

d. The importance of God's witness.

The one who does not believe the record God has given of His Son continually makes God a liar (the perfect tense shows the permanent results). The perfect for "believeth not" shows the same.

4. WITNESS IN BELIEVER v. 10.

Here is a truth which has troubled many folks. The text, however, makes it so simple. When a man believes on the Son, he will have, as an abiding possession, the witness of God within Him. What IS this witness within? Not a feeling, but the Word of God! See Rom. 8:16; Gal. 4:6. When God is taken at His Word, His Word is taken into the heart. That's it! Blessed be His Name.

Conclusion

That Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the Messiah, and the Saviour of the world is without question. He stands before us all tonight with both earthly and heavenly witnesses to bear testimony unto His Person and work. God has given His final word to men in Christ (cf. Heb. 1:2). If you will put the whole weight of your confidence on Him, you will possess eternal life. God promises this and His Word is true. Amen!

NOTES:

THE EPISTLE OF FIRST JOHN

"Four Great Witnesses"

1 John 5:8-12

Introduction

1. The attestation of a fact or an event by someone is what is commonly referred to as a witness. It is a marvelous experience to witness to the truth of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.
2. It is an inviolable fact that the Word provides witnesses to the person and work of our Lord Jesus. They are included in the Scriptures that men might know that God has written a testimony which none should ignore.
3. Hear then the testimony of the Word of God and the witnesses marshalled by God to draw men to heed His holy Son Jesus.

1. WITNESS TO CHRIST vv. 6-8.

The Gospels were written, in one sense, to establish Jesus Christ as the promised Messiah (cf. John 20:30, 31). John appeals to some of these Gospel facts here in his epistle. Here they are:

a. The water.

This is a reference to the baptism of our Lord at the beginning of His ministry. It was not only the opening, but the explanation for His entire ministry.

b. The blood.

Here is a witness to His death which effected our redemption. This comes at the end of His public ministry. The phrase "by

water and blood" suggests that He was in truth the Son of God at both Jordan and Calvary.

Note: It is true that at Calvary water and blood flowed from His riven side. This may mean that the water of the Word and the precious Blood are used in cleansing. Compare this:

"Let the water and the blood,
From Thy riven side which flowed,
Be of sin the double cure,
Save me from its guilt and power."

c. The Spirit.

Because He is the Spirit of Truth, His witness is irrefragable; He can neither deceive nor be deceived.

Now, the water, the blood, and the Spirit are united in one for the object of establishing the truth that Jesus Christ is God. They are all for the one thing! There are no divided purposes here,

2. WITNESS BY MEN v. 9.

The conditional clause here is a first class in the original. It affirms something which is true. Better: "Since we receive" The idea of receiving is that of accepting as valid what men say. There is no doubt about the fact. The argument is a fortiori and resembles that of John 8:17.

3. WITNESS OF GOD vv. 9-12

A variety of statements are made here which need amplification. Consider:--

a. The status of God's witness.

It is greater than that of men. John does not say we ought to take God's witness because we accept men's, he simply affirms God's is greater! The obvious intent is-- receive God's witness!

b. The content of God's witness.

This is entirely bound in the Person of His Son. The perfect tense of the verb "testified" in v. 9 notes the permanence of the past act: the testimony still stands!

What is the witness of God then? It consists in a divine gift of eternal life (v. 11). The verb "give" is aorist and notes a possession. This is not an offer or promise, but a statement of possession. Blessed be His Name.

The seat and source of the life is the Prince or Author of life--the Son of God (Acts 3:15). Verse 12 is a deduction from the previous verses: To have (possess) the Son is to have (possess) life!

c. The responsibility to God's witness.

Two phrases press the desired goal of God's witness: "he that believeth" and "he that hath." The use of the verb "believe" with a preposition following is found here for the first time in the epistle. John uses this construction nearly 40 times in his Gospel. It expresses the strongest confidence and trust. It is a faith which moves toward and reposes on Him. It means to have full trust in His character and work!