

<sup>6</sup> This is he who came by water and blood<sup>1</sup>—  
    Jesus Christ;  
        not by the water only  
        but by the water and the blood.

And the Spirit<sup>2</sup> is the one who testifies,  
        because the Spirit is the truth.

<sup>7</sup> For there are three that testify:

<sup>8</sup> the Spirit  
        and the water  
        and the blood;

and these three agree.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>9</sup> If 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.

<sup>10</sup> Whoever  
    believes in the Son of God  
has the testimony in himself.  
Whoever

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<sup>1</sup> This section of Scripture is notoriously divisive as to what the exact referents are to blood and water. Common options are 1) that water refers to Jesus' Baptism at the beginning of His ministry and that blood refers to His death on the cross. In this way these two words mark the beginning and end of His ministry. Or it's also possible 2) that water and blood refer to the singular event of Jesus' crucifixion, recalling that when His side was pierced, blood and water flowed out (John 19:34) and so "water and blood" refer more narrowly to the fact of Jesus' death. The first option emphasizes Jesus' incarnation and the second the crucifixion. Both of these things have previously been emphasized by John in this epistle. If I had to choose though, I probably would lean more toward the latter interpretation. John himself was present at the cross and witnessed the flowing of blood and water (John 19:25-27). The only time in his Gospel when blood and water are so closely connected is John 19:34 and the very next verse emphasizes John's personal witness and testimony, "He who saw it has borne witness-- his testimony is true, and he knows that he is telling the truth-- that you also may believe." And all of these key words pop up here in this section of John's epistle. At the very beginning of this epistle, John emphasized his own eyewitness authority over and against the false teachings of others. Another option is 3) that water and blood refer to the Sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, as we received them and it is through these means that the Holy Spirit works faith in us. This option was one that Martin Luther endorsed and while I hate to disagree with him, I would argue that this is more a secondary than primary meaning of the text.

<sup>2</sup> Now John isn't merely mentioning his own eye witness testimony as the authority on the matter of Jesus, he goes to God Himself and speaks of the (Holy) Spirit as the true source of knowledge and the truthfulness of all that John has been saying (see John 15:26-27 and 16:13 and also 2 Peter 1:21). And this connects all of us. We all believe Jesus is our Lord and Savior and that we have life through His death. But that very faith comes by the Holy Spirit. Without the Holy Spirit, we would all be walking in darkness and spiritually blind to the truth of God.

<sup>3</sup> 1 John 5:7-8 is another section of Scripture where MUCH has been written. These verses collectively are referred to in scholarly circles as "Comma Johanneum" (Latin for Johannine sentence"). The major reason why this section is so frequently discussed is because the middle section "in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit and these three are one. And there are three that testify on earth..." is not found in the earliest and best Greek manuscripts of 1 John. The primary reason we know about this section of our Bible is because it was in the King James Version of the Bible and that translation is ubiquitous and enormous in its influence on all other English translations. The reason the King James Version included them is because the scholars who translated the King James Version had relatively few Greek manuscripts available to them. They used the best they had, but those manuscripts were quite late and in general later manuscripts of the Bible are longer than earlier ones.

does not believe God  
has made him a liar,  
because he has not believed in the testimony  
that God has borne concerning his Son.

<sup>11</sup> And this is the testimony,  
that God gave us eternal life,  
and this life is in his Son.

<sup>12</sup> Whoever  
has the Son  
has life;  
whoever  
does not have the Son of God  
does not have life.

<sup>13</sup> I write these things to you  
who believe in the name of the Son of God,  
that you may know  
that you have eternal life.

<sup>14</sup> And this is the confidence  
that we have toward him,  
that  
if we ask anything according to his will  
He hears us.

<sup>15</sup> And  
if we know  
that he hears us in whatever we ask,  
we know  
that we have the requests  
that we have asked of him.