

Introduction

Main Idea

Why should you believe in Jesus? After all, there have been many people who have claimed to speak on God's behalf whom Scripture calls false prophets. *How is Jesus any different?* There are also many people in history, before and since the New Testament, who have claimed to be the Messiah. *How is Jesus any different?* If Scripture confirms that there will be false prophets, false teachers, and false messiahs, *why should you believe in Jesus?*

Also, why should you believe Jesus' claims? Jesus claimed to be the Son of God - the eternal God. Even the teachers of that time accused Him of blasphemy. Jesus claimed that He was sent by God. Yet not everyone who claims to come from God actually comes from God. Jesus claimed that He came to save people from their sins. These are all bold claims.

Why should you believe in Jesus? While there are many answers to that question, [1 John 5:5-10](#) gives one strong reason to believe in Jesus. False prophets, teachers, and messiahs make claims that openly oppose God. As a result, they are opposed **by God**. [1 John 5:5-10](#) explains that **Faith in Jesus is based on God's testimony about Him**. That is, God testifies that Jesus really is the Christ, whom He sent to save us from sin. God testifies that Jesus really became human so that He might die to bear the guilt of sin for His people. God testifies that Jesus really is the Son of God; He is the eternal God.

Personal Reflection

As we read [1 John 5:5-10](#), consider the basis of your faith in Jesus. *Is your faith shaped by Jesus' words and by the words of Scripture? Is your faith shaped by what you read and hear online? Do you believe in Jesus because God has changed your heart or because your family raised you that way? What is the basis of your faith in Jesus?*

Son of God

Who is Jesus? Throughout history, people have made **differing claims** about Jesus' identity. Some have claimed Jesus is God, but not man. Some have claimed that Jesus is man, but not God. Some have taught that Jesus is truly God and truly man. Some have claimed that Jesus was a divine man, but not quite God. Some have claimed that Jesus was a prophet of God. Some have claimed that Jesus was a false prophet.

According to Scripture, who is Jesus? Verse 5 explains that **Jesus is the Son of God.** [1 John 5:5](#) "5 Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?"

Overcoming the world

[1 John 5:1-4](#) explains that **those who are born of God live by faith, love, and holiness**. (1) That is, those who know God believe in Jesus. They acknowledge that He is the Christ whom God sent to save us from sins. (2) Those who know God love others and obey Him. (3) [1 John 5:4](#) states that those who know God overcome the world by faith. Last week, we read how 1 John describes overcoming the world. [1 John 2:15-17](#) describes overcoming the world as rejecting affection for the world and things of the world; that is, we devote ourselves to God and flee from temptation. [1 John 4:1-4](#) describes overcoming the world as rejecting false teaching about Jesus. With that context in mind, [1 John 5:5](#) states that we overcome the world (resisting temptation and rejecting false teaching) through a right view of Jesus. He who overcomes is he who “believes that Jesus is the Son of God” ([1 John 5:5](#)).

Son of God

What does it mean that Jesus is the Son of God? This does not mean that Jesus is a **lesser** deity. **Jehovah's Witnesses** teach that Jesus is the first created being. The official JW teaching about Jesus states, “[Jesus] was God's first creation, and so he is called the ‘firstborn’ Son of God” (jw.org). In fact, they mistranslate [John 1:1](#) which states explicitly that Jesus is God, rewording it to say that Jesus is “a god,” meaning a divine human or angel, but not God. Thus, they deny the eternality of Jesus - He is a created being, a **lesser** divine being.

Mormons teach that all humans were born by a heavenly father (God) and mother. They teach that Jesus was born to God as all humans are born to God. According to LDS doctrine, there are two unique aspects of Jesus' relationship to God. First, Jesus is the firstborn of all of God's children. Second, Jesus' physical birth was unique. Thus, like Jehovah's witnesses, Mormons deny that Jesus is eternal - He is a **lesser** god.

Scripture teaches two important details about Jesus that show that Jesus is not a lesser divine being; He is God. First, Jesus is the **Creator**; that is, He is an uncreated being. Second, Jesus is **eternal**; that is, He was not created at some point in time, He existed before creation. Both of these teachings are shown in [John 1:1-3](#) “1 In the beginning was the Word [Jesus], and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.” *What does this passage teach?* Jesus existed before creation ([John 1:1-2](#)). Jesus was with God at creation ([John 1:1-2](#)). Jesus is God ([John 1:1](#)). Jesus created **every** created thing ([John 1:3](#)).

Summary

So, who is Jesus? When [1 John 5:5](#) states that Jesus is the Son of God, it means that He is the eternal, uncreated God. The god whom the Jehovah's Witnesses worship is a god whom they have created. The god whom the LDS church worships is a god whom they have created. Jesus is distinct, yet equal with the Father and the Spirit. **He is the eternal, uncreated God.**

God's Testimony

What is God's testimony about Jesus? If Jesus is in the same category as false prophets, teachers, and messiahs, then He and God oppose one another. **God has not been silent** about Jesus. God has testified about Jesus through His words, His works, and the indwelling of the Spirit. Verses 6-8 explain that **God testifies to Jesus' nature - that He is the Christ, both God and man.** [1 John 5:6-8](#) “6 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. 7 For there are three that testify: 8 the Spirit and the water and the blood; and these three agree.”

