

The Doctrine of Christ no 41

“The Life of Christ no. 4”

The Witness

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1 John 5:10 He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.

This verse of scripture has two parts to it. Number one it speaks of The Witness which is the Holy Spirit, and then it speaks of the Record that God Gave us concerning His Son.

We will focus our thoughts tonight on this first part alone, ***“He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself.”***

Now, again we see that this word ***“hath”*** was translated from the Greek word echo so this verse should read ***He that believeth on the Son of God echoes the Witness in himself.***

Now, we know there is a difference between just being a witness and THE Witness. For The Witness is the Holy Ghost Himself. ***1 John 5:6 And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.***

Now, we usually think of a witness as a person, another human being. But John tells us in ***1 John 5:9 If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater:***

And what greater witness could there be than the witness of the Spirit of God to us and through us.

Now, to understand what John is telling us here when he says, ***He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself***”, Let’s turn to the book of Romans for our answer.

In ***Romans 8:16*** The Apostle Paul says, ***“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God,”***

Now, if we are not careful we will read this verse completely the opposite of what it is telling us. Many Christians have wrestled this verse to their own destruction, because they have read it exactly the opposite of what it is telling them, and thus they place the emphasis on what they feel and what they witness within themselves instead of what God is witnessing of our spirit.

Many will mistake their own inner voice or their own imagination to be this witness of the Spirit of God to them. Although they might be enthusiastic, or as brother Branham would say, although they might be sincere, yet they are proven by God’s Word to be sincerely wrong.

Therefore when we read this Scripture, we should understand that it does not speak of our spirit bearing witness to anything much less to the Spirit of God. But Rather It says, ***The Spirit*** (which we know is speaking of God's Spirit for there is but one THE SPIRIT, and that is The Holy Spirit of God. And Paul says,) ***The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.*** And if The Spirit Itself then it is not speaking of another spirit but the one and Only spirit of God. Not God's spirit plus my spirit, and certainly it is not talking about my spirit bearing record with anything. But it tells us plainly that God's Spirit all by Itself is what bears witness with our spirit.

So we are not looking here at what we do, nor are we looking here at what we perceive, nor even what we feel in or with our own spirit, for our spirit has nothing to do with this verse of scripture in the sense that this verse is not talking about our spirit witnessing anything, but rather it speaks of God's spirit that is witnessing what is going on in our spirit. It speaks of what God Himself in His Spirit is bearing witness to.

And Paul said in **GALATIANS 6:3** ***For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.*** So it is not what you think that counts anything to God, but rather what He thinks is what really matters.

In **I JOHN 1:7** we read ***But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses us from all sin. 8 ¶ If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ONLY ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins,*** (and that means to say the same thing he says about them and not cover them up with our own justifications for them) ***he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.***

Now, those people who read **Romans 8:16** wrong, ***“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God,”*** read it as thus, ***“Our spirit beareth witness with His Spirit,”*** ...

The problem is that many people in reading this wrong try to convince themselves that it is their own spirit that is bearing witness with God's spirit and thus that makes them something. And they will not accept the sovereign position of God that he does not need them. No, rather, by taking the assumption that it is their own witness in their spirit and their own choosing, they null and void the witness of The Spirit and the choice that is reserved for God to make, and Him alone. For what good is your choice if it is not God's choice, and what good is it that you witness in your own spirit that you are what God has not made you to be.

Do you think that just because you feel it that that makes it right? Hogwash. I remember a man once told me that it was ok with Go that he divorce his wife and marry this other woman who had been married several times already, because he felt it. He said, the Spirit of God welled up in him when he kissed her and therefore it must be ok to marry her.

That man didn't know the difference between the spirit of lust and the Spirit of God. And The problem with reading this Scripture with a wrong understanding is that so many have done so for so long that it has produced only fanaticism instead of a heartfelt dying out to self. Amongst the fanatical fringe you will have those who are always witnessing in their spirit, this, that or the other. **But this Scripture does not speak of what we witness in our spirit, but what God witnesses in our spirit.** It says, *THE SPIRIT also beareth Witness with our spirit.* And how could The Spirit of God ever bear witness to just any spirit which is not born again in His own image. For to bear witness speaks of identification. And thus when the Spirit of God bears witness to your spirit it is not your human spirit He is bearing witness to, but rather His own Spirit that has come into you and made you a new creation in Christ Jesus.

We use the term in our daily conversations and say things like, *"I can bear witness to that.* And what we really mean is that we identify with that....

