The Case for the Son

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Primary Scripture: 1 John 5:7–12

I. The Testimony of God Concerning His Son

> For there are three that testify: the Spirit and the water and the blood. And these three agree. If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater, for this is the testimony of God that he has borne concerning his Son. Whoever believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself. Whoever does not believe God has made him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has borne concerning his Son. And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life. — 1 John 5:7–12

Having an Answer for the Hope Within Us

We're always supposed to have an answer for those who ask us for the hope that is within us. We're supposed to do that with meekness whenever we speak to somebody.

We have to account for the fact that God is going to draw them to himself. That's what the Word of God tells us.

The entirety of the Gospel, the entirety of the books that are in this book that we call the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, is a Christocentric theme.

The central claim is that God's testimony concerning Jesus is trustworthy and decisive and that eternal life is the gift of God.

Victorious Faith: Overcoming the World

In 1 John 5:1–5, he connects believing that Jesus is the Christ with:

• Being born of God.

• Loving God's children.

• Keeping God's commandments.

• Overcoming the world.

Verse 6 identifies Jesus as the one who came by water and blood. And then the Spirit testifies because the Spirit is truth.

Verses 7–12 explain the testimony and its consequence. God has testified about his Son, and eternal life is in him.

When you read the entirety of this section of Scripture and you see the word testifying and the word testimony, this is what holds the paragraph and the verses together, because the entirety of this section is about God and the testimony that he has given about his Son.

II. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit

You have three different schools of thought on the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. One of them is modalism. The other one is partialism, and the other one is Arianism.

A. Modalism

God is one in different modes. That means that he's one person, and this Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, they have to cease in one to be able to function as the other. They change modes, and that's how they operate.

B. Partialism

Father, Son, and Spirit as well, but they're not fully God. They're just partially God. Think of a relationship in a business where you have partners, three of them, 33⅓ percent equal partners. That would be partialism.

C. Arianism

This early Christian theological position that was actually started by the Alexandrian priest Arius, back in 250 to 336, holding that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is a created being distinct from and subordinate to God the Father.

He doesn't think that they're both co-eternal, and they're not of the same substance.

III. The Three That Testify

A. Jesus Christ Has Come in the Flesh

1 John 5:6

> This is he who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ; not by the water only but by the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth.

It is commonly understood that this water and blood conversation has to do with the blood of the cross of Christ, but the water is when Jesus, in Matthew chapter 3, goes and gets baptized by John the Baptist.

When he comes up, you hear God say, “This is my Son in whom I'm well pleased.”

I personally think that it has to go before that because of what happens in the conversation of John chapter 3 between Jesus and Nicodemus.

It is not a well-accepted type of reading of the Word, but that's what I believe it has to do with.

1 John 4:2

> By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God.

2 John 7

> For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. Such a one is the deceiver and the antichrist.

There was this guy named Cerinthus back in those days, in the time of John, that his job was to go around and tell people that though this Jesus was a figure, he did not become God until the

Spirit of God descended on him at that moment of baptism.

That Spirit actually departed from him before he actually went onto the cross, because as God he could not be allowed to go onto the cross with this Spirit inside of him.

John, as he's writing this, is trying to dispel all of these notions.

• He's fighting the Gnostics.

• He's fighting this guy Cerinthus.

• He's fighting a bunch of different people that are putting out heresies.

This book itself, to me, is one of the most apologetic books that you can find.

B. Textual Note About Verses 7 and 8

This is actually what is known as the Comma Johanneum.

The earliest and strongest Greek manuscripts do not support this as evidence. We have not found that particular section in the early manuscripts.

When it reads that the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost bear witness in heaven, that has not been located in the earlier manuscripts.

What we have settled on, which is actually what we have in the manuscripts, is what it says:

The Spirit, the water, and the blood. And these three agree.

C. The Evidence of Two or Three Witnesses

This idea of testimony or witnesses, we have to take into consideration that the Apostle John is dealing with something that comes from the Old Testament.

Deuteronomy 19:15

> A single witness shall not suffice against a person for any crime or for any wrong in connection with any offense that he has committed. Only on the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses shall a charge be established.

The Apostle John is being biblically accurate with what he's doing. He's making sure that they understand it's not just going to be one person.

