



Message **Transcript**

I Solemnly Swear

Jeff Schwarzentraub

Well, good morning. And thank you so much for choosing to worship with us. Could you do me a favor? Welcome our Broomfield Campus who is worshipping along with us. So great to have you. And I just really want to encourage you this morning no matter what campus you're on listening to God's word that you would use this time as we've been worshipping his name as we've been seeking his face, to really pray that the Lord would speak specifically to you today individually. Because I know every time I preach a message like this, there can tend to be distractions and thinking about other things. So, I'm asking you individually, as I'm praying, pray that the Lord would speak directly to you through His Word this morning. Can we pray together?

Lord Jesus, we give you all the glory and all the honor and all the praise for who you are and for all you did on our behalf. Lord, I pray this morning, you'd be helpful to me, you'd be helpful to our church. As Lord, we look into your Word and desire to see what you have specifically to say to us individually, as well as collectively as a body. And so, Lord, we want to hear you. We're saying to you, "Speak, Lord. We want to hear." And we believe that your Word is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, to penetrate both soul and spirit, joints and marrow to judge the attitudes and intentions of our hearts.

So, Lord, do that here this morning. Open us up and pour into us Your Holy Spirit in a way that we know we have directly heard from you. And Lord, help us to own who we are in Christ. Help us to put into practice the things that you show us and Lord help us in every way to give you all the glory, all the honor, and all the praise. And now all God's people who are ready to receive His word agree with me by very loudly saying,

Amen, amen.

In my spare time, one of the things I enjoy doing is watching people give speeches, watching people declare things, whether it's a convention for a political party or whether it's someone on TV. I like watching people declare things. As a matter of fact, some of my favorite movies involve courtroom scenes where people are making declarations about what they think is true, because as you're watching those, you're trying to ask the question, is what they're saying true? Is it credible? Do they have passion behind what they're saying? And ultimately, one of my favorite things I enjoy doing is watching people in movies, or even in live being cross examined as a witness, as they give testimony to what they believe is true. Because if what they're saying is ultimately true and they solemnly swear that what they're saying is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, they have nothing to hide, and eventually, the truth does come out.

In this section, in first John, John is sitting on the witness stand, and he is bearing witness. And he's saying, "I do solemnly swear." And he's going to make three declarations about what he is testifying to. We've talked about how this Book of First John is really like a family photo album or taking snapshots of the family of God from different directions so that we can see who the body of Christ really is and who we are from different angles and perspectives. And as for John is winding down this letter that he's writing, as he gets towards the end, what we see him in this snapshot is sitting on the witness stand, and testifying what he believes about the gospel of Jesus Christ.

And he's going to make a declaration about what he believes about God, he's going to make a declaration about what his own experience with God is, and then he's going to make a declaration to the world. All three declarations he makes have significant importance, not only for this world, but also for the world to come.

So, as we're going through this text, if we're going through it, and your mind starts to wander, and you say, "I already know this." I'm encouraging you specifically tune back in because you need to know that you own this so well, that you could teach what I'm teaching here this morning no matter who you come across. So, with your Bible, open to the book of First John, in chapter five, we're going to be looking at verses six through 12 this morning, I'd like to read those aloud, and then let's unpack them together.

Talking about Jesus, John says, "This is the one who came by water and the blood, Jesus Christ. Not with water only, but with the water and with the blood. It is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. For there are three that testified of the Spirit, the water, and the blood, and the three are in agreement. If you receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater for the testimony of God is this, that he has testified concerning his Son. The one who believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself. The one who does not believe God has made him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has given concerning his Son. And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life. He who does not have the Son does not have the life."

And in that section, what we really see is John giving solemn testimony to what

he believes about Jesus Christ and His gospel. And you can really hear John saying, "I solemnly swear, I solemnly swear to tell you the truth." And here's what John Psalm He swears. Number one, John says, "I solemnly swear that God testifies that Jesus is the Son of God." As John is being cross examined, so to speak, in giving his testimony and giving his witness, he solemnly swears that God testifies that Jesus is the Son of God. This is not only John's testimony. This is John's testimony about what God says about himself. This is John testifying about another.

So many of you that have children will know this. And when you see your kids or maybe they have friends over to the house, and you may hear your kids coach the other kids like, "Hey, at our house, don't do that. My mom doesn't like it when you do that. My dad doesn't appreciate it when you do that." They're giving testimony about someone that they know really, really well. They're bearing witness, and we're going to see this word testifies or testimony at least 10 times in these seven verses. So, what they're doing is, John is testifying about this is what God says about himself. Okay, this is what we're going to see in this section.

When I played high school football, I remember in my senior year, we had a culture, that was extremely disciplined. You had to dress a certain way, keep your hair cut short, you couldn't get in trouble in class, you couldn't get in trouble with teachers. Everything was, "Yes, sir. No, sir." Everything was eye contact. You couldn't not look away. I mean, that was just our culture. And I remember one time before one of our first practices in the summer, there was a kid that came from another school. And he showed up in flowery shorts, had long hair, and had an earring in his left ear. And I

went over and testified. And I said, you don't know our coaches, but I know our coaches.