What happens though, is because the fanatic mindset is also a very devoted mindset, devoted to their fanatical and fringe ideas, and because we see it as a devoted mindset, therefore it is assumed by most observers that it is a sincere mindset, and after all we do not wish to slam a person because they are sincere. But those who walk in this state, become so heavenly minded that they have become of no earthly good, and as a result they turn others away because of there extreme mental condition, and then when others steer as far away from that sort of mindset, they loose touch themselves with the inner consciousness of the Spirit of God trying to direct their soul into the Deeper things of His word. And thus they go to the starchy side.

It seems then that in Christianity, we run into one extreme or the other? You either see those who are so void of sincerity that they come off as either very dry and starchy Christians, or on the other hand you see those who are so super duper sincere, that their sincerity blinds you to the fact that they are so far off the Truth that they have become almost mystical in their approach to the Word, and everything to them has some great super spiritual significance.

And didn't brother Branham say we should keep in the middle of the road. We should keep a sufficient distance from that spirit of error and enthusiasm, and yet without denying the gift of God, and his calling to us, and our sensitivity to His Spirit moving among us and in us.

In order to walk with a balance as His children, we need to consider walking in His presence and having the proper fear of God, First, because after all, the fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom. .

Therefore, we must ask ourselves, **what is this witness or testimony** of the Spirit? The real question should be, **what is the testimony of God's Spirit;** and, how does **He, God,** **"bear witness with our spirit** that we are the children of God?"

Let's turn to the Book of John and see what the Word of God tells us concerning this Witness that God has concerning His Son. For here is the pattern that we must follow.

In **JOHN 5:30** Jesus Said, *I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.* 31 ¶*If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true.* 32 *There is another that beareth witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true.* 33: *Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth.* 34 *But I receive not testimony from man: but these things I say, that ye might be saved.* 35 *He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light.* 36 *But I have greater witness than [that] of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.*

Notice that Jesus is telling us that the witness of man, no matter who it is, is still not good enough. The witness must come from The Spirit, or The Father Himself.

37 And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape. 38 *And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not.* 39 *Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.* 40 *And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.*

Secondly. How is this joint testimony of God's Spirit and our own, clearly and solidly distinguished from the presumption of a natural mind, and from the delusion of the devil? We can not even consider what is the witness of our own spirit. That is where man has gone so wrong in the past. *There is a way which seemeth right unto man, but the way is the way of death.* God also said in , **Isaiah 55:8** *For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD.*

We also see in **1 John 2:5**: *“Hereby we know, that we do know him, if we keep his commandments.” “Whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: Hereby know we that we are in him; that we are indeed the children of God.*

Therefore the only way we know that our Spirit is bearing witness with His Spirit is that we keep His Word. That is what the obedient Son is all about. Not obedient out of fear or retribution, but obedient because we have the same thoughts about it as He does.

And again we see in **1 John 2: 29**, *“If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him “*

And again from **1 John 3:19** *“Hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him;” for if our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our hearts.*

Now, that ought to tell you right there that it is not what your heart condemns or does not condemn, nor is it what your heart bears witness to or does not bear witness to, but simply put, it is what God bears witness to that really matters in the final countdown.

Therefore it is not what you bear witness to in your heart, because we are told in **Jeremiah 17:9** *The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?*

Therefore God does not leave it up to your heart to do or not to do, to know or not to know, or to bear witness or not to bear witness, but He knows the heart, that is for sure.

1 Thessalonians Chapter 2 Verse 4 *But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts.*

Psalms Chapter 7 Verse 9 *Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but establish the just: for the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins.*

And it does not come down to what you do either for there are those who think they do, and even think they are doing the Lord's will, and yet in the final analysis they are not even given credit for what they do, do... Jesus told us they will say, *Have not we done this in your name and that in your name, and he will say, depart from me ye that work iniquity, for I never knew you."*

So it all comes down to this. God must bear witness with your spirit that you are a son of God, and that places the preeminence back in Him where it must stay.

And yet how does it appear that these people can see themselves doing these works for God when God Himself does not even acknowledge their works? Well, if they do and God does not think they are doing, then It would appear that they are not really doing for God, Because God gives them no credit whatsoever.

Then the question still remains, How does it appear, that they do love God and their neighbor, and that they keep his commandments and yet are not given credit for it?

But the question that arises here is not how does it appear to God what they are doing, but rather how did it appear to themselves. For to themselves they thought they were identifying with the Spirit of God when God did not identify with them. He said, *depart from me for I don't even know you.*

Now, we must ask ourselves, **what is this witness** or this **testimony** of the spirit? The real question should be, **what is the testimony of God's Spirit**; and, how does **He "bear witness with our spirit** *that we are the children of God?"* **Secondly**. How is this joint testimony of God's Spirit and our own, clearly and solidly distinguished from the presumption of a natural mind, and from the delusion of the devil?

