

BFF381 Testimony of Jesus

Scott Moore: Welcome to the "Building Faith Families" podcast with Steve Demme. I'm your host, Scott Moore, thanks for joining us today. Good morning, Steve. How are you today?

Steve: I'm well Scott, how are you?

Scott: Considerably holier than last week. I had surgery last week. I have three holes in my belly now, that weren't there last week at this time.

Steve: We're going to talk about a phrase today that I have done a lot of thinking about, and the other day I finally realized I'd never prayed about. As I was asking God about this phrase, He shed some light on it for me. That's what we're going to talk about today. How's that for an introduction?

Scott: I'm intrigued. Let's do it.

Steve: Father in Jesus' name, thank you that Scott's on the mend. Thank you that you've helped him through this surgery and ordeal and lots of people out there that are going through a lot of stuff. I pray that the God of all comfort will reach us all today, right where we need to be reached, encourage us and help us

As we consider this topic from scripture, I pray that the Good Spirit of God will teach us and show us how we can walk into it in Jesus' name. Amen.

Scott: Amen.

Steve: I'm going to read a couple of verses as a kind of introduction, but the words, or phrases, that I have been thinking about are "the word of their testimony," which is found in Revelation 12, and "the testimony of Jesus."

I been curious about what it means to have the testimony of Jesus because in Revelation 12:17, we read, "The dragon became furious with the woman, and went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, on those who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus."

Testimony of Jesus. It's a fascinating phrase, later we read, "They overcame him by the blood of the lamb and by the word of their testimony." That's what we started with in Revelation 12, but the word of their testimony and the testimony of Jesus...What does they mean? I have trouble getting my mind around it.

I understand that they overcame him by the blood of the lamb. We've had many podcasts that have referred to the blood of Jesus. That makes sense, but what's the word of our testimony? What's the testimony of Jesus, which is used, maybe 9 or 10 times in the Bible?

I jumped into the Greek, and here's what it says. I'm going to start, in Revelation 1 -- the first two verses to lead into this. "The revelation of Jesus Christ" the Greek word for Revelation is Apocalypses.

Apocalypse. When I think of apocalypse, I used to think of great earth-shaking events, which is part of Revelation, but the purpose of Revelation is to reveal Jesus.

“The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants the things that must soon take place. He made it known by sending His angel to His servant John.”

John is the one who is receiving this message by an angel, but it was Jesus who sent him to talk to John. Then it says, "Who bore witness to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even all that he saw."

John saw something, the angel showed it to him. He knew that what he was seeing and he's bearing witness to it. The word for bear witness or testify, is Marturio. To bear witness is to testify, which means to agree with. It's a legal term.

The root word has to do with evidence that you put before a judge in a court. John is bearing witness. He's testifying and bearing witness. He's declaring and stating for the record all that the angel showed him.

Let's go back and look at these words that we've learned now so far. Apocalypses is the revelation of Jesus. To bear witness is the verb, Marturio. Testimony is the noun, Marturios.

Now let's go back and read Revelation 12:11 again. "We have one more Greek word to look at. They have conquered him by the blood of the lamb and by the word, "Logos." It's something that's uttered. It's declared. It's spoken.

"They conquered him by the blood of the lamb and by the word or utterance," or spoken testimony, the word of their testimony, "for they loved not their lives even unto death."

This is people that had spoken the truth about Jesus. They had declared, they had uttered their testimony.

Steve: I have a bunch of scriptures on this. This is going to be good. It's not deep, if I can put it that way. It's not like there's some secret message in here, but I think it's important that we understand that when we read the book of Revelation, one of the things that stands out is there are martyrs. There are martyrs around the throne. And there are the two witnesses who are martyrs.

When I think of Martyr, I think of people dying for their faith, but Martyr is simply people who testified to what they knew to be true. They agreed with the truth. Keep oil mind that the book of Revelation, is not about major cataclysmic events, it's about revealing Jesus.

Jesus is revealed in this book and people bore witness to the word of God. They conquered the devil because of the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their witness, the word of their testimony.

I'm going to read a big chunk from the first gospel of John 1. We call John the Baptist or John the baptizer. This is the gospel of John written by the same guy that we're reading about in Revelation, but in the first chapter of John, I'm going to change the name of John the Baptist.

Instead of calling him John the baptizer, I'm going to call John the bear witnesser. Here's why, starting in the sixth verse, "There was a man sent from God whose name

was John. He came as a witness to bear witness about the light that all might believe through Him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light. The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him."

"He came to His own and His own people did not receive Him, but to all who did receive Him, who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God, who were born not a blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man but of God.

