

I John 4:13–5:13

I John 4:13 Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.

The greatest evidence, the most substantial proof that God not only exists, but dwells in believers, is revealed when He gives them His Spirit. Ultimately, it is the Spirit's presence in the heart that makes it known who dwells in God, and He in them.

(Barnes' Notes on the Bible, I John 4:13) *Hereby know we that we dwell in him* – Here is another, or an additional evidence of it.

Because he hath given us of his Spirit – He has imparted the influences of that Spirit to our souls, producing “love, joy, peace, long-

¹ John 14:16[&]17 *And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; ¹⁷Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.*

John 14:26 *But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*

John 15:26 *But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:*

John 16:7 *Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.*

² Matt. 4:21 *And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them.*

Matt. 17:1 *And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart,*

Mark 3:17 *And James the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James; and he surnamed them Boanerges, which is, The sons of thunder:*

Mark 14:33 *And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy;*

Luke 5:10 *And so was also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men.*

Luke 8:51 *And when he came into the house, he suffered no man to go in, save Peter, and James, and John, and the father and the mother of the maiden.*

Luke 9:28 *And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray.*

Luke 9:54 *And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?*

John 1:38–40 *Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou? ³⁹He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour. ⁴⁰One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.*

John 13:23 *Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved.*

John 21:20–22 *Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee? ²¹Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? ²²Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me.*

John 21:24 *This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true.*

Acts 4:13 *Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.*

³ John 20:19–22 *Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace*

suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,” etc., Galatians 5:22–23. It was one of the promises which the Lord Jesus made to his disciples that he would send the Holy Spirit to be with them after he should be withdrawn from them, John 14:16–17, John 14:26; John 15:26; John 16:7,¹ and one of the clearest evidences which we can have that we are the children of God, is derived from the influences of that Spirit on our hearts. (END QUOTE)

I John 4:14 And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.

Because the apostle John had personally observed Jesus in both His earthly² and resurrected form, and had subsequently been given the Holy Spirit by Him,³ he

could openly testify to the truth that Jesus is the Savior of the world.

(Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary, I John 4:14) The internal evidence of the indwelling Spirit (1Jo 4:13) is corroborated by the external evidence of the eye-witnesses to the fact of the Father having "sent His Son to be the Savior of the world." (END QUOTE)

I John 4:15 Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.

The recognition of Christ's deity, is not something that can occur merely in the head, but must be a genuine and sincere belief that originates in the heart, and then is made public to the world.⁴ It is an act of submission and subjection to the Son of God, that leads to God's salvation. (Acts 5:32) *And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.*

I John 4:16 And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.

Two of the very first great evidences of salvation, are by men possessing both the Holy Spirit, and the love of God in their hearts. He who is truly born of God, has been given a divine Spirit, and as a result of this, will love deeply both God

and other Christians born of Him. If any then desire to know whether or not they are saved, and have true fellowship and union with the heavenly Father, then they need only to ask themselves if both God's Spirit and God's love dwells in them. If this is confirmed and true, and can be internally testified to, then it is certain that a man or woman has been brought to spiritual life by the Son of God, and possesses a union with both the Father and Son. By love are men confirmed to be the children of God.

I John 4:17 Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.

By following Christ's example of love, His people are assured that they shall have nothing to fear in the day of His judgment.⁵ Because Christ's love lives within the hearts of those saved by Him, and they live as He lived in the world, then nothing more is needed for them to have met God's will for their life. Having obeyed Christ's two commandments to love both God and his neighbor,⁶ allows the believer to approach the tribunal of Christ,⁷ with the spiritual confidence that the life lived was in obedience to his Lord. Understandably, love proves that men are truly the children of God by their possessing and manifesting the same loving nature as Him.⁸

be unto you. ²⁰And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord. ²¹Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. ²²And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost:

4 Rom. 10:9&10 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

5 Heb. 4:14-16 Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. ¹⁵For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

Heb.10:19 Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,

I John 2:28 And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.

6 Matt. 22:36-40 Master, which is the great commandment in the law? ³⁷Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. ³⁸This is the first and great commandment. ³⁹And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. ⁴⁰On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

7 Ps. 9:8 And he shall judge the world in righteousness, he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness. Ps. 96:13 Before the LORD: for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth.

