

## I John 4:15-5:12 - Accepting God's Testimony and Life

EMC Wednesday Night Bible Study - 8-21-19

### Some Implications of Abiding Life (vv. 15-21)

Some implications: of v. 15

- V. 16a - we "come to \_\_\_\_\_...the love...God has for us" - personal experience
- V. 16b - we "abide in love"
- V. 17 - our "love is \_\_\_\_\_" - 2 marks:
  - V. 17 - "confidence in the day of judgment" - sons/daughters by grace
  - V. 18 - "no fear," but rather love as response (v. 19)
- Vv. 20-21 - love is \_\_\_\_\_

### Summarization of Themes (5:1-4)

3 tests—obedience (2:3-6), love (2:7-11), and belief (2:18-27)—intertwined

- Link = \_\_\_\_\_ (cf. John 1:12-13; 3:1-8) - Initiated by God, effected through the Spirit, conditioned upon faith in Christ
- Faith, obedience, and love are \_\_\_\_\_
  - Belief "that Jesus is the Christ" (v. 1; cf. 4:2-3, 15: 5:1, 6-8)
  - Obedience to his command to love (vv. 2-3)
  - Love for God (vv. 1-2) and those born of God (v. 1)
- V. 4a - "whatever is born of God overcomes the world" (cf. 2:10, 15-17)
  - Love \_\_\_\_\_ us and makes obedience to God a \_\_\_\_\_
  - Love as both result and test of new birth

### Accepting God's Testimony and Eternal Life (5:4b-12)

V. 4b - what overcomes the world: our \_\_\_\_\_ (πίστις, "pistis")

- Not in the abstract, but in a specific \_\_\_\_\_ (v. 5)
- The "world" = the secessionists and their false teachings

V. 6a - describes the Jesus we believe in: "the One who came by water and blood"

- Vs. the secessionists, who claimed he came "with the water only" (v. 6b)

Option #1 - water and blood refer to the 2 \_\_\_\_\_ (Luther and Calvin)

- Water = baptism. Blood = eucharist.
- Main issue: "came" (aorist), not "is coming"

Option #2 - linked to blood and water of John 19:34-35 (Augustine and others)

- Past event and "testimony"
- Main issues:
  - He did not "come by" the water and blood, they "came out" of him
  - Testimony is concerned with his \_\_\_\_\_ rather than his divine-human person

Option #3 - referring to the beginning and end of Christ's earthly \_\_\_\_\_  
(Tertullian)

- Water → \_\_\_\_\_. Blood → \_\_\_\_\_.
- Best comports with historical context of the letter (Cerinthus' "Jesus" and "the Christ")
- John: Jesus was Son and Christ before and during his baptism and during and after the cross

- Stresses the unity of his earthly ministry and person

V. 6b - "It is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth"

- The Holy Spirit offers direct \_\_\_\_\_ to this truth
  - Indwelling possession (3:24; 4:13) and anointing (2:20, 27; 4:1-6)
  - Enlightens and empowers confession (1 John 4:2; cf. 1 Cor. 12:3)
- He truthfully testifies to the \_\_\_\_\_. The Spirit of Truth who is "the truth" (cf. 1 John 4:6; John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13; et al.)

Vv. 7-8 - these three witnesses agree: the Spirit, water, and blood

- The necessity of 2-3 witnesses in the law (Deut. 19:15)
- Through these witnesses, "God...has testified concerning His Son"
  - Jesus is the object of this testimony, but God is its \_\_\_\_\_

Vv. 10-12 - unfolds the purpose and result of God's testimony

- Purpose: to evoke \_\_\_\_\_
  - "receiving the testimony" (v. 9) = "believing in the Son of God" (v. 10)
  - The unbeliever "makes God a liar" by rejecting what has been said about the Son
    - Stott: "Unbelief is not a misfortune to be pitied; it is a sin to be deplored."
- Result: \_\_\_\_\_ (vv. 11-12)
  - Son was given for us (1 John 4:14)
  - In him, life (John 17:3) is given to us (v. 12; cf. John 11:25; 14:6)

3 important truths about eternal life:

- It is an undeserved gift received by faith, not a prize for our achievements
- It is found only in Jesus Christ
- It is a present possession

John 20:31 - "These have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name."

- The way to life is faith, and the way to faith is testimony.
- God has borne witness to his Son in order that we may believe in him and have him and life.

## Appendix I - Concerning the *Comma Johanneum*

The *Comma Johanneum* is a variant reading of I John 5:7-8.

- *Comma* = “short clause.” *Johanneum* = “pertaining to John.”

Without the *comma*:

“For there are three that testify: the Spirit and the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement.” (NASB)

With the *comma* (in italics):

“For there are three that bear record *in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth*, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.” (KJV)

### Why is it absent from the NASB (and virtually all modern English translations)?

- It does not occur in any Greek manuscript prior to the 14th century
  - Exception: one 11th and one 12th century manuscript added into the margins at a later date
- It does not appear in any quotation of an early church Father
  - It would have surely been quoted during the trinitarian debates
- It does not appear in any of the ancient translations, including the early editions of the Latin Vulgate

Metzger: “That these words are spurious and have no right to stand in the New testament is certain.”

### Why is it present in the KJV (and NKJV and MEV)?

- In the 16th century, Erasmus compiled a Greek text that became known as the Textus Receptus
- He omitted the *comma* in his first 2 editions, but later included it under pressure from the Roman Catholic church because of its explicit support for the trinity.
- The Textus Receptus is the Greek basis for the KJV
  - Based on 6 Greek manuscripts, all dated from the 12th Century or later, all but 1 coming from the Byzantine family - the largest family of manuscripts we have today, but not the oldest
  - Erasmus didn't have the whole Bible in Greek, so some passages were translated from the Latin.
  - Greek texts accepted today are based on discoveries from the 19th and 20th centuries which are vastly older, more accurate, and superior
  - See “Textual Criticism & the KJV” from Wednesday Night Bible study on 4-20-16

**Conclusion:** A scribe added the phrase at a very late date. While the doctrine of the Trinity is biblical, these words are not to be considered God-breathed scripture.