

John 5: Seven Testimonies of Jesus

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The Gospel of John reveals itself in part in a series of “sevens”. Seven signs & miracles performed by Jesus; seven confessions of faith; seven “I AM” statements; seven waters; seven life statements by Jesus; seven feasts; seven testimonies of Jesus. It is this last point that is addressed in the second half of John 5.

The Gospel of John uses the word testimony/testify 35 times. Oddly, the word “witness” is only used two times, and both times refer to John. Later in Revelation Jesus is called a witness of God too (Revelation 1:5 *and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth*), which might answer the identity of the two “witnesses” in Revelation 11:3. John’s Gospel spends particular time revealing seven things that testify to Jesus.

1. Jesus Himself

It is clear that Jesus bore witness of Himself, but only after others had done so (John 10:24-25). We often point out that Jesus never plainly stated I AM THE CHRIST unless it was confessed beforehand (John 4:25-26, Mark 14:62, Mark 15:2, Matthew 16:18) or if it was directly inferred (John 9:36-37). Jesus clearly expected US to make the confession of His identity.

2. John the Baptist

As we mentioned before, John the Baptist was the unique witness of the Christ. God had told him what to look for in the Christ rather than who the Christ was, so that he would then reveal Jesus. John *“came as a witness, to testify about the Light, so that all might believe through him”* (John 1:7). John was prepared and prophesied of ahead of time.

3. Works

Jesus said that the works He performed are a greater testimony than John. Consider that when John questioned whether Jesus was the One, Jesus pointed to the works He had done in Matthew 11:3-5 (which were prophesied to be works of the Messiah in Isaiah 35:4-6). Works in general testify that God is operating through someone (Matthew 9:5-7), so Jesus’ unique miracles testify to His identity.

4. The Father

Jesus continues in John 5 to say that the Father offers a greater testimony than any other. He notes that His audience had not heard the voice of the Father; perhaps this is similar to the way they could not hear God in Exodus 19:19 (Deuteronomy 4:12). But we know that three times in the life of Jesus the Father spoke from heaven; first at His baptism (Matthew 3:17); second at His transfiguration (Luke 9:35); and finally when Jesus asked the Father to glorify His (THE) Name (John 12:28). All three are a testimony to the identity of Jesus.

5. Moses and the Scriptures

The last of the testimonies mentioned in John 5 is the Scriptures, or Moses as they are personified. Jesus would say that *“if you believed Moses, you would believe Me, for he wrote about Me”*. We know that Scriptures are the foundation of the testimony of Jesus; His disciples would use them repeatedly to introduce Jesus (Acts 26:22, Acts 8:35)

6. The Holy Spirit

Later in the Gospel of John Jesus would point to the coming of the Holy Spirit (in Acts 2) as One who testifies of His identity. "*When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me*" (John 15:26). Consider this a parallel to the testimony of Number 11:25.

7. The Apostles

When the Holy Spirit had come, He would enable the Apostles to testify to Jesus. "*And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning*" (John 15:27). They would reveal the truth of Jesus, as John does in this Gospel: "*This is the disciple who is testifying to these things and wrote these things, and we know that his testimony is true*" (John 21:24).

Scriptures repeatedly tell us that "by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established" (2 Corinthians 13:1, Matthew 18:16, Hebrews 10:28). Consider how much more perfect the testimony of the identity of Jesus as the Christ is from these seven testimonies!