Three that testify

What are three ways God has testified about Jesus? This passage mentions the testimony of water, blood, and Spirit. Verses 9-10 indicate that believing the testimony of the water, blood, and Spirit are equivalent to believing the testimony of God. This passage is notoriously difficult to interpret. People disagree concerning the meaning of water and blood. It is quite clear that Spirit refers to the Holy Spirit, but the passage does not specify **how** the Spirit testifies about Jesus. So, I will share with you my understanding of each of these, but I will also share other views and will be okay if you hold a different view than me (as long as it is not unbiblical).

Water: First, water likely refers to Jesus' **baptism**. Some believe that this refers to Jesus' birth. Others think that water and blood together may refer to Jesus' death because **blood and water** came out of Him when the soldier pierced Him with a spear after He died. I think both of these possibilities are reasonable. I also think that both of these possibilities rightly teach truth about Jesus similar to what we read about in 1 John.

The major reasons that I think water refers to Jesus' baptism is that both [1 John 5](#) and Jesus' baptism **connect water with God's testimony**. [Matthew 3:16-17](#) "16 And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; 17 and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."

Notice that the Father speaks, testifying that Jesus is His Son and that He is pleased with Jesus ([Matt 3:17](#)). Two other times in the New Testament, the Father spoke audibly confirming that Jesus was the Son of God. In [Mark 9](#), when Jesus was transfigured - [Mark 9:7](#) "7 And a cloud overshadowed them, and a voice came out of the cloud, "This is my beloved Son; listen to him." Close to His arrest, Jesus prayed in public and the Father answered Him audibly. [John 12:27-28](#) "27 "Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? But for this purpose I have come to this hour. 28 Father, glorify your name." Then a voice came from heaven: "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again." The following verses explain that the crowd heard the voice and struggled to explain it ([John 12:29-30](#)).

Notice also that the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus. John the Baptist described this in [John 1:32-34](#) "32 And John bore witness: "I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. 33 I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' 34 And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.'" *What did John the Baptist learn from Jesus' baptism?* First, notice that John **saw** the **Spirit** descend on Jesus ([John 1:32](#)). This is how he knew that Jesus was the coming **Christ** ([John 1:33](#)). John's conclusion of the baptism was the Jesus was the **Son of God** ([John 1:34](#)). Jesus' baptism testifies that He is the **Christ and the Son of God**.

Blood: Second, blood likely refers to Jesus' **death**. 1 John makes the connection between Jesus' blood and His deity in the context of atonement. [1 John 1:7](#) "7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin." Jesus is God's Son and His blood atones for our sin.

Jesus' death testifies that He is the **Christ**; He came to die to redeem from sin. His death also testifies that He is truly **human**. Remember [1 John 4:2](#) addresses a false teaching in that church that Jesus had not come in the flesh (Docetism). Jesus did not **appear** to be human; He **was** human without sacrificing His deity. In fact, there is no atonement unless Jesus is both God and human. Jesus became a human for the purpose of suffering, temptation, and death - so that His death would atone for sins. [Hebrews 9:22](#) "... without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins."

Spirit: Third, the Spirit testifies about Jesus. *Who is the Spirit? Oneness*

Pentecostalism teaches that the Holy Spirit is Jesus Himself, not a distinct being. They deny that God is Triune. They claim that Jesus is the only God, acting as Father in creation, acting as Son in the incarnation, and acting as the Spirit as He indwells us. According to Scripture, the Father, Son, and Spirit are distinct persons, yet one God. For example, we see interaction between the members of the Trinity at Jesus' baptism. [Matthew 3:16-17](#) "16 And when **Jesus** was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the **Spirit** of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on **him**; 17 and behold, a **voice** from heaven said, "This is my beloved **Son**, with whom I am well pleased." The Holy Spirit is a distinct person from the Father and Son.

The Holy Spirit is God. The Holy Spirit existed at creation ([Gen 1:2](#)). The Holy Spirit gives life ([John 6:63](#)). The Holy Spirit creates ([Psa 104:30](#)). In [Acts 5:3-4](#), Scripture equates lying to the Spirit with lying to God. The Holy Spirit is God.

How does the Holy Spirit testify about Jesus? First, the Holy Spirit testifies to Jesus' deity by the **resurrection**. [Romans 1:4](#) "[Jesus] was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead..." Second, the Holy Spirit testifies to Jesus' saving death through **conviction** and giving **faith**. [John 16:8](#) "8 And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment:" [1 Corinthians 12:3](#) "... no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except in the Holy Spirit." Third, the Spirit testifies to our relationship with Christ by **indwelling** God's people. [1 John 3:24](#) "24 Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God, and God in him. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us." Fourth, the Spirit testifies of the truth of Jesus by revealing God's word in **Scripture**. [2 Peter 1:21](#) "21 For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit."