"So, do you have any other shorts that you can go change into really quick? No, I don't. Do you have scissors anywhere where you can cut your hair? No, I don't. Then get that earring out of your ear now. It's for your own good." Because I said to him, "You're going to get ripped tonight. But if you want to play here, those are going to be some things that you're going to need to know." What was I doing? I was testifying on behalf of the coach. I knew really well that he didn't know so well, that this wasn't going to go well for him.

That's what John's doing here. John is testifying and saying, "This is what God says about himself. This is what God says about the gospel." What does he say? He says, "This is the one," now don't miss that. This is the one, he's talking about Jesus Christ. There is no other way to God except through Jesus Christ. He is the one, he is not a one. He's not a way to God. He is the way to God. Now, why is this important? Because we live in a pluralistic society. And here's the question we're asking, listen, listen, we're asking this question. How can you be sure that Christianity is right? How can you be sure that Jesus Christ is the only way? I mean, how can you be so audacious to share that he's the one and only way? Here's John's answer, "Because this is what God says." God is the one declaring the testimony that Jesus is the one.

Now what did he do? How do we know that he's the one? Here's what he says, "He's the one who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ. Not with water only, but

with water and the blood. It is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is truth. So, who is this Jesus? He came not with the water only but with blood. Now, keep in mind, who the audience is that will help us understand what the Bible is talking about here. The audience were a group of people called Gnostics. Gnostics comes from the Greek word meaning knowledge. There were people that thought they were smart in their own eyes, right? So, they believe that the flesh is really, really bad, but the spirit is really, really good. They would be much like 21st century spiritualist and say, "I'm really spiritual." That's what they were like. So, they could concede the fact that Jesus was a man, but he didn't have flesh like us. He was different than us, right? That's what they would teach.

What the Bible teaches is, in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And then, in John 1:14, it says, "And the Word, Jesus Christ, became flesh and made his dwelling among us." Meaning that Jesus, as we talked about in this book has always been God. He's always been the second person of the Trinity. And he put on flesh about 2000 years ago, and he came to this Earth. At the moment he was conceived, he didn't become God. He had already been God. What some Gnostics believed is not just that he had a different body. What some Gnostics conceded is that at Jesus's baptism, he became a God. And right before he died, the Spirit kind of left him and he died as a man on the cross, but he didn't die as God because God can't die. That's what they would teach.

If that's your thinking. It's much like 21st century Christianity that would say, I believe Jesus was a good man. He was a good moral teacher. I believe He lived. I

believe He died on the cross. I mean, I believe all the facts, that's good. And that's what a lot of people believe to get to heaven. And that's what Christians believe, that's just one way. Because if Jesus Christ isn't divine, if he isn't God, and just so you know, in order to be God, you have to have always been, okay? That's just one of the requirements on the resume. Right? So, it means that Jesus has eternally existed. That's why He's God. So, when you're talking about He came in the water and the blood? What does that mean? What does that mean? And everybody has all these interpretations.

Here's what John is saying, "At his baptism, He was already God. When He died and shed his blood on the cross, He was still God, because He's always been God. And the Spirit is testifying to the fact that Jesus is the only son of God. He is the only way. That's what's going on here. That's what the water in the blood is. And remember what happened to Jesus' baptism at the end of Matthew, chapter three, I believe it's verse 17? First of all, when Jesus goes into the waters of baptism, John the Baptist sees Him and he's like, well, basically, the translation is, "Why are you coming to me? You don't need to be baptized by me?" And Jesus said, "Let's do it to be fulfilled."

In other words, if I'm going to ask my people to be baptized, I'm going to get baptized not because I'm repenting of anything. I'm being baptized, because I want to model for what I want all my followers to ultimately do. And by being baptized, I'm identifying with all the future sinners in the world who are going to be baptized. So, I'm going to go into the waters of baptism. That's what happened. And when Jesus came out of the waters of baptism, what do we hear? You hear the voice of the Father

booming so that the world can hear it. "This is my beloved Son." Not, "This is a Jesus who just became a God." "This is my beloved Son. He's always been my Son, in whom I am well pleased. Listen to Him." In other words, at Jesus baptism in the water, He was already God before He got baptized. He was God after He got baptized.

What do we see at Jesus' crucifixion? At about noon that day, He died at 3:00, about noon that day, the whole sky turned dark. And when Jesus died, there was a massive earthquake over the whole Earth. Dead people were getting up walking around. Even the Roman Centurion that was standing there looking up at the cross was like, "Truly, this was the Son of God." Duh. Right? I mean, Jesus was the God man on the cross. When Jesus Christ died on the cross, He was fully God and fully man. The father didn't die on the cross.

The Spirit didn't die on the cross, but Jesus Christ, the God man did die on the cross. And here's the significance of the blood. Without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sin. Now, listen closely. We live in a society that wants a bloodless Christ. Everybody wants a bloodless Christ. You see, nobody wants to talk about the fact that the significance of Jesus dying on the cross and shedding His blood is because of your sin, the sin of the world.