Acts 17:31 Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

8 Eph. 3:1&2 For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, ²If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward:

(Barnes' Notes on the Bible, I John 4:17) *That we may have boldness in the day of judgment* – The idea is, that he who has true love to God will have nothing to fear in the day of judgment, and may even approach the awful tribunal where he is to receive the sentence which shall determine his everlasting destiny without alarm.

Because as he is, so are we in this world – That is, we have the same traits of character which the Saviour had, and, resembling him, we need not be alarmed at the prospect of meeting him. (END QUOTE)

I John 4:18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.

There is no fear in love, since perfect love casts out all fear of God, and any sheepishness to be judged by Him. Yet, if fear of divine judgment remains, this is strong evidence, that love still remains an unfinished work in the believer. Just as love is a fruit of the Spirit,⁹ fear is a characteristic of the flesh.¹⁰ Because of this, not until love has grown and accomplished its full purpose, revealing obedience to divine will, will all fear of heavenly judgement be removed.

(Barnes' Notes on the Bible, I John 4:18) *But perfect love casteth out fear* – That is, love that is complete, or that is allowed to exert its proper influence on the soul. As far as it exists, its tendency is to deliver the mind from alarms. If it should exist in any soul in an absolutely perfect state, that soul would be entirely free from all dread in regard to the future. ...

He that feareth, is not made perfect in love – He about whose mind there lingers the apprehension of future wrath, shows that love in his soul has not accomplished its full work. Perhaps it never will on any soul until we reach the heavenly world, though there are many minds so full of love to God, as to

be prevailingly delivered from fear. (END QUOTE)

I John 4:19 We love him, because he first loved us.

The origination of all love has its source in God.¹¹ It is because God first loved man, that men have come to love Him. Consequently, if a man has deep affection and love for God, he can be encouraged that the reason love abides and has made its home in his heart, is because God first loved him.

(Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary, I John 4:19) *We love him, because he first loved us* – This passage is susceptible of two explanations; either.

(1) that the fact that he first loved us is the "ground" or "reason" why we love him, or.

(2) that as a matter of fact we have been brought to love him in consequence of the love which he has manifested toward us, though the real ground of our love may be the excellency of his own character. (END QUOTE)

(Matthew Poole's Commentary, I John 4:19) His is the fountain love, ours but the stream: his love the inducement, the pattern, and the effective cause of ours. (END QUOTE)

I John 4:20 If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?

If there is any professed love for God, while hating those born of Him, then it is certain that a man *is a liar* concerning his true relationship with the Lord. As a man's relationship, or lack of it, towards those born of God, practically reveals if

⁹ Gal. 5:22–23 *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, ²³Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.*

¹⁰ Job 3:25 *For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come unto me.* Prov. 29:25 *The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe.*

John 20:19 *Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.*

¹¹ I John 4:8 *He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.*

I John 4:16 *And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.*

his profession of faith is either genuine or counterfeit. Thus, if there is an absence of love, and hate has taken its purposed place in the heart, then none should consider themselves true Christians. It is also unreasonable to presume that any can love God, Who cannot be seen, if there is not love for those born of God who can be. In truth, one born of God, who has become a son of God, cannot hate, simply because it is completely contrary to the Holy Spirit that lives within him.

(Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary, I John 4:20) If we do not love the brethren, the visible representatives of God, how can we love God, the invisible One, whose children they are? (END QUOTE)

I John 4:21 And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.

The commandment spoken of, and was taught by Jesus, is that all who truly love God, will love their spiritual brother also. The emphasis is on the source of the commandment, which came from none other than the Son of God.

(Barnes' Notes on the Bible, I John 4:21) And this commandment have we from him – That is, the command to love a brother is as obligatory as that to love God. If one is obeyed, the other ought to be also; if a man feels that one is binding on him, he should feel that the other is also; and he can never have evidence that he is a true Christian, unless he manifests love to his brethren as well as love to God. (END QUOTE)

I John 5:1 Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him.

What is true of loving other Christians is even more true of loving He, Who makes them such. Hence, just as the previous argument was that if men love God, they will love their brother, now it is added that if a man truly loves God, he will love all those begotten of Him. This undoubtedly includes Jesus Christ Himself,

12 I John 4:13 Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.

13 I John 4:16 And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.

14 Titus 3:5 Titus 3:5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

the only begotten Son of God. Ultimately, if God is genuinely adored, cherished, and embraced, there will be similar love for both the Son and those born-again of God through Him.

I John 5:2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments.

(Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary, I John 5:2) As our love to the brethren is the sign and test of our love to God, so (John here says) our love to God (tested by our "keeping his commandments") is, conversely, the ground and only true basis of love to our brother. (END QUOTE)

Any true affection for God, will result in the keeping of His commandments. Therefore, just as the apostle argued 1. That those who possess the Spirit, dwell in God, and He in them.¹² 2. That those who also dwell in love, likewise dwell in God, and He in them.¹³ Now thirdly, it is that those who truly love God, will keep His commandments. By these three spiritual realities we can see who has genuine and authentic relationship with the heavenly Father, and if any do not. Scripture therefore makes it abundantly clear, that a mere profession of relationship with the Father is not enough, if there remains a lack of the Holy Spirit, a deficiency of love for the brethren, and a failure to keep God's commandments. Ultimately, there is no such thing as a disobedient Christian, or a Christian lacking love, or a Christian who has not been regenerated¹⁴ by the Holy Spirit, simply because these three divine signs both confirm and establish where true salvation exists, and where it does not.

I John 5:3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.

In conjunction with the truth that all those who truly love God, will keep His commandments, is the added revelation that God's commandments are not burdensome, nor difficult to be borne. The

Greek word for “grievous” is #926, “*barus*.” Strong’s defines the word as “heavy, weighty, burdensome, lit. and met; violent, oppressive.”¹⁵ HELPS Word-studies defines the word, “properly, heavy (weighty); (figuratively) what is grievous (burdensome), pressing down on a person with oppressive force. Such a grievous burden makes a person unable to function (enjoy free movement).” It is sin that weighs men down, and is a heavy weight to bear, and surely not obedience to God’s will. This is because the Lord puts nothing on a man, that is not profitable for his life and good for his soul.¹⁶ Hence, subjection is always good, acceptable, and perfect for those who yield their lives to doing God’s will,¹⁷ and cannot be considered either burdensome or grievous in any manner. Ultimately, keeping God’s commandments is joy to the soul,¹⁸ health to the body,¹⁹ and prosperity for the life.²⁰ For these reasons and many others, it is always good for men to keep God’s Word, which enables them to live a happy and profitable life.

(Barnes’ Notes on the Bible, I John 5:3) *And his commandments are not grievous* – Greek, “heavy” – βαρεία *bareiai*; that is, difficult to be borne as a burden. See Matthew 11:30.²¹ The meaning is, that his laws are not unreasonable; the duties which he requires are not beyond our ability; his government is not oppressive. It is easy to obey God when the heart is right; and those who endeavor in

sincerity to keep his commandments do not complain that they are hard. All complaints of this kind come from those who are not disposed to keep his commandments. Indeed, they object that his laws are unreasonable; that they impose improper restraints; that they are not easily complied with; and that the divine government is one of severity and injustice. But no such complaints come from true Christians. They find his service easier than the service of sin, and the laws of God more mild and easy to be complied with than were those of fashion and honor, which they once endeavored to obey. The service of God is freedom; the service of the world is bondage. No man ever yet heard a true Christian say that the laws of God, requiring him to lead a holy life, were stern and “grievous.” But who has not felt this in regard to the inexorable laws of sin? (END QUOTE)

I John 5:4 For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

(Barnes’ Notes on the Bible, I John 5:4) John makes this affirmation of all who are born of God. “Whatsoever,” or, as the Greek is, “Everything which is begotten of God,” (πᾶν τὸ γεγεννημένον *pan to gegenēmenon*;) meaning to affirm, undoubtedly, that “in every instance” where one is truly regenerated, there is this victory over the world. (END QUOTE)

This scripture makes two very important points. 1. That *whosoever is born of God overcometh the world*. 2. The means

¹⁵ Strong’s Concordance

¹⁶ Deut. 5:33 *Ye shall walk in all the ways which the LORD your God hath commanded you, that ye may live, and that it may be well with you, and that ye may prolong your days in the land which ye shall possess.*

Deut. 29:9 *Keep therefore the words of this covenant, and do them, that ye may prosper in all that ye do.*

Josh. 1:8 *This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.*

I Kgs. 2:3 *And keep the charge of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and his testimonies, as it is written in the law of Moses, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou turnest thyself:*

II Chron. 31:21 *And in every work that he began in the service of the house of God, and in the law, and in the commandments, to seek his God, he did it with all his heart, and prospered.*