"The word became flesh and dwelt among us and we have seen His glory. Glory is of the only Son from the Father full of grace and truth. John bore witness about him and cried out, 'This is He of whom I said, He Who comes after me ranks before me because He was before me.'

"From His fullness, we have all received grace upon grace. For the Law was given through Moses. Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God, the only God, Who is at the Father's side. He has made Him known."

John was the bear witnesser. He was the one that pointed people to Jesus, and he declared the truth. One of the greatest things that John ever uttered was, "Behold, the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world." He bore witness to what he knew, that Jesus was God, not him.

Building on that, John 5:36, this is Jesus speaking, "The testimony that I have is greater than that of John. For the works that the Father has given Me to accomplish, the very works that I am doing bear witness about Me that the Father has sent Me, and the Father who sent Me has Himself born witness about Me. His voice you have never heard. His form you have never seen."

Jesus is telling them, "Look, the very things that I'm doing are revealing Who I am, that God has sent Me. The very works that I'm doing bear witness about Me, that the Father has sent Me."

Another section in John 8:12-18. Jesus spoke to them saying, "I am the light of the world." Now as I've been meditating on this topic and praying about this topic, I began to see that John, the his Gospel, is a huge bear witnesser. There are many declarations in the Gospel of John. "I am the door. I am the way, the truth, and the life. I am the living bread," etc. These are statements bearing witness to the character and revealing of Jesus.

Jesus spoke to them saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life." The Pharisees said to him, "You are bearing witness about yourself. Your testimony is not true." You see those two words, bear witness, testimony, same thing.

Jesus answered, "Even if I do bear witness about myself, my testimony is true, for I know where I came from." He's on the stand. He's taking the oath. He's telling them, "Look, I can't lie. I know where I came from."

He goes on to say, "and where I am going, but you do not know where I come from or where I'm going. You judge according to the flesh. I judge no one. Yet even if I do judge my judgment is true, for it is not I alone who judge but I and the Father who sent Me."

"In your law is written that the testimony of two people is true. I am the one who bears witness about Myself and the Father who sent Me bears witness about Me." That's the part of this word which is a legal term.

He says, "I can't lie. I know where I came from. The Father also knows because He sent Me. In your laws, in your courtroom, you need to have two people. I have two, my Dad and Myself."

Now, we're pretty cognizant of this word, *maturoo*, to bear witness, which means to testify, and the noun is testimony. What about this whole idea that we started with, back in Revelation 12:11, "The word of their testimony."

I had a friend help me with this yesterday. He said, "It's something that's spoken. It's uttered." I checked the Greek and he was right. Romans 10:8, "You know this. The word is near you and in your mouth and in your heart. That is the word of faith that we proclaim." This is what Paul said, "How can people hear unless somebody tells them?" He was proclaiming the Word of faith.

In the ninth verse, "Because if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart, one believes and is justified, and with the mouth, one confesses and is saved." There's utterance going on here. They are confessing with their mouth.

They're saying Jesus is Lord. He's God. "For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." Everyone who with their voice expresses these things. This is something that we say. You remember what Jesus said. "Everyone who confesses Me before men, I will confess before My Father. That's the idea.

We want to be faithful to what we know, and we want to be upfront and out loud about our convictions and our faith. There's something about that. I want to hear Jesus say my name to His Dad, so I've got to say His name to everybody else around me.

The other night I was outside and praying. I said, "Lord, what is the testimony of Jesus? What are these words, this testimony, that people uttered to conquer the devil? What is the word of their testimony? In my thinking it is tied to the testimony of Jesus. The Holy Spirit brought two passages to my mind right away, and here they are.

Matthew 16. "When Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" They said, "Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others, Jeremiah, one of the prophets." He said to them. "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter replied, he said it out loud, he declared it, he testified, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Boom. He cleared the air. "You are the son of a living God. You are the anointed one." Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you Simon by Jonah, for flesh and blood has not

revealed this to you but my Father who is in heaven. This was divine revelation given to you, you had a divine apocalypse, you had a revelation of Jesus. This was revealed to you, by my Dad."

God revealed this to you and that's how you know it, and blessed are you because you declared it. You are the Christ, the son of the living God. The second passage that He brought to my mind was in 1 John 4.

I going to start the first verse, "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God for many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God. Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God.

"And every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the Spirit of the Antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already. Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world."

I included that last verse because we can't forget that when we confess the truth, that's how we overcome the devil. This is what happens. Part of our confession is acknowledging that Jesus Christ is greater than he who's in the world. Let me back up.

When I was a school teacher, public schools, second year I think I was there, a new couple joined the faculty. He and his wife both taught and they were from a certain religion. I'm just going to leave it there. I think you could figure it out. If you really want to know, email me, I'll tell you.