If when Jesus Christ died on the cross and He was not divine, you know what that means? You're not forgiven. There's no forgiveness of sin. That's why you'll hear I mean, listen to Talk Radio, listen to your, I'm not telling you to listen to it. When you listen to them, listen to people talk about Jesus. Here's what they'll say, "I love Jesus.

He's a good man. I love Jesus. Yeah, He died on the cross." But if you press them and say, "Did the God man die on the cross? Did He shed His blood in your place because you're a wicked sinner?" They won't go there. "I don't believe in that Jesus." There's no other Jesus to believe in.

And the Spirit testifies to this. The Spirit came upon Jesus at His baptism and led Him in ministry, all the way to the cross. We see Him in the Garden of Gethsemane, we see Him on the cross. I mean, the Spirit led Jesus. So, what is testifying? Jesus said, If I'm going to have my people be baptized, I'm going to go into the waters to model and identify myself with sinners. If I'm calling my disciples that they must deny themselves, take up their cross, which means to die and follow me, then I'm going to model that too. I'm going to go die for them. Now, we don't die for the sins of the world. We die because we're crucified with Christ.

And then he says, "You know what? I'm going to follow the Spirit of God because I'm going to expect all my followers to live in yielding obedience to the Spirit of God." This is the testimony here. John is making testimony, regardless of what the world says, God says that Jesus is the Christ and that He's the only way and the world wants a bloodless Christ. Do you remember when Jesus was telling His disciples what He must do in going into Jerusalem?

Because He was asking disciples, "Who do you say that I am? What do you say about me?" "Well, some say you're John the Baptist, others say you're Elijah. My grandma says that you're really good guy. My grandpa says, my dad says." Yeah, but who do you say that I am? And Peter says, "You're the Christ. The Son of the living

God." And Jesus tells him that he's blessed because those words were not revealed to him by flesh and blood, but by His father who's in heaven.

Then Jesus after that scene, after Jesus says He's going to build His Church through that testimony goes on to tell them that He must go into Jerusalem and do what? To be handed over by the chief priests and elders and that He would die on the cross. What does Peter do? Does Peter say, "Yeah, the blood is going to be the witness." Now he pulls Jesus aside and rebukes Him. Why? Because Peter wants a bloodless Christ. And he says, "May that never happen. I'll never allow that." What does Jesus say to him? "Get thee behind me, Satan.

For you not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men." The things of men is I want to bloodless Christ. I don't want to know that the reason Jesus came to Earth was to die in my place and be punished because of me. I don't want that Jesus. I want the Jesus that just loves me for who I am and just accept me for my own shortcomings. No, Jesus does love you but he died on the cross because you are sinful and you can't get to the Father except through Him.

And it wasn't just at that point that we see the world wants a bloodless Christ. If you have your Bible, I invite you to turn back to Mark chapter 15. In Mark chapter 15, starting in verse 29. It goes Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Mark, chapter 15 in verse 29. When Jesus is on the cross, even the religious leaders of the day, wanted a bloodless Christ. Notice this, Mark, chapter 15, verse 29, this is "When Jesus was on the cross, those passing by were hurling abuse at him, wagging their heads and saying, "Ha, you

who are going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself and come down from the cross." Jesus is suffering and dying for the sins of the world. People are mocking Him and laughing at them, saying, "You said you were going to destroy the temple in three days and rebuild it, that took us 46 years to build. If you're so good, just come down off the cross, we will believe."

Notice this. In the same way, the chief priests along with the scribes who were the religious leaders of the day were mocking Him among themselves saying, "He saved others. He cannot save himself." So, all the religious people are pulled over here looking at Him like, "Remember that guy? The Savior of the world, He can't even save Himself. Ha, ha, ha ha." That's what they're saying. Notice verse 32, "Let this Christ, the King of Israel now come down from the cross." Well, why would you want Jesus to come down from the cross? Here's what they say, "Let Him come down from the cross so that we may see and believe." In other words, "Jesus, you come off that cross, we will believe in you. If you're bloodless, we will believe in that Jesus."

Jesus understood that unless he bled and died, no one can have relationship with the Father. It's through the blood of Jesus that we are saved. You see, a lot of people come to church and they're like, "Well, I believe in Jesus. He died on the cross, rose from the dead. I believe, I believe." What Jesus do you believe in? Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the God man who has eternally existed, who came and died on the cross, not just generically for the sins of the world, but for your sins and your sins and your sins? And the reason He had to die is because you are dead in your sins, and you have no relationship with God. That's what John is testifying to. He's testifying, this isn't

my testimony, this is what God says about himself. And this testimony is consistent throughout the entirety of Scripture.

He says, there are three that testify the Spirit, the water, and the blood, and all three are in agreement. Now, here's what he goes on to say, notice in verse nine, "If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater for the testimony of God is this, that he has testified concerning his Son. Here comes the question, "Do you believe that Jesus is God's one and only Son? Do you believe that he shed His blood for you? Do you believe that He has eternally existed? Do you believe there's no other way to the Father except through Him? He's the one. He's the only, there are no other ways." Now, when you hear that, in a pluralistic society, that things all religions are pretty much the same. And I know some more people that are Muslim, I know some more people that are Hindu. There are more people that are Buddhists. There are more people that are just spiritualists.