Ps. 119:2 *Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart.*

Ps. 128:1 *Blessed is every one that feareth the LORD; that walketh in his ways.*

I John 2:17 *And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.*

17 Rom. 12:2 *And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*

18 John 15:10–11 *If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love. ¹¹These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.*

19 Exod. 23:25 *And ye shall serve the LORD your God, and he shall bless thy bread, and thy water; and I will take sickness away from the midst of thee.*

20 Job 36:11 *If they obey and serve him, they shall spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasures.*

21 Matt. 11:30 *For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.*

by which this victory is accomplished is through *faith*. A true child of God therefore cannot be, nor ever will be overcome by this world, as so many who are not the children of God, confirmably are. Hence, Christians are not, and should never be considered victims of this world, simply because through Jesus Christ and His triumphant ministry, they have defeated it. Wherever and whenever you see true Christians, one who has been regenerated through the impartation of the Holy Spirit, then it is both certain and visible that they have overcome the world. Their very own lives prove it. (Eph. 4:8) *Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.*

(Barnes' Notes on the Bible, Eph. 4:8) *He led captivity captive* – The meaning of this in the Psalm is, that he triumphed over his foes. The margin is, “a multitude of captives.” But this, I think, is not quite the idea. It is language derived from a conqueror, who not only makes captives, but who makes captives of those who were then prisoners, and who conducts them as a part of his triumphal procession. He not only subdues his enemy, but he leads his captives in triumph. The allusion is to the public triumphs of conquerors, especially as celebrated among the Romans, in which captives were led in chains (Tacitus, Ann. xii. 38), and to the custom in such triumphs of distributing presents among the soldiers; compare also Judges 5:30,²² where it appears that this was also an early custom in other nations. Burder, in Res. Alt u. neu Morgenland, in loc. When Christ ascended to heaven, he triumphed over all his foes. It was a complete victory over the malice of the great enemy of God, and over those who had sought his life. But he did more. He rescued those who were the captives of Satan, and led them in triumph. Man was held by Satan as a prisoner. His chains were around him. Christ rescued the captive prisoner, and designed to make him a part of his triumphal procession into heaven, that thus the victory might be complete — triumphing not only over the great foe himself, but swelling his procession with the attending hosts of those who “had been”

the captives of Satan, now rescued and redeemed. (END QUOTE)

I John 5:5 Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?

Many a sinner has had this world beat them down, drain them of all strength, and ultimately ruin their life. Yet, there is no true Christian that it can be said was overcome in this manner. Because of faith in the Son of God, Christ has made all those born of the Spirit to overcome all the oppressiveness, sin, death, and evil forces in this world. In Christ is the Christian made victorious through belief in the Son of God, and it is certainly not because of any earthly power within himself. (Matt. 28:18) *And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.*

(Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary, I John 5:5) *Who* – “Who” else “but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God:” “the Christ” (1Jo 5:1)?²³ Confirming, by a triumphant question defying all contradiction, as an undeniable fact, 1Jo 5:4,²⁴ that the victory which overcomes the world is faith. For it is by believing; that we are made one with Jesus the Son of God, so that we partake of His victory over the world, and have dwelling in us One greater than he who is in the world (1Jo 4:4).²⁵ “Survey the whole world, and show me even one of whom it can be affirmed with truth that he overcomes the world, who is not a Christian, and endowed with this faith” [Episcopius in Alford]. (END QUOTE)

I John 5:6 This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.

There are many speculations as to the true meaning of this verse. But like with most things, the simplest explanation is often the most satisfactory one. The

²² Jdgs. 5:30 *Have they not sped? have they not divided the prey; to every man a damsel or two; to Sisera a prey of divers colours, a prey of divers colours of needlework, of divers colours of needlework on both sides, meet for the necks of them that take the spoil?*

²³ I John 5:1 *Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him.*

²⁴ I John 5:4 *For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.*

²⁵ I John 4:4 *Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.*

scripture states here that Jesus *came by water and blood*. If we are to understand this in simple terms, then it is seen that Jesus' earthly ministry began when John the Baptist baptized Him with water.²⁶ In respect to Christ coming to His people with *blood*, it should be remembered that just as Christ's earthly ministry began with water; His heavenly ministry began with His death and the shedding of His blood.²⁷ Thus in both instances, at the beginning of Christ's earthly ministry,²⁸ which began with water, and then the commencement of His heavenly ministry, which began with blood, the Spirit of God witnessed to and gave supernatural testimony that Jesus was the Son of God. These two spiritual events, the heavenly baptism of Christ²⁹ when the Spirit descended upon Him in the form of a dove and a voice from heaven declared, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*,³⁰ and Christ's resurrection from the dead, revealing His divine nature, testified to by the Spirit of holiness,³¹ and Christ becoming a life-giving Spirit³² proved Him to be the Son of God.