Therefore in examining this Scripture that speaks of God bearing witness to our spirit we must be careful not to think in terms that our own spirit is the one that bears witness because the Apostle Paul is so far from speaking of the testimony of our own spirit *only*, that it may be questioned whether he speaks of it at all. The Apostle had just said, in the preceding verse, *"Ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father;"* and immediately he adds, *"The same Spirit beareth witness to our spirit, that we are the children of God."* Thus He, the Spirit of God witnesses this *at the same time*

that he enables us to cry Abba, Father. And as I have already said, the testimony of your own spirit, although a good thing, because it keeps you in check, yet is still a very deceiving thing. Therefore, it is the Witness of God's Own Spirit Himself, to your spirit and for your spirit, that is what counts in the final estimate. Let's face it, if we believe in the sovereignty of God, then our bearing witness to Him adds nothing to Him, nor does our not bearing witness to Him take away from what He is. Then what really matters in the end is that He bears witness of us, for if he does not bear witness of us we are lost and will remain lost.

The acts of obedience in doctrine, in speech, in actions, and in submitting our will to God's will is our outward show that we have identified with our role as a son, but these however, do not prove you to be a son. However, when you are proven to be a son by the witness of God's Spirit, then the acts will help your own understanding of the role God has set before you to play out as a son.

The Apostle Paul said in, **1 Corinthians 14:20** *“Brethren, be not children in understanding; in malice” or wickedness “be ye children; but in understanding be ye men;”*

Every man applying those scriptural marks to himself, may know whether he is a child of God. Thus, if we know, First, *“as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God;”*

Secondly, you might reason, I am *“led by the Spirit of God;”* and thus you conclude, *“Therefore I am a son of God.”*

Paul said in **ROMANS 9:1** ¶ *I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost,*

Now our conscience is the testimony of our own spirit; that God hath given us to be holy of heart, and holy in outward conversation. It is a consciousness of our having received, in and by the Spirit of adoption, those characteristics mentioned in the word of God, as belonging to his adopted children. Thus we are conscious of having a loving heart toward God, and a loving heart toward all mankind; And we hang with child-like confidence onto, God our Father's Word, desiring nothing but him, casting all our care upon him, and embracing every child of God with earnest, tender affection: A consciousness that we are inwardly conformed, by the Spirit of God, to the image of his Son, and that we walk before him in justice, mercy, and truth, doing the things which are pleasing in his sight.

But, still in all this we can deceive our selves. Jesus said in **John 5:30**, *“If I bear witness of myself my witness is not true”*. Therefore, the witness in our own soul although very good does not really matter. I can claim God as my father all I want, but until he claims me, what good will it do me? This is the very argument that Jesus had with the Pharisees. They began by claiming to be seed of Abraham, and when Jesus pointed out to them that Abraham had two seeds coming forth from him, one by promise and the other by an act of the flesh, then they claimed that God was their father. And Jesus laid out the grounds

for whom you can claim. He said you will do the deeds of your father. **This is your witness in the spirit.** If you are a REAL Son of God you will do the things your father God shows you to do. So the witness in your spirit of The Spirit is the condition of your spirit in response to the things of God.

JOHN 8:32 *And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. 33 They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free? 34 Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. 35 And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever. 36 If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. 37 I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my Word hath no place in you. 38 ¶ I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father. 39 They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. 40 But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham. 41 Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, [even] God. 42 Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. 43 Why do ye not understand my speech? [even] because ye cannot hear my word. 44 **Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. 45 And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not. 46 ¶ Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me? 47 He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God. 48 Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil? 49 Jesus answered, I have not a devil; but I honour my Father, and ye do dishonour me. 50 And I seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth. 51 ¶ Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death. 52 Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death. 53 Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself? 54 Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God: 55 Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his saying.***

But what is that testimony of God's Spirit? How does he "bear witness with our spirit that we are the children of God?" It is hard to find words in any language to explain "the deep things of God." Indeed, there are none that adequately express what we experience.

But to the best of my ability I can say, the testimony of the Spirit is an inward impression on the soul, whereby the Spirit of God directly witnesses to my spirit, that I am a child of God; that Jesus Christ hath loved me, and given himself for me; and that all my sins are blotted out, and I, even I, am reconciled to God.