Jeff, are you saying that they have to become Christian to go to heaven? Here's what I'm saying, apart from a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, not only will they not experience a relationship with the Father and go to heaven, but they will be eternally damned in hell for all eternity, no matter how good they are, because they've missed the whole point of why Jesus came. He didn't come for good people. He came for sinners. That's the only group of people He came for, which meant everybody, right? But we have to understand that's God's testimony about himself. John saying, "I know him." If you go back to the first part of First John, chapter one and verse one, he says, "What we've heard from the beginning, what we've heard, what we've seen with

our eyes, what we've looked at and what we've touched with our hands concerning this word of life."

In other words, "I know Jesus, I've been with Jesus, I've touched Jesus, He is the one and only Christ, there is no other." And that's what this whole book is testifying about. Do you believe that? Because I know when I go around the world and I preach the gospel, even when I've been in India and preach the gospel, I'd be really clear on this point because people in India will accept Christ as one of their 3,000 gods that they've accepted too. I'll just add Jesus to that. Now you say, "Well, I don't worship idols like that." Seriously? Seriously, it means this.

There's nothing else that stands in place of your allegiance to Jesus Christ, nothing. Not family, not friends, not job, not money, not nothing, not your hedonistic lifestyle, nothing. Jesus is the Lord. He is the Christ and He desires full allegiance. That's the Gospel. Have you rejected all else and trusting in Jesus Christ and in Him alone? That's the testimony John is making, saying, "This is the testimony Jesus made." And if you study the life of Jesus, you'll see the same thing.

John 14:6, when he's answering, "Hey, we don't know where you're going. He said, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through me. I'm the way. I'm the way." Do you know the way? Do you have a relationship with the way? And here's what he's saying? He goes, if you can trust the testimony of men, then you can definitely trust the testimony of God. Here's what he's trying to say. Did you ever notice some people that would say stuff like this? "I just

wish I had faith. I just wish I could believe. I just wish I could believe."

I have this uncle. He's so smart. He's so logical. He's so smart. I just wish he could believe. It says in the Bible that, "The wisest man is foolish in the sight of God." You can believe that Jesus is the Christ. It's one of the most historically provable facts in the world. You may not be able to prove how the universe was created, and all these different ... You can prove that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God.

I mean, even non-Christians believe that Jesus Christ died on a cross in Jerusalem in the first century. I mean, you start studying why would all these disciples go to their death knowing that they were dying for a lie? The answer is, they wouldn't. Here's the truth. If you can believe the testimony of man, how come you can't believe the testimony of God? If you can put your faith in human beings? Why can't you put your faith in God? You put your faith in human beings all the time. Every time you go to a restaurant, you're putting your faith in that food, right? You're trusting that somebody back there has clean hands and that the food is healthy, and that they're going to bring it to you in a way that's not going to upset your stomach. You're placing your faith there.

If you dropped any of your children off in our Children's Ministry, you're placing your faith in another human hands. If you've ever trusted someone to watch your kids, you're trusting someone else. I mean, you place your faith on that, if you get on I-25, you are placing your faith in man that are going to stay in their lane. I mean, you just know, right? And here's what John says, "You have the faith to believe in Christ. There's not a faith gene where some people get it and some people don't. It's an act of

the will, where you've got to come to the conclusion, I am a sinner and I'm in need of the Lord Jesus Christ. And anyone anywhere at any time, they can do that. And if they don't, it's their own stubborn heart. It's not God's lack of desire to bring you into his kingdom. He loves you.

And that's what John is saying, "I'm testifying. I know God. I spent time with him. I've seen him in the flesh. I know this God. I'm testifying that Jesus is the Son of God. I solemnly swear to you that He is." Then he goes on to a second point. Now, he's not just going to talk about who God is. He's going to talk about his own personal experience with this God man Jesus Christ. And here's what he's going to solemnly swear in his second declaration. Now he says, "I solemnly swear that Jesus Christ indwells my life and I am not lying. I solemnly swear that Jesus Christ indwells my life and I am not lying." Notice this in verse 10. The one who believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself. The one who does not believe God has made him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has given concerning his Son. Note in the first part of this verse, the one who believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself.

Now, let me just be clear on this gospel. God, the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world. Jesus Christ came, He fulfilled the law. He did what no human being can do, because He was born of the Virgin Mary, because He's the eternal Son of God. He had flesh, but He was sinless. By the way, He still has family because He rose from the dead fully God, fully man. He ascended as fully God and fully man. He's coming back as fully God and fully man. That's our God. But when He died on the

cross, it was God the Father pouring out all His wrath on His son slaughtering His son because of your sin. And God, Jesus Christ made payment to His father to redeem humanity in that one act, and then demonstrated the fact that He was God by rising from the dead.