I 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.

For a more thorough and detailed examination of this verse, and the Greek

words used to translate it into English, it is recommended that the Jamieson-Fausset-Brown notes are thoughtfully read on this important topic.

(Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary) three – Two or three witnesses were required by law to constitute adequate testimony. The only Greek manuscripts in any form which support the words, “in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one; and there are three that bear witness in earth,” are the Montfortianus of Dublin, copied evidently from the modern Latin Vulgate; the Ravianus, copied from the Complutensian Polyglot; a manuscript at Naples, with the words added in the Margin by a recent hand; Ottobonianus, 298, of the fifteenth century, the Greek of which is a mere translation of the accompanying Latin. All the old versions omit the words. The oldest manuscripts of the Vulgate omit them: the earliest Vulgate manuscript which has them being Wizanburgensis, 99, of the eighth century. A scholium quoted in Matthæi, shows that the words did not arise from fraud; for in the words, in all Greek manuscripts “there are three that bear record,” as the Scholiast notices, the word “three” is masculine, because the three things (the Spirit, the water, and the blood) are SYMBOLS OF THE Trinity. To this Cyprian, 196, also refers, “Of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, it is written, ‘And these three are one’ (a unity).” There must be some mystical truth implied in using “three” (Greek) in the masculine, though the antecedents, “Spirit, water, and blood,” are neuter. That THE Trinity was

26 Matt. 3:13–17 *Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. ¹⁴But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? ¹⁵And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. ¹⁶And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: ¹⁷And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*

27 Matt. 26:28 *For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.*

Mark 14:24 *And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many.*

Luke 22:20 *Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.*

28 Mark 1:9–11 *And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. ¹⁰And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him: ¹¹And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*

Luke 3:21–22 *Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, ²²And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.*

29 Luke 3:22 *And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.*

30 Matt. 3:16–17 *And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: ¹⁷and lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*

31 Rom. 1:4 *And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:*

32 I Cor. 15:45 *And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.*

the truth meant is a natural inference: the triad specified pointing to a still Higher Trinity; as is plain also from 1Jo 5:9, “the witness of God,” referring to the Trinity alluded to in the Spirit, water, and blood. It was therefore first written as a marginal comment to complete the sense of the text, and then, as early at least as the eighth century, was introduced into the text of the Latin Vulgate. The testimony, however, could only be borne on earth to men, not in heaven. The marginal comment, therefore, that inserted “in heaven,” was inappropriate. It is on earth that the context evidently requires the witness of the three, the Spirit, the water, and the blood, to be borne: mystically setting forth the divine triune witnesses, the Father, the Spirit, and the Son. (END QUOTE)

I 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.

Continuing with the *Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary*, more understanding is given, as to the true meaning of the thought introduced that Christ's ministry in the earth, has a threefold witness verifying Him as the promised Messiah.

(Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary, I John 5:8) agree in one – “tend unto one result”; their agreeing testimony to Jesus' Sonship and Messiahship they give by the sacramental grace in the water of baptism, received by the penitent believer, by the atoning efficacy of His blood, and by the internal witness of His Spirit (1Jo 5:10):³³ answering to the testimony given to Jesus' Sonship and Messiahship by His baptism, His crucifixion, and the Spirit's manifestations in Him (see on [2651]1Jo 5:6). ... By the baptism then received by Christ, and by His redeeming blood-shedding, and by that which the Spirit of God, whose witness is infallible, has effected, and still effects, by Him, the Spirit, the water, and the blood, unite, as the three-

fold witness, to verify His divine Messiahship [Neander]. (END QUOTE)

I 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.

