

1 John 5:6-13 Answers Assurance of Salvation

Introduction: According to 5:13, why did John write this letter?

******Who can have assurance of eternal life?** Whoever has the Son has eternal life.

What testimony did God give to verify Jesus as the Son of God (5:6-12)? God testifies three ways: The Spirit, the water and the blood (5:7-8).

What did John mean when he wrote Jesus came by water and blood (5:6)? John did not explain himself. Doubtless his readers knew what he meant, but today certainly has been lost. Some understand the water and blood to refer to what happened when the Roman soldier stabbed Jesus on the cross with his spear (how this would contribute to a testimony I do not know):

ESV **John 19:34** But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water.

Since the water and blood have something to do with God's testimony regarding Jesus, it may refer to Jesus' water baptism and the blood he shed on the cross.

In what ways did God testify at Jesus' water baptism (5:6)? At Jesus' baptism, the Holy Spirit came down from heaven and the voice of God the Father announced God's approval of Jesus.

ESV **Mark 1:9-11** . . . Jesus . . . was baptized by John in the Jordan. And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens opening and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."

Concerning Jesus' blood, just before Jesus' Baptism John the Baptist said:

ESV **John 1:28-29** These things took place in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing. The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

In his baptism, Jesus publically identified with the sins of the people, even though He was sinless (Coleman & Peace, p. 50). He was the Lamb of God, sacrificed for our sins.

John wrote earlier in this epistle:

ESV **1 John 1:7** . . . the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.

Why did John emphasize it was not by the water only, but by the water and the blood (5:6)?

It is quite possible the false prophets under the influence of the spirit of antichrist were denying something about Jesus' blood. Even though Jesus was the Son of God, fully endorsed by the Father at His baptism, it was also necessary for Him to shed His blood to take away the sin of the world. Jesus was not punished for His own sins.

Even today false teachers downplay Jesus' death on the cross, saying he was a mere man and not God (Jehovah's Witnesses), that his death was in no way propitiatory (theological liberalism), that he only swooned on the cross (skeptics), or that he never went to the cross at all because a substitute went for him (Islam).

The truth is that since He is infinite God, Jesus could suffer in a finite time on the cross what it would take us, who are finite, an infinity to suffer in hell.

According to 5:6c, the Spirit is the one who testifies. How does the Spirit of Truth give testimony? The Spirit testifies by convincing people that Jesus is the Christ. John has already explained there is a inner witness given by the Spirit to God's people as to the truth of who Jesus is:

ESV **John 15:26** But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me.

ESV **John 16:13-14** When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth . . . He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

ESV **1 Corinthians 12:3** . . . no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except in the Holy Spirit.

ESV **1 John 4:2** By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God . . .

— 5:7-8 —

In 5:7-8, John made a strong point that there are three that testify. From an Old Testament perspective, why it is important there are three witnesses? Under the Mosaic judicial system, conviction of a crime required two or three witnesses. This principle was carried over to the New Testament.

ESV **Deuteronomy 19:15** A single witness shall not suffice against a person for any crime or for any wrong in connection with any offense that he has committed. Only on the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses shall a charge be established.

ESV **Matthew 18:16** [In the church discipline process, Jesus said] . . . if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses.

ESV **2 Corinthians 13:1** Every charge must be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses.

— 5:9 —

What is the point of 5:9? If we are willing to believe something based on man's testimony, how much more should we accept something to which God testifies!

— 5:10 —

According to 5:10 (reread), what does it mean for a person to have the testimony in himself? To have the testimony within yourself means you believe in Jesus.

According to 5:10, what problem is there in someone not believing in Jesus? Those who did not believe in Jesus are in essence calling God a liar.

NIV **John 8:24** . . . if you do not believe that I am *the one I claim to be*, you will indeed die in your sins.

How would this apply to people who don't believe in Jesus simply because they never heard of him (5:10)? First, there are no people who don't believe simply because they never heard of Jesus; our hearts are so hardened by sin that no one would believe apart from the Holy Spirit even if they heard.

ESV **John 6:44** No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. Second, even though those who never heard of Jesus could still be calling God a liar: the fact remains they are still accountable for not even living up to what God has revealed about Himself in nature:

ESV **Romans 1:18-21** . . . the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

— 5:11 —

**** **According to 5:11, what is God's testimony?** God's testimony is that God gave us eternal life in Jesus.

ESV **John 3:16** For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

ESV **John 10:10** I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

— 5:12 —

What binary declaration did John make in 5:12? If you have Jesus you have eternal life. If you do not have Jesus you do not have eternal life. It is either a or b, yes or no, in or out, 1 or 0.

ESV **John 3:36** Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.

ESV **John 14:6** Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

ESV **Revelation 20:14-15** Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

******Why did John write these things (5:13-15)?** He wrote so his readers would know for sure they have eternal life. John wrote something similar at the end of his Gospel:

ESV **John 20:31** . . . these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

Application: It is possible for us to have assurance of salvation. Ours is not a "hope so" salvation, but a "know so" salvation! K, n, o, w spells "got it!" (King, p. 110).

To what does "these things" (5:13) refer? As in John 20:21, it refers back not simply to the previous paragraph but to the whole book.

Based on 5:13, who has eternal life? Eternal life belongs to those who believe in the name of the Son of God.

Saving Faith: We are saved by faith in Jesus. For the last five chapters John has told us what it looks like to truly believe in Jesus. True saving faith will impact us in certain positive ways: we will walk in the light (**1:7**), we will keep his commandments (**2:3**), we will purify ourselves (**3:2-3**), we will not practice sin (**3:9**), and we will love the brothers (**3:14, 4:16**).

What is eternal life (5:13)? Eternal life is not merely a length of time, but also a type of life: the life of God which God has shared with us through Jesus (Coleman & Peace, p. 54). Eternal life is right now, too.

ESV 1 John 1:1-3 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life - the life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us - that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.

ESV 1 John 5:11 And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

There are people who want to go to heaven who have no idea what to do with themselves on a rainy Sunday afternoon.

So What?

What is God's testimony concerning Jesus? The Spirit, the water and the blood.

How can you know that you have eternal life? Those who have a faith in Jesus that moves them to love the brethren can have full assurance.

**** = ask this question before reading the text aloud. Doing so will cause focus.

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