The testimony of the Spirit of God must come before the testimony of our own spirit. We must be holy of heart, and holy in life, before we can be conscious that we are so; before we can have the testimony of our spirit, that we are inwardly and outwardly holy. But we must love God, before we can be holy at all; this being the root of all holiness. Now we cannot love God, till we know he loves us. "*We love him, because he first loved us.*" And we cannot know his pardoning love to us, until his Spirit witnesses it to our spirit. Since, therefore, this testimony of his Spirit must precede the love of God and all holiness, of consequence it must precede our inward consciousness thereof, or the testimony of our spirit concerning them.

Then, and not till then, when the Spirit of God beareth witness to our spirit, that "God hath loved thee, and given his own Son to be the propitiation for thy sins; the Son of God hath loved thee, and has washed you from your sins by his blood," — "we love God because he first loved us;" and, for his sake, we love our brother also. And of this we cannot but be conscious to ourselves: We "know the things that are freely given to us of God." We know that we love God, and keep his commandments; and "hereby also we know that we are of God." This is that testimony of our own spirit, which, so long as we continue to love God and keep his commandments, becomes a union with the testimony of God's Spirit, "that we are the children of God."

It is he that not only worketh in us every manner of thing that is good, but also shines upon his own work, and clearly shows what he has wrought. Accordingly, this is spoken of by St. Paul, as one great end of our receiving the Spirit, "that we may know the things which are freely given to us of God:" That he may strengthen the testimony of our conscience, touching our "simplicity and godly sincerity;" and give us to discern, in a fuller and stronger light, that we now do the things which please him.

Should it still be inquired, "How does the Spirit of God 'bear witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God,' so as to exclude all doubt, and the reality of our sonship?", the answer is clear.

The joint testimony of our spirit and the Spirit of God, our Father is this, that we lay down our own will in favor of His Will. Jesus said, "Not my will but Thy will be done." And that is the testimony of The Spirit with our Spirit. We identify and do the Will of the Father. That is how our will also identifies with His Will, and that His Will is preeminent in us over our very own will.

REV Chapter 4 PT 2 24 Elders 61-0101 321 *Sanctify this little church this morning, Lord. Sanctify every person in here with Thy Spirit, and let the Holy Ghost come into their hearts, each one of us. Freshen up the Spirit in them Who's already opened their*

hearts through their self-will, has denied their own will and has come to know Your will.

There you are. It is a letting go of your own will and receiving the will of the Father. That is the witness of His Spirit, His Will in your spirit.

231 "How is self-will? Why will you call that self-will, Brother Branham?" Because it puts a man and woman back again just like Adam and Eve at the garden of Eden, On what? The two trees? Self-will, this one is death. This one is Life, self-will. Free moral agency... God placed the first man, Adam and Eve, right here on free moral agency. He places you the same place. And the only way that you can get this thing fixed in here is your own self-will. Hallelujah. Your self-will. **You have to will to do God's will. You have to get rid of your own will to let God's will come in,** for this is the only channel that leads to the heart.

232 Oh, you can join church, you Baptists and Presbyterians. And you Methodists and Pilgrim Holiness can come to sanctification. But **you have to will to do God's will,** self-will, to let the Holy Spirit come in here to bring forth: "These signs shall follow them that believe; In My Name they shall cast out devils. They shall speak with new tongues. They shall lay their hands on the sick, or take up deadly things, and so forth. These signs shall follow them that has let their will become My will, and the works that I do shall they do also." I hope you don't miss it. **There's a will to do God's will.** You see what I mean?

308 Now, "the mercy seat..." Now, the mercy seat's in the heart, seat where the shining forth of His Glory in all of His children, the Shekinah Glory in the human heart. Here's the human heart. Is that right? Is that the mercy seat? How do you come through it into that, through these different systems? Through self-will, self-will, comes into here, and through there comes out what? Shekinah Glory. What--what is the Shekinah Glory? It's God's Presence. And when a man's walking, or a woman, **he's reflecting the Shekinah Glory.** He don't go into gambling dens, and--and carry on, and go out here and deny the Word. **No matter what the people says, he's got his heart set on one thing: God.** And if he's truly called of God, then **Jesus Christ reflects Himself through him with the Shekinah Glory, doing the same things** He did back there, manifesting the **same Gospel, preaching the same Word,** same Word being made manifest in the **same measure** it was then; just like it was truly at Pentecost it's measured back again. Oh, my.

1 John 5:10 *He that believeth on the Son of God echoes the witness in himself,* and The Witness we echo is God's Spirit. Let's bow our heads in prayer...