Jesus tells us in the Bible that he doesn't even witness of himself. He says that the Father and the Spirit are going to testify of him. He's going to have other people do that for him, i.e., his Father and the Holy Spirit.

D. The Spirit, the Water, and the Blood

The Spirit is truth and bears witness to Jesus. Water and blood are less certain. Several readings have been proposed.

I believe in the birth and the death being the fact of the witnesses of the water when he was born of his mother, of that virgin birth.

The reading emphasizes the Son's real entrance into human life and his real death. It fits John's broader insistence that Jesus Christ came in the flesh.

1 John 4:2–3

> By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already.

IV. God's Testimony Is Greater

Jesus knows that the testimony of men, what they're going to give him, can only go so far. It needs to be something that the Father or the Spirit had given him.

A. What You Have Seen and Heard

Luke 7:22

> And he answered them, “Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them.”

He tells this person that was sent to him to go back and give them a report as to what they've actually seen happening on the outside.

B. My Lord and My God

John 20:24–29

> Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord.” But he said to them, “Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe.”
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> Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe.”
>
> Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!” Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

Thomas actually went to India and preached to a group of people there that believe in 300 million deities, meaning that God is in everything and is everything.

He ended up giving his life because of going there to preach the Gospel of the risen Savior, Jesus Christ.

This is a guy who didn't believe unless he could actually feel and see something. But then he goes out there and he gives his life based on what he actually saw.

To me, this is one of the strongest evidences for the reality of Christianity: the disciples being able to actually turn their life around and to be able to give their life based on what they have witnessed.

It's very easy to give your life for something that you think is true but don't know is a lie. How many people actually do you know that are willing to give their life up for something that they know is a lie?

> Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.

That speaks of you. That speaks of me. Whoever has actually sold their life out for Christ, not having seen him, but yet do believe.

V. Yahweh on the Witness Stand

1 John 5:9

> If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater. For this is the testimony of God that he has borne concerning his Son.

What does Yahweh's own testimony say about the Son?

• Who are you, and who is your Son in relation to you?

• When and where have you provided witness or testimony to your Son's essence and deity?

A. The Lord Is One

Yahweh the Father, Yahweh the Son, and Yahweh the Holy Spirit.

Deuteronomy 6:4

> Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.

Genesis 1:1

> In the beginning, God created.

We have an uncreated spiritual being who's able to actually affect the material world. I'm just going to take it at his Word.

Isaiah 45:5–6

> I am the LORD, and there is no other, besides me there is no God. There is none besides me; I am the LORD, and there is no other.

Isaiah 43:10

> You are my witnesses, declares the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen, that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. Before me no god was formed, nor shall there be any after me.

B. Yahweh on Earth and Yahweh in Heaven

Genesis 19:24

> Then Yahweh rained on Sodom and Gomorrah sulfur and fire from Yahweh out of heaven.

Did he just say that Yahweh was on earth when he was actually there? Was he raining sulfur and fire from heaven out of Yahweh in heaven? Didn't he just say that the Lord is one?

How many ends are on this one wire? You have one wire; you have two ends.

The Bible reminds us that God is everywhere.

C. Emmanuel: God With Us

Matthew 1:23–25

> Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which means, God with us. Joseph woke from his sleep. He did as the angel of the Lord commanded

> him. He took his wife, but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

Let's say that he was not indwelled by God himself, and he is a man. Let's say he's a holy man, a righteous man.

When God tells us that we are to hear him and that we are going to actually give this Jesus worship, would that be blasphemy? That you'd actually take a being that is less than God and actually worship that being himself?

That would totally contradict what God wanted us to do in the law.

> You shall have no other gods before me, and you shall have no graven images.

God with us himself, leaving the infinite realm, coming into the finite realm, going into that human body in that flesh and actually being fully God and fully man.

D. The Glory of Yahweh

Isaiah 42:8

> I am the LORD; that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to carved idols.

John 17:4–5

> I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.

Yahweh says, “I am the LORD. That is my name. My glory I give to no other.” Jesus said that he had this glory with Yahweh before the world existed.

Yahweh the Father, Yahweh the Son, and Yahweh the Holy Spirit: three persons, one being.

We like to actually see if this three-pound brain that we have can fit a universe-sized God in it.

VI. The Seed of the Woman

Genesis 3:15

> I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.

The devil thought that when he got Adam and Eve to disobey God and to actually commit sin, and then to actually sever the relationship with Yahweh, that he had won.

