

Word of Life



Life of Faith

In his first epistle, John's focus is on three pillars of assurance: Obedience, love and faith. These are interwoven throughout the epistle. In this passage FAITH is the central component to **REAL LIFE**.

Introduction: Eternal life is the beginning of real life here and now. "God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son...He who has the Son has life."

A. Real Life and Real Faith 1 Jn 5:1-5

In 1 John 4:1-3, John told us that we have overcome the 'spirit' of the antichrist who is now in the world. Here God reveals that we have also overcome the world because of our faith.

1. **Keeping the commandments:** [:1-2] In verse 1, John restates the last section of chapter four regarding love. However, he adds a further clarification in verse 2 implying that our assurance in God is related to following what He says.
 - a. **Real love of God:** [:3] is revealed in our life of following His ways rather than our ways.
 - b. **Real love is not a burden:** [:3] So many think that following God is burden—but the real burden is when we fail to follow His Word, purpose and will for our lives.
2. **Faith that overcomes:** [:3-4] Notice that there are two aspects to this 'overcoming' kind of faith.
 - a. **You must be born again:** Before 'faith' can be an agent of overcoming—I must receive Christ as my personal savior by faith. The first requirement of faith is faith in Christ.
 - b. **Victory of faith:** [:4-5] We are born [born-again] to be winners. God, through Christ, makes us more than conquerors (Rom 8:37-39). In John 16:33 Jesus said that He would overcome the world—and through 'faith' we also overcome the world.

B. The Assurance of Real Life 1 Jn 5:6-12

1. **The witness of the Spirit:** [:6] Verse :6 is the basis for understanding verses :6-9. It is the Spirit of God—the Holy Spirit—that bears witness of Christ's birth, death and resurrection. *See back of handout for more information.*
2. **A three-fold witness:** [:6-8] Many Biblical scholars consider this to be one of the most difficult passages in the Bible to understand. The KJV translators did not help when they added verse :7 to the text with no manuscript authority. To be consistent with the Gospel—the water and blood most likely refer to the birth and death of Christ.
3. **The witness in us:** [:9-12] Since God is a greater witness than man—and since God has given us of His Spirit—we have this same witness [assurance] in us. God has given us eternal life through His Son—and our life is in Him. *See Galatians 2:20*

1 John 5:1-12 (NKJV)

:1 Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him.

:2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments.

:3 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.

:4 For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.

:5 Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

:6 This is He who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ; not only by water, but by water and blood. And it is the **Spirit who bears witness,** because **the Spirit is truth.**

:7 [For there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one.] (1)

:8 And there are three that bear witness on earth: the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three agree as one.

:9 If we receive the witness of men, **the witness of God is greater;** for this is the witness of God which He has testified of His Son.

:10 He who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself; he who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given of His Son.

:11 And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.

:12 He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.

(1) Verse :7 in the KJV is **not** in any reliable Greek manuscripts.

The Witness of the Holy Spirit to Christ

The Scriptures give us a fascinating glimpse into the witness of the Spirit to Christ:

- 1. The Spirit gave witness at Jesus' baptism.** There was a voice from heaven, affirming the identity of Jesus as the Son of God (Matt. 3:16–17; Mark 1:9–11; Luke 3:21–22; John 1:32–34).
- 2. The Spirit baptizes men and women.** John the Baptist baptized with water, but Jesus came to baptize people with the Spirit (Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; Acts 1:5).
- 3. The Spirit gave witness at Pentecost.** The birth of the Christian movement, or Church, was inaugurated and empowered by the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4).
- 4. The Spirit bears witness with our human spirit** that we are children of God. The Scriptures are clear that God's Spirit energizes the work of Christ in our lives and responds to our faith as God's force for holiness within us (Rom. 8:16).

From the Wesleyan Commentary on the Book of First John