

Sermon Discussion Guide

“The Authentic Life” Series

Part 5: Three Witnesses (1 John 5:1–13)

Icebreaker Questions: (*Option #1*): What is one thing you have now that you wished for or prayed for when you were younger? (*Option #2*): What is one random item that you like bringing with you wherever you go? (E.g., special pen, book to read, fidget spinner, deck of cards, protein bar, etc.)

Prayer: Take a few moments at the beginning of your group time to pray for God’s presence and blessing on your discussion. At the end of your gathering, pray for one another and ask God to use your time together to strengthen your faith and make you more like Jesus.

Read: 1 John 5:1–13

Big Idea: True assurance is found not by looking inward (at our own performance or worthiness), but by looking to Jesus, whom God himself has testified to be his Son and the source of eternal life. Looking to Jesus in faith leads to obedience, love, and victory.

Discussion Questions

1. What was the most encouraging, convicting, confusing, or thought-provoking part of the sermon or Scripture reading to you this week, and why?
2. Read v. 2. How is our love for others seen by our love for God and keeping his commands? (We often emphasize the other way around—that our love for God is seen by our love for others, which is also true, of course.)
3. Read v. 3. What does it mean that “[God’s] commands are not burdensome”? How have you experienced this in your life?
4. Read vv. 4–5. In what way(s) does our faith “overcome the world”? How have you experienced this in your life? (Also see John 16:33)
5. What is God testifying to in vv. 6–10? How does this give us security/assurance? What gives you security and assurance of salvation when Satan tempts you to doubt or despair? (This could be something from today’s text or something totally different.)
6. Read vv. 11–13. Why do you think John uses the present tense to describe our experience of eternal life? (e.g., v. 13 - you *have* eternal life) How is eternal life a present reality? How is it an “already, not yet” reality? What changes when we realize eternal life is not merely a future destination but a present possession in Christ?
7. What do you look forward to most about heaven?
8. Where do you see the gospel in today’s passage? How does today’s text and discussion make Jesus/the gospel more precious to you?
9. What is one specific way you would like to apply today’s Scripture passage or small group discussion this next week?

Scripture Reading

1 John 5:1–13 (NIV)

1 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well. 2 This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands. 3 In fact, this is love for God: to keep his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, 4 for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. 5 Who is it that overcomes the world? Only the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.

6 This is the one who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ. He did not come by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. 7 For there are three that testify: 8 the Spirit, the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement. 9 We accept human testimony, but God's testimony is greater because it is the testimony of God, which he has given about his Son. 10 Whoever believes in the Son of God accepts this testimony. Whoever does not believe God has made him out to be a liar, because they have not believed the testimony God has given about his Son. 11 And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. 12 Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.

13 I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.