He had the allegiance of the only two existing beings at that time, and because of doing so, that now somehow, someway, everything that was going to be procreated out of that was going to be a fallen humanity, never having the opportunity of recuperating.

What he didn't expect was that Yahweh would implant a seed into a virgin woman who never knew a man.

I'm actually of the clan that says that there is such a thing as original sin. And that being the case, without having a man in that woman's life bypasses that situation.

You have a spiritual being, Satan, who went into some type of being. We call it the serpent.

It was a spiritual being that went into that and is the one that planted the seed of disobedience and sin into humanity.

So wouldn't it have to be that a spiritual being would actually have to go into another person for there to be something else that comes out that is holy, to actually reverse that?

VII. The Son Is Creator and Not Creature

A. The Word Was God

John 1:1–3

> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made.

John 1:14

> And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Throughout the whole entire Bible, New Testament and Old Testament, you're going to find out that in the Old Testament, though you may think it's Yahweh, it's actually Jesus himself being the Creator.

Nehemiah 9:6–8

> You are the LORD, you alone. You have made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them; and you preserve all of them; and the host of heaven worships you.
>
> You are the LORD, the God who chose Abram and brought him out of Ur of the Chaldeans and gave him the name Abraham. You found his heart faithful before you, and made with him the covenant to give to his offspring the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, and the Girgashites. And you have kept your promise, for you are righteous.

B. Everyone Who Calls on the Name of the Lord

Joel 2:32

> And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those who escape, as the LORD has said, and among the survivors shall be those whom the LORD calls.

Where is that in the New Testament? The book of Acts, chapter 2.

C. The Messenger of the Covenant

Malachi 3:1

> Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts.

- Who's sending the messenger? Yahweh.
- Who is this messenger? John the Baptist.

- Who is he making the way straight for? Jesus.
- Who's coming to the temple? Jesus.

D. My Name Is in Him

Exodus 23:20–22

> Behold, I send an angel before you to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place that I have prepared. Pay careful attention to him and obey his voice; do not rebel against him, for he will not pardon your transgression, for my name is in him.

In Exodus chapter 3, in the burning bush, we saw the angel of the Lord. The name of Yahweh is in the angel of the Lord.

E. Your Throne, O God

Hebrews 1:5–12

> For to which of the angels did God ever say, “You are my Son, today I have begotten you”? Or again, “I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son”? And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, “Let all God's angels worship him.” Of the angels he says, “He makes his angels winds, and his ministers a flame of fire.”
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> But of the Son he says, “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions.”
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> And, “You, Lord, laid the foundation of the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the work of your hands; they will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment, like a robe you will roll them up, like a garment they will be changed. But you are the same, and your years will have no end.”

This is Yahweh giving testimony to his Son in the New Testament, talking about the scepter of righteousness, talking about there will never be any end.

And he calls him God.

VIII. Scriptures That Would Intimate That Jesus Is Not God

There are some texts in the Bible that you will read in the New Testament and you say, “Well, this seems to intimate that Jesus is not God.”

If you're sitting there on the street talking to somebody who's half educated, you might find yourself in a pickle if you don't know how to resolve this.

A. Concerning That Day and Hour

Matthew 24:36

> But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only.

I'm just going to say very lovingly that assuming that he does not know, I think, is committing biblical suicide.

In the New Testament, Jesus calls us the bride. He calls himself the bridegroom.

B. The Bride and the Bridegroom

The Payment

In Jewish tradition, the groom paid a price to the bride's family. That, of course, was ahead of the wedding. This payment was a compensation for losing her contribution to the household.

We, as the Church, have a contribution to planet Earth. Yahweh, with his Son, has to pay a dowry. Jesus paid that with his life on the cross.

The Shared Cup of Wine

After the engagement process, the betrothal, the couple would drink from a shared cup of wine to seal that covenant. During the Last Supper, Jesus gives his disciples that cup and says, “This is my blood.” The bride drinking that blood represents the groom's life poured out for her.

The Purification Process

Before the wedding, the bride would need to undergo a purification process, and it's called mikvah. It's a process where the bride would actually have to be put into a pool of water to be cleansed, to be purified. It's called baptism.

The moment that you do that, you're supposed to be leaving behind the old life, and you're coming out anew. You're coming out to live a new life.