It is one thing for men to testify as to the truth that Jesus is the Son of God. It is quite another thing, when God Himself testifies. God's witness is therefore significantly greater, more worthy to be trusted, and infinitely more reliable than any earthly witness. For *if we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater*. It should be noted that in regards to both the origination of the Word of God,³⁴ and the true identity of Jesus Christ, critics have for thousands of years, argued that Christianity was founded upon men—that the Word of God came from men, and the Son of God was nothing more than a man. What is undoubtedly left out in this weak and deceptive claim, is that God Himself both bore and bears witness to Christ being His Son. Hence, it is not merely man that has borne testimony that Jesus is the Son of God, but also and more importantly, that God Himself has openly witnessed to this truth.

(Barnes' Notes on the Bible, I John 5:9) For this is the witness of God ... – The testimony above referred to – that borne by the Spirit, and the water, and the blood. Who that saw his baptism, and heard the voice from heaven, Matthew 3:16–17,³⁵ could doubt that he was the Son of God? Who that saw his death on the cross, and that witnessed the amazing scenes which occurred there, could fail to join with the Roman centurion in saying that this was the Son of God? Who that has felt the influences of the Eternal Spirit on his heart, ever doubted that Jesus was the Son of God? ... Any one of these is sufficient to convince the soul of this; all combined bear

³³ *I John 5:10 He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.*

³⁴ *Gal. 1:11–12 But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. ¹²For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.*

II Tim. 3:16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

II Pet. 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.

³⁵ *Matt. 3:16&17 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: ¹⁷And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*

on the same point, and confirm it from age to age. (END QUOTE)

I John 5:10 He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.

He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself. There is no true Christian who does not possess a spiritual witness in his own heart, that Jesus is the Son of God. This witness is the Spirit of God, given through Christ, which abides in him.³⁶ Understandably, no man can ever fully believe upon Jesus Christ, without having a personal witness of experiencing the Lord himself. This is accomplished by the Holy Spirit being given to all who believe upon Him as the Son of God and yield their lives to His lordship.³⁷

(Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges, I John 5:10) *in himself*] According to the revised reading, *in him*. Wiclif has ‘in him’, Lu-

ther, *bei ihm*: Tyndale added the ‘self’, and most English Versions have followed him. But ‘in him’ in this context cannot mean anything but ‘in himself’. The external witness faithfully accepted becomes internal certitude. Our faith in the Divinity of Christ attests its own Divine origin, for we could not have obtained it otherwise than from God. (END QUOTE)

He that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. He, who refuses to believe the testimony of God, presented at Christ’s baptism,³⁸ His being raised from the dead,³⁹ and God sending the Holy Spirit in Christ’s name,⁴⁰ has no other option than to argue that God has lied regarding Jesus being His only begotten Son. When men then do not receive the record that God has given of the Son, they position themselves as branding God a *liar*. To not believe in the Son of God and His being sent by God,⁴¹ is to refute the holy record of God, and to declare Him a liar.

36 Acts 5:32 *And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.*

Rom. 8:14 *For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.*

Rom. 8:16 *The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:*

37 I Cor. 12:3 *Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.*

38 Matt. 3:17 *And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*

Mark 1:9–11 *And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. ¹⁰And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him: ¹¹And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*

Luke 3:21–22 *Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, ²²And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.*

John 1:32–34 *And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. ³³And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.*

³⁴*And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.*

39 John 20:11–18 *But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre, ¹²And seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. ¹³And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. ¹⁴And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. ¹⁵Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. ¹⁶Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. ¹⁷Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God. ¹⁸Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her.*

40 John 14:26 *But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*

41 John 5:30 *I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.*

John 6:40 *And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.*

The Word of the Lord

(Barnes' Notes on the Bible, I John 5:10) *He that believeth not God hath made him a liar ... Because he believeth not the record ...* – The idea is, that in various ways - at his baptism, at his death, by the influences of the Holy Spirit, by the miracles of Jesus, etc. - God had become a “witness” that the Lord Jesus was sent by him as a Saviour, and that to doubt or deny this partook of the same character as doubting or denying any other testimony; that is, it was practically charging him who bore the testimony with falsehood. (END QUOTE)

I John 5:11 And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

The sum, the conclusion to the whole matter regarding the identity of Jesus Christ, is that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in the person of His Son.⁴² In Christ there is divine evidence, of possessing eternal life,⁴³ where in all other things, there is surely not.

(Barnes' Notes on the Bible, I John 5:11) *And this is the record* – This is the sum, or the amount, of the testimony (μαρτυρία *marturia*) which God has given respecting him.

