A Devotional Study from 1 John 5:6–9

By the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ

Introduction

Praise be to the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Today, we explore one of the profound truths in Scripture: the testimony affirming that Jesus Christ is the Son of God—a testimony borne not just by men but by God Himself through three witnesses in heaven and three on earth.

> “This 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.
> For there are three that testify: the Spirit and the water and the blood; and these three agree.”
> *—1 John 5:6–8, ESV*

I. Understanding the Witnesses in Heaven: The Trinity Testifies

> “For there are three that testify in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit, and these three are one.”
> (Note: This portion appears in some manuscript traditions but is absent in earliest Greek texts.)

Though 1 John 5:7 in some translations includes “in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit,” modern critical editions (including the ESV, NIV, NASB) omit this clause due to manuscript evidence. However, the theological truth of the Trinitarian witness remains strongly supported throughout Scripture.

1. The Father

- At Jesus’ baptism, the Father speaks from heaven confirming Jesus’ divine sonship:

> “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.”

> *—Matthew 3:17, ESV*

2. The Word (Logos)

- Jesus is identified as the eternal Word of God:

> “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” *—John 1:1, ESV*
> “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us…” *—John 1:14, ESV*

3. The Holy Spirit

- The Spirit descends visibly upon Jesus at His baptism:

> “…he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him.” *—Matthew 3:16, ESV*

These three—the Father, the Word (Son), and the Holy Spirit—unite in affirming Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of God, co-equal in the Godhead (Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14).

II. The Earthly Witnesses: Spirit, Water, and Blood

> “And there are three that testify: the Spirit and the water and the blood; and these three agree.” *—1 John 5:8, ESV*

John now shifts from heaven to earthly witnesses, still confirming Jesus’ divine identity and redemptive mission.

1. Water – Baptism of Jesus

- Jesus’ baptism was not a formality, but a divine confirmation of His calling and mission.

> “It is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.” *—Matthew 3:15, ESV*

> *His baptism inaugurated His public ministry and was affirmed by the Father's voice and the Spirit's descent.*

2. Blood – Death of Jesus

- At the crucifixion, Jesus' shed blood became the means of atonement for sin.

> "...the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin." *—1 John 1:7, ESV*
> *When Jesus died, the Roman centurion exclaimed:*
> "Truly this man was the Son of God!" *—Mark 15:39, ESV*

This Roman soldier, having witnessed Jesus' unique death and the events surrounding it (darkness, earthquake), was so convicted that he made a declaration of divine identity—an earthly testimony from a Gentile.

3. The Spirit – Divine Conviction and Presence

- The Holy Spirit not only descended at baptism but continues to testify of Jesus through inner conviction, miracles, and regeneration of believers:

> “The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.” *—Romans 8:16, ESV*

III. Theological Significance: Why This Matters

These three earthly witnesses point to vital truths about salvation and Christian identity.

> “Whoever believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself.” *—1 John 5:10, ESV*

To be true children of God, we also need these three to testify in our lives:

1. Water – Baptism (Obedience to the Gospel)

- Jesus commanded water baptism as an outward sign of inward faith.

> “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins...” *—Acts 2:38, ESV*

2. Spirit – Regeneration and Indwelling

- The Holy Spirit must regenerate and seal us.

> “Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.” *—John 3:5, ESV*
> “You...were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit.” *—Ephesians 1:13, ESV*

3. Blood – Atonement and Justification

- Faith in Jesus' shed blood is central to salvation.

> "We have now been justified by his blood..." *—Romans 5:9, ESV*

IV. Baptism: A Sacred Testimony

Sadly, many today neglect or misunderstand baptism, reducing it to a ritual rather than recognizing it as a public confession of faith and obedience. Christ Himself, though sinless, was baptized to fulfill all righteousness.

Moreover, baptism must be a conscious decision made by those who believe—not infants who cannot confess faith. Nowhere in Scripture is infant baptism commanded or practiced.

Correct Mode and Name in Baptism

- In the New Testament, baptism is consistently performed in the name of Jesus Christ:

> “They were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.” —*Acts 8:16, ESV*
> “Be baptized…in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins…” —*Acts 2:38, ESV*

This affirms the identity of Jesus as Lord and unites believers into His death and resurrection (Romans 6:3–4).

Conclusion: Do You Bear the Testimony?

Just as heaven and earth bore witness to Jesus’ identity, so we too must receive the Spirit, the water, and the blood in our lives to have God’s testimony within us.

> “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.” *—1 John 5:10, ESV*

May we not neglect these foundational truths. Let us walk in obedience, faith, and the witness of the Spirit, so that we too may be counted as sons and daughters of the Most High God.

Maranatha – Come, Lord Jesus.

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