

Attesting – 05.24.09

Introduction - Any lawyer will tell you the importance of testimony in a trial. It is the first level of evidence that is desired. Other forms of evidence include documentary, physical, exculpatory, scientific, genetic. But give a lawyer eyewitness testimony, and he'll walk into the courtroom with a more confident step.

- **Transition: God gives us many sources of testimony to support our faith.**

Continue Series Pt. 5 - "What does love got to do with it?" "Attesting."
God loves us so much that he does not leave us without reason for our faith. He attests to His love. He gives testimony in three ways!

READ – 1 John 5:5-12

I. The three-fold testimony of God:

"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. 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." 1 John 5:6-9

What is meant by the testimony of the water, the blood, and the Spirit? The testimony of the water is the testimony of Jesus' baptism, the blood is Jesus' death on the cross, and the Spirit is the giving of the Holy Spirit that came after Jesus' death.

The Witness of the **WATER**.

God Himself spoke at Jesus baptism.

"And a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with You I am well pleased." Mark 1:11

John the Baptist: **"I have seen and borne witness that this is the Son of God."**
John 1:34

The Witness of the **BLOOD**.

We have not only the historical fact of Jesus' baptism, but also the historical fact of his death... and the glory that he intended to bring to His heavenly Father as a result:

"For as yet the Spirit had not been given because Jesus was not yet glorified... Jesus lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, 'Father the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you...' When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, 'It is finished,' and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit." John 7:39, 17:1, 19:30

It was important to John, and should be important to us, to remember that Jesus was fully God as well as fully human. This is a great mystery and none of us can fully grasp it. But Jesus really lived and breathed as a human being:

- He once was a baby, but grew in wisdom and stature (Luke 2:52).
- He experienced hunger when he fasted (Matt. 4:2).
- He experienced thirst (John 19:28).
- He experienced fatigue (John 4:6).
- He could be dismayed (Matt. 26:36, 50-41).
- He experienced emotion of love (John 11:3, 13:23).
- He experienced compassion and pity (Matt. 9:36, 14:14, 15:32)
- He could be sorrowful and troubled (Matthew 26:37).
- He could be joyful (John 15:11; 17:13; Hebrews 12:2).
- He could be angry and grieve with people (Mark 3:5)
- He could even be indignant (Mark 10:14).

Why Humanity of Christ So Important

John is battling Docetism. From dokeo, meaning “to seem.” There were those from Greek philosophy that physical reality, matter was evil. The spirit world was good. So Jesus, as God, only “seemed” to be physical. He entered Jesus at baptism and left him on the cross. John says, “NOT SO!”

“... not by the water only but by the water and the blood.” 1 John 5:6b

Six reasons why the full humanity of Jesus is so important to us:

1. Atoning death of Jesus can truly avail for us. He was one of us and thus could truly offer a sacrifice on our behalf.
2. Jesus can truly sympathize with and intercede for us.
3. Jesus exhibits true humanity, not our imperfect version of it!
4. Jesus can be our example, our model.
5. Human nature is good. This is what God intended in creation.
6. God is not so far removed from us. We can talk with Him!

The importance of the Sacraments:

This is one reason why any true church will observe the sacraments of baptism and communion. In baptism, we remember not only our own death and resurrection in Christ, but also the example that he set for us with his own baptism. And communion reminds us of his sacrifice for our sins.

SPIRIT

The Witness of the _____.

And we have the witness of the Holy Spirit. Jesus was quite specific about our need for the Holy Spirit, the fact that the Spirit would not come until Jesus died, and the Spirit's witness to us about Jesus.

“Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you... But when the Helper comes, whom I will send from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me...” John 16:7, 15:26

These 3 agree:

So we have the witness of these three from God: the water, the blood, and the Spirit, **and these three agree (5:8)**. Literally, these three are “one.” We have the principle of more testimony the better, if they agree. (Nb 35:30, Jn 8:17). God is giving his testimony about Jesus in many ways: (a) miracles of Jesus, (b) teachings of Jesus, (c) witness of angels, (d) witness of prophets, (e) witness of disciples, (f) witness of Bible. But John tells us that these 3 witnesses of water, blood and Spirit alone should be enough to convince us.

WITHIN

II. The Testimony _____.

“Whoever believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself.”
1 John 5:10a

Internal Testimony Even Better!

This is a most remarkable truth of the Christian life. We might believe the external testimony of others. But we are sure to believe the testimony of our own experience. We say, “I saw it with my own two eyes!” Thomas expresses this when he says...

“Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe.”
John 20:25

God did not leave this special testimony of the Spirit with only the leaders of the church. This is not just for clergy. He graciously gave his Spirit to each and every person *who believes in the Son of God*. This means that we don’t even have to trust only the evidence of history. We can also trust the evidence of our experience! **Sadly, too many Christ-followers do not trust this gift of God’s Spirit!**

Testimony of God enough?

“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... 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 9, 10b

John pulls no punches with us. He tells us that if we do not accept this testimony of God’s Spirit within us that **we make God out to be a liar!** What does this say about the effort and amount of time you put into your private, quiet times with God AND the times you gather with other Christ followers? If we do not provide for our spiritual health, through the disciplines of prayer, reflection, solitude, Bible study, worship, then we do not provide for our soul’s chance to hear the witness of God within, which He so willingly provides to us! And John says that if we do this, **we make God out to be a liar!** For who would CHOOSE NOT TO HEAR FROM GOD if he could?

PROMO NEXT SERIES: This testimony of the Spirit is so important that we will enjoy a special series beginning next week titled, **THE CONNECTION**. 3 weeks. 1st week, Pentecost Sunday, Spirit in us, 2nd week, Trinity Sunday, Spirit in God, 3rd week Spirit in me.

God has so richly provided his testimony to us, but externally through the water, blood and spirit of Jesus AND internally through the Holy Spirit within us. But John tells us that there is ONE MORE WITNESS of God's love to us....

III. The Testimony of **ETERNAL LIFE**.

“And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.”
1 John 5:11-12

Three aspects of eternal life as a witness we should note:

A. Eternal Life is found only in the Son of God. John is quite particular. “Whoever has the Son has life. Whoever does not have the Son does not have life.” Jesus made this same claim for himself:

- “I am the bread of life.” John 6:48
- “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me... will have the light of life.” John 8:12
- “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live.” John 11:25

B. Present possession of eternal life. John does not talk about this eternal life as being something that will be gained in the future, but about something we possess right now if we have the Son!

C. There is as much a qualitative aspect to eternal life as there is a quantitative aspect. We often think of eternal life in term of how long the life will be. It will be forever, never-ending. This is true. But Jesus also talks to us in terms of abundant life.

“I have come that they might have life and have it abundantly.”
John 10:10 ESV

“... in all its fullness.” GNT

“... to the full.” NIV

“... more and better life than they ever dreamed of.”
The Message

CONCLUSION: So how are you doing in your Christian walk today? Look into the courtroom of your own mind. How do the witnesses line up? Do you know the testimony of God in your life? Do you know the witness of the water, of the blood, and of the Spirit? Is this witness something more than an objective, external historical fact? Is it also a subjective, internal experience within you? Do you set aside adequate time to experience this inward testimony that God wants to give you? Despite the negative circumstances of life, do you experience the abundant joy in life that Jesus promised? If so, your faith should be strengthened. If not, this would be a good time to pray to that end.

PRAY AND COMMUNION.