He was expostulating one time. We were in the faculty lounge, I can still visualize this, and he just could not figure out why people did not believe that he was just like Christians. He says "Why do people say that I'm in a cult?"

He said "I pay tithes, we have church every week", and he went on and on, all these things that were the same. I looked at him and I said, "Well, I have one question for you." He said, "What's that?" I said, "Do you believe that Jesus is God in the flesh?"

He said "No." I said, "There you go." That is the only question that separates Christ from Antichrist. That's exactly what that passage says. I'll read it again. "There is many false prophets that have got out into the world.

"By this, you know the Spirit of God. But every spirit that confesses, that testifies, that puts it in the air, Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God. But every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist."

To me, these two passages that the spirit quickened to me, the more I've thought about it, this is the facts. "You are the Christ, the Son of a living God." That's what Peter declared. Right here in the letter of John, every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God.

This is declaring the truth. A couple more passages and then we can unpack it a little bit. In Acts 4, I'm breaking into a prayer. Peter and John came back. People were all excited.

The elders didn't really say who's praying this, but they said in the fourth chapter, 29th verse, "Lord, look upon their threats and grant to Your servants to continue to speak Your word with all boldness while You stretch out Your hand to heal and signs and wonders are performed through the name of Your holy servant Jesus.

"When they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness. Now, the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common.

"With great power, the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all." They were declaring what they knew to be true, they were declaring with evidence.

They had seen that Jesus had died. They had seen that He rose from the dead and they were simply declaring their testimony. We all have a testimony. Revelation 1:9, "I John, your brother and partner in the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance that are in Jesus was on the island called Patmos."

You know why he was there? On account of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. [laughs] He was there because he believed that every word of God was true and that Jesus was God in the flesh, and that Jesus was the Son of God, the Christ.

Revelation 12:17, I read it before.

"The dragon became furious with the woman and went off to make war with the rest of her offspring on those who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus." The devil hates people who believe in the Word of God, who keep the Bible, and who hold and stand fast on the truth that Jesus Christ is God in the flesh.

That Jesus Christ, as Peter said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Then, Revelation 20, last passage, "I saw thrones, seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed. Also, I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the Word of God. "

"Those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands, they came to life and they reigned with Christ for a thousand years." We might have a big hole on top of our shoulders someday if we continue to hold the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus because that's what's happened.

These people were beheaded because they continued to obey the Scriptures and to testify that Jesus Christ was God in the flesh and that He was indeed the Christ, the Son of God. What do you think?

Scott: Amen. You hit all the verses I was thinking of when you said testimony and testify. The only thought I had was in John 1, "In the beginning was the word and the word was with God." Does those phrases connect at all to the testimony part?

Steve: I think they do because the more I started, this was resonating in my heart. I realized the whole Gospel of John is a testimony to Jesus. [laughs]

He wrote the book and then he paid the price and now he was in Patmos and then God appeared to him and says, "The reason you're here because you wrote the book, you obey the book and you've stood fast. You continue to hold fast what I've given you."

There is one more verse. It's in Revelation 19, where the angel tells him, "This is the marriage up with the Lamb."

Steve: Then John says he fell down his feet to worship him. But the angel said to him, "Hey, I'm a fellow servant with you and your brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus."

You worship God. You don't worship me. Since I thought this was going to be a mysterious thing when I was praying, I said, "What is the testimony of Jesus?" But the more that I looked at it and what God gave me was very simple. We just keep the commandments of God and we continue to use our mouth to declare the truth that Jesus Christ is God in a flesh. Amen.

Scott: Amen.

Steve: Simple, yet sublime. Father, thank you for your word and thank you that you have given it to us and thank you for John, one of my favorites.

Thank you for his words that he has deeply and yet faithfully and spiritually declared to us to reveal Jesus as the light of the world, as the bread of life, as the source of life, and all the way through, the way the truth in the life. Thank you for his testimony, his declaration of what he knows to be true.

Thank you that you've put it in our hearts. Like Peter, we can say we know that Jesus Christ is God in the flesh, but we also know that it's not because we're so smart or no Greek, it's because your Father, our Father, has revealed it to us.

Thank you for revealing Jesus to us. Help us to be faithful to him. Help us to be able to believe in our hearts, what we know to be true, and help us to declare it faithfully when opportunities arise in Jesus' name. Amen.

Scott: Amen. That's our show for this week, folks. Thanks for joining us for the "Building Faith Families" podcast with Steve Demme. If you have a question for the show, email Steve at spdemme@gmail.com.