And here's what John's now testifying. I believe that. Now, when you believe the gospel, it's not just a ticket getting punched into heaven. That's a byproduct of what you really get. Notice what you really get. Paul spells it out this way in Colossians 1:26 and 27. He calls it "The mystery which has been hidden from past ages and generations, but has now been manifested to the saints." Mystery in the Bible means that which was unknown before that we now realize what it is. Well, what was it, Paul? What did all the saints that were prior to Jesus? What did they not get to experience? What did they not know that we now know? I mean, there are people saved in the Old Testament that served the covenant God, Yahweh. They were saved by grace through faith. What about this new covenant? What do we need to know now? What's new, Paul? Here's what he says, verse 27, "To whom God has willed to make known the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles." Which is, what is it? Christ in you. The hope of glory.

Salvation is not that I get to go somewhere when I die. Salvation is when I believe that Jesus is the Christ. He comes and indwells me now. He's in me. John's testimony is saying, "He's in me. Someone's moved into my life and my life is different." That's what he's testifying to. John's not saying, "I'm going to heaven someday,

because I believe some facts." John is saying, "Because I believe in the Christ, he now indwells me through His Holy Spirit. Because the one who believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself, has the testimony in herself that the mystery of what was hidden for the ages. In the Old Testament. Christ didn't come and live in you. They were looking forward to the Messiah that would forgive sins.

In the New Covenant, what we have is by believing in Jesus Christ, looking backwards, now through the Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ comes and takes up residency in your life. He indwells you. In Romans 8:9, it says, "Anyone that does not have the Spirit of Christ is not of Christ." You have all the Holy Spirit from the moment that you believe. That's what the Bible teaches. And John is saying, "Because He's in me, my whole life has changed." There are evidences that John has been talking about through this book, because his whole life changed. His love for God, his love for God's people, his desire to do what God wants. Why? Because Jesus is on the inside. And when he's on the inside, and someone's moved in the inside of your life, everything changes.

Prior to getting married, where I lived looked differently on the inside of my residence than what it did after I got married. You know why? Because someone moved in. And when people would come visit my house after I was married, they would say, "Clearly, you're married." The house was clean. The house was spotless. The house was nice. Everything was set up. There were pictures on the wall. I lived with white walls until I got married. And I would beat up couches, I would take my clothes off and just lay them on a couch so that they were ready to wear the next day, right? And the house changed when my wife moved in. Subsequently, we had some other

people move into our house over the years. And there's evidence that it looks different now than what it used to look like when it was just the two of us. You see what I'm saying? If you've trusted in Jesus Christ and he's moved into your life, and he's beginning to live His life in and through you, which is the hope of glory, your life will change.

John is saying, "My life has changed. I'm not the same as I once was before, because Christ is now on the inside. He's my hope and I'm living to glorify Him. And because He's here, there's evidence in my life that my life is different." That's called our new identity. That's what the whole New Testament teaches. Second Corinthians 5:17 says, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the old things have passed away. Behold, all things have been made new." Why? Because Christ has come in. And Christ has come in, and as we've said many times from this pulpit, not to be resonant, but to be precedent. He's coming in to take over. He's coming in to take charge. And John is saying, "Everyone who believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself." What's that testimony? That testimony is Jesus Christ. They have Jesus Christ in themselves. That's what he's talking about.

Because here's what happens at the moment that you're converted. There's this divine exchange that takes place. I take all of my sin that I'm aware of, and I place that all on Jesus Christ and he removes all that as far as the East is from the West, and then I get all the fullness of Him coming into all my life. It's a divine exchange. So, the Gospel is not I prayed this prayer at the altar, so now I know I'm going to heaven. The gospel is I believe in Jesus Christ. and now He lives in me. And instead of the sin that

used to indwell me, He indwells me and He's giving me freedom for a whole new way to live. That's the indwelling power of the Spirit of God. Do you have that in your life? Every Christian has that in their life. That's not reserved for some good Christian out there or some real spiritual Christian out there. If you've been saved, the fullness of God has come to dwell in you.

And here's how we know. Because the Bible says in first Corinthians 12:13, "That the Holy Spirit at the moment of conversion baptizes us into the body of Christ." And the Holy Spirit is a person. So, you don't get piecemeal of the Holy Spirit. Some of them comes this day, and some of them comes that day. He's a person. He comes all the way in. He's indwelling you. And just as in Jesus Christ ministry, how the water and the blood and the Spirit testify, they testify in the life of a believer too. Because by believing in Christ, you are testifying that the blood of Christ has forgiven you from all your sins. You're testifying that Jesus is the Christ who died on the cross.

And then if you're obedient to Christ, the very next thing you're going to do is you're going to go into the waters of baptism, going public, and identifying with the fact that you've been buried therefore with Him by baptism into death. So, this Christ that was raised to the glory of the Father, you too, might walk in newness of life. And that water is going to testify for what you believed about the blood. And then the Spirit of God who already indwells you, you're going to continue to yield to him for the rest of your life.