The Testimony

What do these three testify about Jesus? According to the immediate context, they testify that Jesus is the **Son of God**. [1 John 5:5](#) "5 Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?" [1 John 5:10](#) "10 Whoever believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself..." [1 John 5:13](#) "13 I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life."

If we look at 1 John as a whole, these three also testify of Jesus's **humanity** and that He is the **Christ**. [1 John 2:22](#) "22 Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son." [1 John 4:2](#) "2 By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God," [1 John 5:1](#) "1 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God..."

Summary

This is the basis for our belief in Jesus. God has testified about Jesus. Jesus is the Christ, the Savior of the world. Jesus is truly, eternally God, the creator of everything. Jesus is truly human, eternally God who became flesh so that He might atone for our sins through His death.

Faith in Jesus

Why is it important to know and believe God's testimony about Jesus? Faith is more than understanding and accepting that something is true. [James 2:19](#) points out that demons understand and accept truth about God, but that is not faith. So, it is not enough to understand and accept that God's testimony about Jesus is true. Faith in Jesus is from a changed **heart**, not just a changed **mind**. Faith includes love for God and devotion to God. Faith requires a **response**. Verses 9-10 explain that **those who believe God have faith in Jesus**. [1 John 5:9-10](#) "9 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. 10 Whoever believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself. 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."

Greater Testimony

How does God testify of Jesus today? Notice the point of verse 9 - God's testimony is **greater than man's testimony**. In the context of 1 John, we can see God's testimony directly contrasted with **false teachers**. [1 John 2:22](#) "22 Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son." [1 John 2:26](#) "26 I write these things to you about those who are trying to deceive you." [1 John 3:7](#) "7 Little children, let no one deceive you..." [1 John 4:1](#) "1 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." [1 John 4:3](#) "3 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." [1 John 4:6](#) "6 We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us; whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error." John writes this letter to remind the church that they should listen to God's testimony rather than the false teachers.

We face the same challenge today that church faced. People claim **new revelation** from God, making their testimony equal to God's testimony, even when it contradicts God's testimony. For example, the **Catholic** church claims that the church, specifically the Pope, church doctrine, and church tradition, have divine revelation equal to Scripture. To be more precise, they claim that the church has greater authority than Scripture because they **created** the canon of Scripture. **Mormon's** claim that the church has become apostate; therefore, God gave new revelation to Joseph Smith, including new scripture that contradicts the Bible. They also claim that God reveals new truth to the LDS prophet. These are both examples of exalting the testimony of men over the testimony of God.

Scripture alone is our authority. God has revealed Himself through Scripture. Although written down by men, it was authored by God. [2 Peter 1:21](#) “21 For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.” [2 Timothy 3:16](#) “16 All Scripture is breathed out by God...” *Why should we believe Scripture over the testimony of men?* Humans are sinful and fallible (we can make mistakes). God is true and infallible (He cannot make mistakes). Therefore, God's revealed word is **true** and **infallible**. God's testimony is greater than man's testimony.

[Rejecting God](#)

Another reason we should have faith in Jesus is because **it is impossible to believe God without faith in Jesus**. That is, anyone who rejects Jesus, rejects God. It is false to claim that the **Jews** worship the same God as Christians - they reject Jesus. It is false to claim that **Mormons** worship the same God as Christians - they reject Jesus. It is false to claim that **Jehovah's Witnesses** worship the same God as Christians - they reject Jesus. It is false to claim that **Oneness Pentecostals** worship the same God as Christians - they reject the Triune God.

Notice [1 John 5:10](#) “... 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.” God has testified about Jesus. Read what Jesus said about God’s testimony. [John 5:23](#) “... Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him.” [John 5:36-39](#) “36 But 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. 37 And the Father who sent me has himself borne witness about me. His voice you have never heard, his form you have never seen, 38 and you do not have his word abiding in you, for you do not believe the one whom he has sent. 39 You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me,” [John 5:36](#) - the Father testifies about Jesus through Jesus’ works. [John 5:38](#) - you don’t have His word because you reject the one whom He sent. [John 5:39](#) - the Father testifies about Jesus through Scripture. Those who reject Jesus, reject God and God’s word (cf. [Luke 10:16](#)).

Summary

Why is it important to believe in Jesus? **Those who believe God have faith in Jesus.** God testifies of Jesus. Scripture, not the claims of men, is our authority and source of truth.

Conclusion

Personal Reflection

How do your beliefs and life align with [1 John 5:5-10](#)? Do you believe that Jesus is the Son of God - the eternal God who became flesh? Do you hold an intellectual belief (a profession of faith) or have you devoted your life to Christ through ongoing repentance and holiness? Do you accept Scripture as God’s revealed word or do you follow whatever convincing argument you hear on TikTok? Do you regularly read Scripture - study it, meditate on it, memorize it, and apply it?

Main Idea

The warning of [1 John 5:5-10](#) for today is **be careful where you look for truth**. There are many false teachings about Jesus. You will hear them from dynamic, convincing speakers and some of you will be convinced. [1 John 5:5-10](#) explains that **Faith in Jesus is based on God’s testimony about Him.**

[1 John 4:1](#) “1 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.” **Be careful where you look for truth.**