. One of John's opponents in ministry was a false teacher by the name of Cerinthus – who taught that Jesus was a normal man – but the Spirit of Christ (Messiah) indwelt Jesus at His baptism and empowered Him for ministry – but the Spirit of Christ left Jesus prior to His crucifixion.

This teaching was not only wrong – but it denies the Biblical teaching of atonement - that Jesus, being God, died for the sins of the world (John 3:16).

So John gives three things that testify about Jesus.

First, he says that Jesus “...came by water...” What is meant by water? There are a few interpretations that are possible, but the best interpretation is that the water is a reference to Jesus' baptism. When Jesus was baptized by John the baptizer – it was the inauguration of Jesus' earthly ministry. **Next**, John refers to “blood”. The dominant opinion by scholars and theologians is that “blood” refers to Jesus' death – His crucifixion. John is giving the full scope of Jesus' ministry – and in an effort to combat the false teachers who taught that the Spirit of Christ left Jesus before His crucifixion – John makes it clear that the “Christ” came by His

blood also. (Some see Jn. 19:34-35 – others believers baptism and observance of the Lord’s Supper in the “water” and “blood”)

John restates – with greater emphasis (vs. 6b – “He did not come by water only, but by water and blood.”) the fact that it wasn’t by water only that Jesus came to humanity – but also through His blood. Then he states that “...it is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth.”

John 14:17 “...the Spirit of truth.”

vs. 7-8 “For there are three that testify: ⁸ the Spirit, the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement.” (KJV or AV – alternate reading in vs. 7-8 – see handout)

So how does the Spirit testify?

He testifies about Jesus and what He says is in total agreement with the truth about Jesus – from His baptism to His death. Scripture tells that the Holy Spirit testifies in a few different ways.

First, the Spirit testifies through the Scriptures. I read the various prophecies in the O.T. about Jesus to make a point. Scripture tells us that the Biblical writers wrote the thoughts and words of God – not their own, independent thoughts and ideas.

2 Tim. 3:16 “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness...”

2 Peter 1:21 “Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. ²¹ For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.”

2 Peter 2:1 “But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them--bringing swift destruction on themselves.”

The context here of what Peter is saying (what the Spirit is saying through Peter) is important. If we don't understand that the Bible is inspired by God – that the Bible is the direct result of the Holy Spirit “carrying along” the authors – then we will be gullible to following a false teacher who distorts the true message of Scripture – namely the person and work of Jesus Christ.

Second, the Spirit testified about Christ by His direct involvement in Jesus' life and ministry (Matt. 1:18, 20; 3:16; Mark 1:12, etc.)

Third, the Spirit testifies through Biblical preaching and teaching.

Fourth, the Spirit testifies in the heart and mind of believers. This is the inward confirmation of Biblical truth.

Vs. 9 – “We accept man's testimony...” In the first 4 verses of this letter (1:1-4) – John reminds us of the truthfulness of His testimony about Jesus – and that His testimony can be trusted because he was an eyewitness to the life and ministry of Jesus. However, to accept the testimony of man – and to reject the testimony of God makes no sense! Why? Because God is infinitely greater than any man – God is completely truthful and cannot lie – and He does not change – so His testimony can never be invalid or false (Numbers 23:19; 1 Sam. 15:29; Titus 1:2; Heb. 6:18).

In John 17:17, Jesus affirmed the truth of Scripture – that it is the truth of God (“Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.”)! Like the Holy Spirit – God the Father's testimony about Jesus was seen through the supernatural power of Christ – but also through the verbal affirmation of Christ at His baptism, the mount of Transfiguration, and as Jesus hung on the cross and the Father caused darkness to fall on the earth, an earthquake occurred, tearing of the Temple veil from top to bottom, and the resurrection of many holy people (Matt. 27:45, 51-54 “From the sixth hour until the ninth hour darkness came over all the

land...At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook and the rocks split. The tombs broke open and the bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life. They came out of the tombs, and after Jesus' resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many people. When the centurion and those with him who were guarding Jesus saw the earthquake and all that had happened, they were terrified, and exclaimed, "Surely he was the Son of God!")

Your response to God's testimony vs. 10-12

Read vs. 10-12

When you realize that God the Father – and the Holy Spirit have testified to the truth and reality of Jesus – you are left at a point of decision. This is not information that is interesting to know – it's information that demands a response. James tells us that "Even the demons believe (in God) that--and shudder." (James 2:19)

God will confirm the truth about Jesus in your own heart – but also through the various external proofs he has already mentioned in the letter – mainly a belief in Jesus as the Christ – the Son of God, by your love for one another and your obedience to His commands (5:1-5).

The line that John draws here is very clear...there is no 'gray area' or uncertainty. If you don't believe God and His testimony about His Son, Jesus – then by your rejection of God's testimony, you are calling Him a liar (vs. 10).

Disbelief in God's testimony (Scripture) – specifically His testimony about Jesus Christ - is the same as calling God a liar!

"eternal life" – this is more than a chronological issue. It's the very life of God – the abundant/full life Jesus mentions in John 10:10 – it's the daily abiding or remaining in God each day – it's the inner working of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer – it's the unspeakable joy and excitement of spending eternity in Heaven.

John then gives a clear warning – that if you don't have Jesus – you don't have eternal life.

There is no other way to heaven except through Jesus Christ.

John 14:6

“I am the way, the truth, the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

Acts 4:12

“Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.”

Application

1. Christian – be confident in the truth of Christ

The testimony of the Apostles is reliable – but God gave us more! He gave us His own testimony about Jesus – and His testimony is true. Your faith does not rest on your own thoughts – but on the honesty and truthfulness of God!

2. You must decide.

Heb. 2:3

“...how shall we escape if we ignore such a great salvation?”

Close in prayer