Preparing a Place

The groom leaves. He goes back to his father's house to prepare a place. This is what the groom does for his bride in these Jewish traditions.

He told us that he's going to prepare a place for us. And if it were not true, he would not tell us so.

The Comforter

When the groom leaves, the bride is given a token. Jesus told us that he would have to go before the Comforter would come.

In that Jewish tradition, there would have to be witnesses to testify of that union that was about to happen. And what does Jesus say when he leaves?

He will testify of me.

The Father Declares the Time

The only one that was allowed to say when the groom was coming back in that tradition is the father. The father is the only one that's allowed to say that.

Does that mean that the groom doesn't know? No.

St. Augustine and a bunch of other people, in this very specific section of Scripture, what Jesus was saying was that it was not for him to declare. He wasn't saying anywhere that he didn't know.

The Bride Must Be Ready

Most arrivals of the groom to the bride were unexpected because the bride was supposed to always be ready for his arrival. Did Jesus not say to the ten virgins to stay ready?

The Celebration at the Father's House

After the wedding, the bride is taken to the father's house for celebration.

> I will not drink this fruit of the vine from now until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

They would actually have a very first cup of wine after their union.

C. I Can Do Nothing on My Own

John 5:30

> I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge, and my judgment is just, because I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me.

That demonstrates that Jesus is not God, right, because he's not doing his own will?

No, it actually just demonstrates their unity, because you're not going to have a united being where one's doing one thing and the other one's doing another.

He's just simply pointing out the fact that that which I do is because the Father is also doing, and I see and I do what I see my Father doing.

D. If I Alone Bear Witness About Myself

John 5:31

> If I alone bear witness about myself, my testimony is not true.

He's expecting the Father to provide testimony to him.

E. Now We Know That You Know All Things

John 16:29–30

> His disciples said, “Ah, now you are speaking plainly and not using figurative speech! Now we know that you know all things and do not need anyone to question you; this is why we believe that you came from God.”

I didn't read anywhere in that section of Scripture where Jesus said, “No, don't forget I told you that I don't know the hour, so I don't know all things.”

If we're going to be biblically honest, we have to do the same thing.

When he was sitting there in Matthew chapter 4, and he was being tempted by the devil, and the devil told him to go ahead and bow down to him, and that he was going to give him the world that was in front of him, Jesus didn't dispute that.

He didn't say anything to him, “No, that's not your world. That's my Father's world.” Why? Because the devil wasn't lying.

Neither are the disciples here when they said:

Now we know that you know all things and do not need anyone to question you.

IX. A Unique Day Which Is Known to the Lord

A. His Feet Shall Stand on the Mount of Olives

Zechariah 14:1

> Behold, a day is coming for the LORD, when the spoil taken from you will be divided in your midst.

Zechariah 14:4

> On that day his feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives that lies before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall be split in two from east to west by a very wide valley, so that one half of the Mount shall move northward, and the other half southward.

On that day, his feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives. On what day?

B. This Jesus Will Come in the Same Way

Acts 1:10–11

> And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.”

C. It Is Known to the Lord

Zechariah 14:7

> And there shall be a unique day, which is known to the LORD, neither day nor night, but at evening time there shall be light.

It's known to the Lord. This Zechariah 14 is speaking of Yeshua. Somebody else might have another opinion, but that's mine.

And there shall be a unique day which is known to the LORD.

Scripture Reference Section

Old Testament

Genesis 1:1 — In the beginning, God created.

Genesis 3:15 — The offspring of the woman.

Genesis 19:24 — Yahweh rained sulfur and fire from Yahweh out of heaven.

Exodus 3 — The angel of the Lord in the burning bush.

Exodus 20:3–4 — No other gods; no graven images.

Exodus 23:20–22 — My name is in him.

Deuteronomy 6:4 — The LORD is one.

Deuteronomy 19:15 — The evidence of two or three witnesses.

Nehemiah 9:6–8 — You are the LORD, you alone.

Psalm 139:7–10 — God is everywhere.

Isaiah 42:8 — My glory I give to no other.

Isaiah 43:10 — Before me no god was formed.

Isaiah 45:5–6 — I am the LORD, and there is no other.

Joel 2:32 — Everyone who calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.

Zechariah 14:1 — A day is coming for the LORD.