Now, here comes the question, are you yielded to the Spirit? Are you yielded to

the Spirit? So, there's a lot of Christians that say, "Well, I trust Jesus. I know He's there, but I'm having a hard time walking it out." Now, here's how you know you're having a hard time walking it out. Have you ever had a situation in your life where you say, "I'm never going to do that again," and then you do it again? I know, "God, I'll never do that again." That's because of this reason for Christians and this reason only is because the Spirit of God is not leading you in that area of your life. It's because you know that you're saved and you're going to help God with your salvation. You know, that you're saved. So, muscle that one up, and you'll try to get through it, it will not work.

Here's how I know it will not work. It hasn't worked for you yet, has it? Let me save you some time. It never will. Now, here's the question. You have all the Holy Spirit in your life at the moment of conversion. Here's the question, does the Holy Spirit have all of you? There are all sorts of terms in the church that people use. I mean, churches get divided over this issue all the time over the baptism of the Spirit, the filling of the Spirit, the yielding of the spirit. Here's what I would say, is the spirit controlling you?

Ephesians 5:18 says, "Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to wastefulness, but be controlled by the Spirit." Being filled by the Spirit. In other words, are you allowing the Spirit who is in you to fill you up to overflowing and that you're living your life through Christ? Because what is the spirit want to testify to? That Jesus is the Christ. How does He want to do it? He wants to take your life and put it on display so the world can see what it looks like when a Spirit filled believer like you is living for the Lord Jesus Christ.

In other words, is He in control of all areas of your life? Are you yielding to Him? That's what John is saying. John is saying, "I am. That's who I am." And when Jesus indwells your life, here's what John says, "You know that you know." He says, "The one who does not believe God has made him a liar." You've made God a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has given concerning his Son. The testimony that God has given concerning his Son is that Jesus is the Christ, the eternal Son of God, that he's the only way to the Father. If you don't believe that, here's what your life screams daily in the heavenlies. "God, you're a liar. You're a total liar."

It's not that you're a good person who doesn't believe, you're telling God daily, by your lack of faith that God is a liar. Because God has given you everything you need to trust the Jesus Christ is Lord. He's given you the Word. He's given you general revelation. When you look at the world to say there has to be a God that did all this. And then he sent his Son into the world who put on flesh, who lived here, who died for the sins of the world, who rose from the dead, who testified to what He did, had all his followers continue to testify. And even the fact that you're here today, listening to this message is you hearing the Lord saying, "That's the testimony."

And here's the truth, that's the message you'll be held accountable to for all eternity forever and ever amen is that Jesus is the Christ. Now, whether you believe it on this side of heaven or not, whether you can push that out of your mind or not, one day for all eternity, whether you're in heaven or hell, you will know beyond a shadow of a doubt that everything I'm testifying today is true, and that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. See? That's what John is saying. John is saying, "That's

God's testimony about himself. That's my testimony about what God's done in my life because He's moved in. I exchanged my sin for his life. I repented. I believe. I'm yielding now to the Holy Spirit."

John is able to say that because he knows where he stands in position with God. Just because John was close to Jesus, it didn't give him an automatic entrance. Everybody has to come the same way. Everybody has to come through the cross. It's the only way of admittance into the kingdom. And sometimes, we get upset about that because we think somebody has either sinned too much, how could God forgive someone like that? Right? How could God forgive someone that sinned that much? Because Jesus Christ is Lord.

Others of us falsely believe that yeah, Jesus would have to die for them. But for me, I mean, we're just buds. I mean, I sinned but I sinned as bad as they sinned. So, in order to come to the cross, you must come to the same realization that Paul came to when he was writing to his young protegee, Timothy. In First Timothy, chapter one in verse 15, when he writes to them, and he says to Timothy, it is a trustworthy statement. When you read in the Bible, it means like, mark this down, this is a big deal. It is a trustworthy statement deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. And most Christians say Amen, brother, I get that. Now, Paul says this, "Among whom I am for most of all."

Now, some of us, if you haven't grown in your faith or haven't matured enough, you're going to read that like, "Yeah, Paul was way worse of a sinner than I was. I've

never done the bad stuff he's done." That's not what that's testifying to. What Paul is testifying to is his awareness of what the cross of Jesus Christ paid for in his life. You see, all of us, if we look internally would say, "Jesus Christ died for me, as well as the whole world. And among all sinners, whom I'm the worst." I would say that about myself. I know my sin. I've lived in my sin. I've been shamed by my sin. I don't look at other people and say, "Oh, they're way worse than I was. I look at me and say, "I know that if God could save me, he can save anybody."

And that's exactly what Paul says in the very next line in verse 16, "Yet for this reason, I found mercy so that in me as the foremost Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life." And then he breaks into praise, "Now to the king, eternal, immortal, invisible. The only God be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen." Here's what Paul's saying, "If God could save me, he can save anybody because look at how lousy I was." Any Christian worth their salt, who's growing would say the same thing. I mean, I've told you several times from this pulpit, if you knew me 30 years ago, you would say, "He'll never be my pastor."

If I told you stories about my past, some of you would get up and walk out and say, "I don't want him to be my pastor. I don't want a sinner like that. I want a good pastor. I want a guy that was homeschooled, went to Moody Bible Institute, went to seminary, rarely sinned. His worst sin was one time he said, shoot, when he got pulled over by a cop." And that ain't me. I know my sin. I've lived my sin. I hate it. And God's redeemed me from it so that God can use a sinner like me to say, "Jeff, I'm telling you,

you can save anybody." That's what Paul's saying. That's what John's testifying to. John's not testifying he's a good person, and that with Christ death and his good works, they combine to make a great team.

