

Worksheet #12: 1 John 5:1–13 (NKJV)

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.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.¹³ These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.

^{*} Vv. 7–8 contain an unusually lengthy textual variant. The words “in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness on earth” do not appear in the vast majority of Greek manuscripts. Only eight medieval manuscripts include this reading, and of these, four place it in the margin to indicate that the copyist considered it to be non-canonical. The long reading does not appear in any other modern English translation, such as the NASB, ESV, NET, HCSB, or NIV.

Interpretation: *Read through the passage, and then review and make notes under the questions below.*

1. In 5:1, John gives two indicators that reveal a person's relationship to God. What are those indicators, and how do these two indicators relate to each other?

2. What tests does John give us to evaluate whether we genuinely love the children of God (5:2)? How do these tests validate our love for others?

3. How does John define love for God in 5:3? Why then can he say that obedience is not "burdensome"?

4. What things (5:4, "whatever [not whoever] is born of God") might John have in mind that come from God? In what sense can these things be understood to "overcome the world"?

5. What might John have in mind with his references to "water" and "blood" in 5:6-8? You may wish to consult a study Bible or commentary for some ideas.

6. To what fact do the Spirit, the water, and the blood all bear witness (5:6)? Explain how these witnesses function as the "witness of God" (5:9).

7. How does the testimony of 5:11 produce the results in 5:12?

8. Consider John's purpose statement in 5:13. In what way does this purpose undergird everything else that he has said in this book?

Application: *Take time to reflect on the implications of this passage for your own life today.*

9. What does this passage mean for your walk with the Lord?

10. How does this passage challenge the way you think about situations in daily life? What should you do about that?