Zechariah 14:4 — His feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives.

Zechariah 14:7 — A unique day which is known to the LORD.

Malachi 3:1 — The messenger of the covenant.

New Testament

Matthew 1:23–25 — Emmanuel, God with us.

Matthew 3:13–17 — The baptism of Jesus.

Matthew 4:8–10 — The temptation of Jesus.

Matthew 24:36 — Concerning that day and hour.

Matthew 25:1–13 — The ten virgins.

Matthew 26:27–29 — The cup and the Father's kingdom.

Luke 7:22 — Go and tell John what you have seen and heard.

John 1:1–3 — The Word was God.

John 1:14 — The Word became flesh.

John 3 — Jesus and Nicodemus.

John 5:19 — What the Son sees the Father doing.

John 5:30 — I can do nothing on my own.

John 5:31 — If I alone bear witness about myself.

John 14:2–3 — I go to prepare a place for you.

John 15:26 — He will testify of me.

John 16:7 — The coming of the Comforter.

John 16:29–30 — Now we know that you know all things.

John 17:4–5 — The glory that I had with you before the world existed.

John 20:24–29 — My Lord and my God.

Acts 1:10–11 — This Jesus will come in the same way.

Acts 2:21 — Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Hebrews 1:5–12 — Your throne, O God, is forever and ever.

1 Peter 3:15 — An answer for the hope that is within us.

1 John 4:2–3 — Jesus Christ has come in the flesh.

1 John 5:1–5 — Victorious faith: overcoming the world.

1 John 5:6 — He who came by water and blood.

1 John 5:7–8 — The Spirit, the water, and the blood.

1 John 5:9 — The testimony of God is greater.

1 John 5:10–12 — Eternal life is in his Son.

2 John 7 — Those who do not confess the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh.

Revelation — Referenced in connection with the bride and the bridegroom.

Study & Reflection Questions

The Testimony of God

1. Are you prepared to give an answer for the hope that is within you? Are you able to do that with meekness?

2. How does John connect believing that Jesus is the Christ with being born of God, loving God's children, keeping God's commandments, and overcoming the world?

3. What are modalism, partialism, and Arianism? What does each say concerning the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit?

4. What was Cerinthus telling people concerning Jesus, his baptism, and his death on the cross?

5. What does John say concerning those who do not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh?

6. What are the three that testify? How does Deuteronomy 19:15 relate to what the Apostle John is presenting?

7. Why is the testimony of God greater than the testimony of men?

8. What did Thomas need to see before he would believe? What does his willingness to give his life based on what he witnessed demonstrate?

The Essence and Deity of the Son

9. What does Yahweh's own testimony say about the Son?

10. How does Genesis 19:24 relate to what we read in Deuteronomy 6:4 concerning the Lord being one?

11. What does Emmanuel mean? If Jesus were a being less than God, would worshiping him be blasphemy?

12. How does Jesus' statement in John 17:4–5 relate to Yahweh's declaration in Isaiah 42:8 that he gives his glory to no other?

13. What is the significance of the seed of the woman in Genesis 3:15?

14. What does John 1:1–3 reveal about the Son being Creator and not creature?

15. In Malachi 3:1, who is sending the messenger? Who is preparing the way, and who is coming to the temple?

16. What does Yahweh say concerning his Son in Hebrews 1:5–12?

The Bride and the Bridegroom

17. How does the Jewish wedding tradition relate to the price Jesus paid with his life; the shared cup of wine; the purification process and baptism; preparing a place at the Father's house; the coming of the Comforter; and the bride being ready for the groom's arrival?

18. In the Jewish wedding tradition, who was allowed to declare when the groom was coming back? Does that mean that the groom didn't know?

19. How does John 5:30 demonstrate the unity of the Father and the Son?

20. What did the disciples declare concerning Jesus' knowledge in John 16:29–30?

21. How do Zechariah 14:4 and Acts 1:10–11 relate to one another?

22. What does Zechariah 14:7 say concerning the unique day which is known to the Lord?

Personal Reflection

23. Are you of the same mindset as Thomas, that you're not going to believe unless you see something or that you can confirm something?

24. Do you trust and believe that speaking the truth into someone's life and praying for them over time can result in a testimony?

25. Have you sold your life out for Christ, not having seen him, but yet believing?

> “Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.” — John 20:29