He's saying this, "Because of Christ's death, He took all my sin. I had nothing to offer him except my sin. I gave him all my sins. He gave me all his life. To Him be the glory forever and ever. Amen." That's the gospel of Jesus Christ. That is what John's testifying to. This is what God says about himself. This is what I'm saying about my experience with what God is saying. And then finally, he makes a declaration to the world. He says, "I do solemnly swear that eternal life is only available in Jesus Christ." He's telling the world that in Jesus Christ and Him alone, that's the only place of salvation. Notice what he says in verses 11 and 12. And the testimony is this, he's going to summarize all what he's been saying, "That God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son." He makes it really clear and I love this. "He who has the Son has the life. He who does not have the Son does not have the life." I mean, you can't get any simpler than that.

Here's what he declares that eternal life is found in the Son. Now think about eternal life. What is eternal life? Just think in your head, what would you say it is? What's eternal life? Most people think forever. Most people think eternity, right? "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life." Eternal life is not a place, it's a person. You will not perish, you will have the eternal life of God, His eternal Son in you. And because He's in you, you will not perish, you will live forever. The gospel is Christ in

you, the hope of glory. He who has the Son has the life. He who does not have the Son does not have the life, that's what John is saying, and you see this all throughout the scriptures.

You can write these verses down if you want. Romans 6:23, "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life." What's the gift of God? Eternal life in Christ Jesus, our Lord. He spells it out for us. The gospel is not just getting people out of hell to heaven, the gospel is getting Christ into the hearts of dead people who need him. And the byproduct of getting Christ in the hearts of people who need them is that they get to experience Him for all eternity. That's the Gospel. I'm not just sharing the Gospel to keep you out of hell. I mean, that's a benefit for sure. I'm sharing the Gospel because there's a God in heaven who loves you, who wants to indwell you and be in you and give you a new identity and a hope and a purpose and let you live your life for His glory so that he can pour His life in and through you. And as a byproduct of that, you get to enjoy that God for all eternity. That's the Gospel.

Because for many people that come to church, they'll say "I never heard that before. I just prayed some prayer because some counselor at the altar told me to pray a prayer and I go to heaven. I don't know if I am, but I think I am because I prayed that prayer." The prayer didn't save you. A desire to bring your sin to Jesus and to trust Him as Lord of your life and Him alone for the forgiveness of your sins did. And if He did, He dwells in you now and forevermore. That's the Gospel of Jesus Christ. That's why, there's another verse John, this is one of my favorite verses in the New Testament. John chapter five, when Jesus is talking to the religious leaders of the day,

John, chapter five in verse 39, he's talking to them, and these guys are skilled in Scripture knowledge.

Did you ever find those people in the church, they're so scripturally smart? They know everything. That was their Pharisees of the day. And I love the Word of God, so long as it teaches you about Jesus. He says, "You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life. It is these that testify about me, and yet you're unwilling to come to me so that you may have life." What was he telling them? You study the Scriptures, great. And you're studying to get eternal life. I am the eternal life standing right in front of you. They testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life, yet you keep your scriptures open and say how smart you are about the Scriptures and you've missed the whole point. You strain out a gnat, and you swallow a camel. The Gospel is that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God, and he wants to indwell your life now.

And the question is, do you want Him? And do you have Him? Because for most people, "I don't want that gospel. I just want the one that I got into heaven, where I just prayed that quick prayer, and then I could live my own sinful life." You won't find that in the pages of scripture. Jesus is the eternal life that wants to come and indwell you on the inside, so that you can live with Him forever and ever and he wants you to enjoy him now. That's what John is testifying to. And he's testifying to the world. He's telling anybody this, it doesn't matter what your background is, it doesn't matter what your heritage is, it doesn't matter who you think you are. It doesn't matter how you see

yourself. It means if you come to Jesus, your life is no longer your own. You are bought with a price. Therefore, you honor God with your body.

It means, you don't come to Christ and say, "Well, I'm a football player. And if Christ can bless that, then I'll give my life to him." No. You're a sinner that needs to be saved and if you come to Christ and you're saved, then Jesus Christ is in control of your life. Whether you ever play football again or not, it makes no difference. Yeah, but this is just kind of what I like, these are my likes. These are my dislikes. Which is better? If you're dead, if you get wheeled to the hospital today, because your heart stops beating, and your lungs aren't moving, and you're declared dead, and they're going to shock you back to life. You don't participate in that. You don't say, "Well, I'll come back as long as I'm given a nice pension, things go better." You don't say that, you're dead. You are dead.