That God hath given to us eternal life – Has provided, through the Saviour, the means of obtaining eternal life. See the notes at John 5:24; John 17:2–3.⁴⁴

And this life is in his Son – Is treasured up in him, or is to be obtained through him. See the John 1:4; John 11:25; John 14:6 notes;⁴⁵ Colossians 3:3⁴⁶ note. (END NOTE)

(Matthew Poole's Commentary, I John 5:11) His testimony, that this is his Son and the Christ, imports so much, that eternal life is in him, as the source and fountain of it; so that he gives it to us in no other way than in and by him. (END QUOTE)

I John 5:12 He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

There is hardly a verse which is so simple, solid and succinct regarding who has been given eternal life: it is those who possess the Son of God. So that if a man hath the Son, he hath the life of God, but if he hath not the Son, then neither does he possess that spiritual life, that comes only through Him.⁴⁷ Ultimately, it is a

John 17:20–21 *Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; ²¹That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.*

42 Acts 1:8 *But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

43 Eph. 1:13 *In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,*

44 John 5:24 *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.*

John 17:2–3 *As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. ³And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.*

45 John 1:4 *In him was life; and the life was the light of men.*

John 11:25 *Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:*

John 14:6 *Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*

46 Col. 3:3 *For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.*

47 John 3:15 *That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.*

John 3:36 *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.*

John 6:47 *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.*

John 6:51 *I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.*

man's faith in,⁴⁸ obedience to,⁴⁹ and relationship with⁵⁰ the Son of God, that allows for the gift of eternal life being given to him.⁵¹

(*Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges*, I John 5:12) A deduction from the preceding clause. If the Son has the life in Himself, then whoever has the Son has the life, and no man can have the one without the other. 'To have the Son' must be compared with 'to have the Father' in 1 John 2:23.⁵² In both cases 'have' signifies possession in living union through faith.

hath life] Better, as R.V., *hath the life*; not merely 'the life just mentioned,' 'the life which

God has given,' but 'the life which in the full sense of the word is such'.

he that hath not] As in 1 John 5:10,⁵³ the negative alternative is stated generally and indefinitely (ὁ μὴ ἔχων). The addition of 'of God' is neither fortuitous nor pleonastic. Those who possess Him know that He is the Son of God; those who do not, need to be reminded Whose Son it is that they reject.

The verse constitutes another close parallel with the Gospel: comp. the last words of [John] the Baptist (John 3:36).⁵⁴ (END QUOTE)

⁴⁸ John 6:29 *Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.*

John 11:25 *Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:*

John 20:31 *But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.*

Acts 16:31 *And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.*

Rom. 3:22 *Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:*

Gal. 2:16 *Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.*

Gal. 3:26 *For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.*

Eph. 3:17 *That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,*

II Tim. 3:15 *And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*

⁴⁹ John 14:21 *He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.*

Heb. 5:9 *And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;*

I John 2:3–6 *And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. ⁴He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. ⁵But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. ⁶He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.*

I John 3:22 *And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.*

I John 3:24 *And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.*

Rev. 14:12 *Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.*

⁵⁰ John 15:4–5 *Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. ⁵I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.*

Rom. 7:4 *Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.*

I Cor. 1:9 *God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Gal. 2:20 *I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.*

⁵¹ John 10:28 *And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.*

Rom. 6:23 *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Titus 3:7 *That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.*

I John 2:25 *And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life.*

⁵² I John 2:23 *Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also.*

⁵³ I John 5:10 *He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.*

⁵⁴ John 3:36 *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.*

(*Pulpit Commentary*, I John 5:12) Eternal life is not granted to the whole world, or even to all Christians en masse; it is given to individuals, soul by soul, according as each does or does not accept the Son of God. (END QUOTE)

I 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.

Because God's life resides in the Son, and cannot be found in any other place, the apostle's great aim in writing this epistle is purposed, to lead people to belief in the Son of God, to gain the eternal

life of God offered through Him. If Christ is possessed, then a man will know that there is something dwelling in him, apart from his physical and material makeup, which has its origin in God. This is also, the reason why the gospel should be preached today, and Jesus Christ, the Son of God, should be declared to the world. Because only through Him, can men be both given, and come to practically know that God's eternal life is theirs. To therefore preach Christ and make Him known, is to preach that precious gift of spiritual regeneration and the divine life offered through belief in the Son of God. To preach Christ, is to preach the wonderful revelation that God's eternal life can be found in Him.