I'm telling you. We were all spiritually still born. We're all born dead in our trespasses and sins. And at some time in our life, we have to trust that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father, and give our heart and life over to them. It is an act of our will. And once you act on your will to trust in Jesus Christ, over time, there will be evidence that you are indeed born again. Because He will indwell you and you will be testifying to the world when you're around all your friends, like, "Yeah, that's a way. That's good for you. And what's good for you is good for you. And what's good for me, it's good for me." And you'll say now, "What's good for the world is good for you, too. And Jesus Christ came for the world and He is the eternal life. And anyone who has the Son has the life and anyone who does not have the Son does not have the

life in the wrath of God remains upon him." That's a fact.

So, the question for you is, do you have the life? Have you ever confessed with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead? Have you ever done that? I mean, as you're listening to this message, I'm asking you, does Christ live in you? You say, "Well, how do I know?" You know because you've given God your sin and you've invited Christ to be the Lord of your life. Has that ever happened in your life? I'm not asking you pray the prayer as you got baptized. I'm not asking you to walk in the aisle right now. I'm not asking you to raise a hand. I'm not asking if you felt spiritually moved. I'm asking is Christ resident on the inside? Is he the God of your life? Now, here's where it gets uncomfortable, because religious people don't like this message. Because with religious people, this screwed up every experience I just had. Because I've kind of always been a Christian. No, you have not. You've always been loved by God.

There's been times where he may have wooed you where you felt something. There may be times where God introduced you to some people that loved him where you had an encounter. But the reality is that every single person that breathes must, at some point, trust that Jesus is the Christ to the glory of God the Father, when did you do that? It's not for you to look at your spouse, it's not for you look at your friend or your mom or your dad. When did you do that? When did Jesus Christ become the Lord of your life? And if you're kind of panicky and said, "Well kind of 80% sure, maybe 85."

Here's what I would tell you, before you leave here today, but right now, in this moment, you need to be 100% sure. The testimony the Spirit is giving is not everything

about the Bible. The testimony Jesus is giving is that not that you know everything about church, not that you understand all things. The testimony being given today is that Jesus is the Christ to the glory of God the Father, and do you have a relationship with Him. He came for you. He loves you. He lived the perfect life. He died for you. When he was on that cross, God, the Father was pouring all the wrath of your sin on Him. Meaning, even if there's nobody else in the world, God the Father was pouring all of Jeff Schwarzentraub's sin on Jesus Christ in that moment, and punishing and slaughtering his Son because of me. And he was doing the same because of you. Have you ever come to that realization?

So, the way I want to end our service today, before we take communion on both campuses, is give you an opportunity to respond to that gospel. I'm not going to have you raise a hand. I'm not going to have you walk in the aisle. I'm not going to have you testify with your mouth. But what I am going to do is I'm going to have you just stay in your seats, please stay in your seats, I'm going to have you stay in your seats on both campuses because I think this is a special moment. Because if you've never had an opportunity to make Jesus Christ, the Lord your life, I want you to make them the Lord of your life today. And then I'm going to have you to tell somebody after we're done today. So, on both campuses, all heads bow and all eyes closed, I just want you to reflect in your own heart and ask yourself this question. Does Jesus Christ indwell me? Is He there?

So, Lord we come before you now and we hear a message like this, and we

hear testimony of one of your apostles saying that Jesus is the Christ, and that's what you say about Jesus. And we hear him saying, I'm saying, that Jesus Christ indwells me. And then we're hearing said that, that's the only way to life and anyone who has the Son has the life and anyone who does not have the Son does not have the life. Here's the question, do you have the eternal life of God's one and only Son on the inside? Are you 100% sure? If you want to settle it today, on both campuses, I'm just saying, if you're the only one here saying, I need to settle this right now, would you just raise your hand right where you're at? Say, "I need to settle this right now. I need to know that I know that I know that Jesus is the Christ." Just raise your hand. Thank you.

Okay. Then here's how you're going to pray. Jesus, I recognize that I'm a sinner, that you died on the cross in my place for all my sins. That you rose from the dead as fully God and fully man, and that you're coming back. Right now, I repent of my sin and I turn to you, and I confess You as my personal Lord and Savior.

For some of you here today, you would say, I pray that I know that I'm 100% sure, I know for sure I'm going to heaven, there's no doubt. I know for sure the eternal Son of God dwells in me. Here's my question to you, does the Holy Spirit have complete control of your life? Is there any way in your life that you would say, Yeah, in this area I'm not yielded. In this area, He doesn't have control. As you're thinking about that area, if you'd like to be so bold, here's what I'd ask you to do, is to pray like this. Jesus, I know you're on the inside, but the life I'm living is not working because I'm still trying to control that. Holy Spirit, I relinquish this area of my life, and this specific cinema life or this specific hindrance in my life, this is yours.

I must become less in this area, you must become greater. Lord, from this moment on, I'm yielding to you. I will do whatever you show me. I will do whatever you say, so that you can be honored in my life. I give you all the glory, all the honor and the praise. Jesus have your way with us here on both campuses this morning. Lord, what's taking place here is eternal. It's your eternal life indwelling us and it's your eternal life being unleashed through the Spirit to do in and through us whatever you would desire. And Lord we want to be individuals, we want to be a church that glorifies your name. And so, Lord we give You all the praise and all the glory and all the honor in Jesus' name, amen.