

- TESTIMONY -

*"This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world
as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come."
(Matthew 24:14)*



Berean Lamp Ministries
For the Body of Christ

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The Seven Churches (Revelation 2-3)

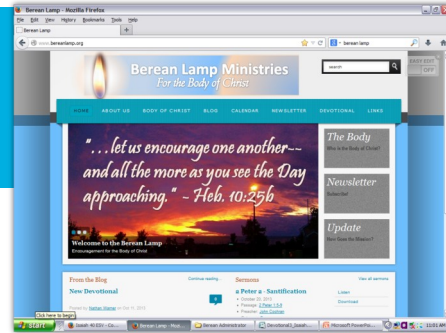


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The Berean Lamp Ministry is a service of the Berean Christian Fellowship of Zimmerman, MN.

The Berean Lamp Ministry seeks to:

1. Encourage and strengthen the Body of Christ by providing the means for each of its members to share their spiritual gifts with one another, rooted in the Word of God, thereby growing into deeper union with one another and with Christ (1 Corinthians 12:12-31).
2. Minister to non-believers; be a witness for Christ and a testimony to His Body in the world.

We would appreciate your help in contributing to the content and in spreading the work of this ministry. Thank you, and God bless.

- Pastor Scott Moller

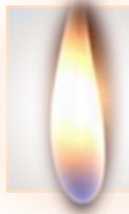
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Moses wore a veil to cover the light of his face after being in the presence of God. Why? The light that came from him frightened the Israelites. It lit up their lives and showed them the passing of sin. But they loved their sin, so Moses covered the light. We are to be bolder than Moses.

Jesus removes the veil on a Believer's heart, and they are invested with His hope of glory. They are to let His Holy Spirit's light shine through them, unveiled upon the world, convicting it of sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:8). Many Christians live today as though there is a veil over their testimony—a basket over their lamp (Matthew 5:15). Not wanting to be an offense to unbelievers, they cover the light of Christ in their heart. But we are not like Moses—we are to be bold in the hope of glory in Jesus Christ! Are we bold?

- Scott Moller

Are You Bold in Your Hope?

"For what was GLORIOUS has no glory NOW in comparison WITH the surpassing glory. And if WHAT was transitory came with glory, how much greater is the GLORY of that which LASTS! Therefore, since we have such a HOPE, we are very BOLD. We are not like Moses, who would put a VEIL over his face to prevent the Israelites from seeing the end of what was PASSING away. But their MINDS were made dull, for to this DAY the same veil REMAINS when the old covenant is read. It has not been REMOVED, because only in Christ is it TAKEN away. Even to this day when Moses is read, a veil COVERS their hearts. But whenever ANYONE turns to the Lord, the veil is TAKEN away. Now the Lord is the SPIRIT, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we ALL, who with UNVEILED faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being TRANSFORMED into his image with ever-increasing GLORY, which comes from the LORD, who is the SPIRIT."

(2 Corinthians 3:10-18)



Jesus—the True and Faithful Witness

By Nathan Warner

“He who has received His testimony has set his seal to this, that God is true.”
(John 3:33 NASB)

A testimony is delivered by a witness. A witness is someone who knows the truth of a situation that is in question or doubt.

Defense Attorney Smiley: “Mr. Freckles, you were walking your pet Pekingese on the day in question – did you or did you not see Mr. Pickly drive his ‘52 Cadillac over Mr. Gardner’s prize cucumber patch?”

Mr. Freckles: “I saw Mr. Pickly drive by the Gardner’s residence without incident.”

This is an example of what a testimony is. But it’s more complicated than that, isn’t it? Yes, because we know that testimony is often disputed.

Prosecutor Painly: “Mrs. Gardner, did you see Mr. Pickly drive over your husband’s garden?”

Mrs. Gardner: “Indeed, I did! That jealous git seemed to really relish it as he did so—even backed up over the roses several times to finish the job! What a mess he left behind, I might add!”

We have a problem here. Two contradicting statements can’t both be true. How is this possible? Well, unfortunately for mankind, humans have the ability to make untrue situations seem like true ones. We can practice deception – we can lie. As you can see above, lies confuse our understanding of what is real – they distort what we see as true. Truth, simply put, is reality (the true situation that exists, the

real situation). It is the way things are, one hundred percent, but what if two claims of reality (of truth) don’t agree?

Testimony 1: “*From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die*” (Genesis 2:16b-17).

Testimony 2: “*You surely will not die! For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil*” (Genesis 3:4b-5).

One of these is a lie. Which one sounds better? When we put faith in a lie, our perception of reality becomes confused, and we walk where we shouldn’t. But why would people want to lie? To understand this, we need to know something about truth and about lies and where faith is between them. People lie because they don’t like where the truth puts them – where they stand in the truth. Maybe the truth makes them responsible for something or maybe it means they are in trouble. For example, if they tell the truth, maybe they’ll lose money, go to jail, break up with friends or family, or maybe just get fired.

Manager Yelalot: “Slandur, I saw you posted on Facebook that your boss was, and I quote, ‘a spineless, bottom-feeding carp.’”

Sales Associate Slandur: “What! Not me, Boss! My account must have been hacked!”

The truth can put us in an uncomfortable place and the desire to get out of that discomfort can motivate us to lie. If someone puts their faith in the lie, the liar might avoid responsibility and side-step the penalty for his actions. **Faith is required where testimony is given, whether true or false.**

On the other hand, some people lie to get

something they don't have or get somewhere that they aren't. Maybe they lie about what they've accomplished or who they are to gain advantage, influence someone, or impress people.

Mr. Groor: "Yep, I invented the internet."

Maybe they lie to get money from people.

Tele-evangelist Hardkash: "If you call me in the next five minutes with a special seed offering of a thousand dollars or more in support of our Gospel-garage makeover, God will personally deliver you a manna-waxed sportscar straight from Heaven's garage!"

Some people lie to cause others harm, out of spite or revenge for something or to silence them.

"Now the chief priests and the whole Council kept trying to obtain false testimony against Jesus, so that they might put Him to death" (Matthew 26:59).

No matter the motivation, people who lie do not want to stand in the truth, and they don't want other people to be in it either because then they'll see them for what they are. They will go to extraordinary lengths to keep the truth from surfacing. In this way, the Jewish religious leaders not only avoided the truth themselves but also misdirected people seeking it as well. Jesus told them, *"You shut off the kingdom of heaven from people; for you do not enter in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in"* (Matthew 23:13b). They offered false testimony to keep people from knowing the truth, in order to protect the lie they were standing in to avoid responsibility and to keep their advantage over people. And when Jesus threatened that with His true testimony, they tried to silence Him to protect their lives built on lies.

...the testimony of the LORD is sure,
making wise the simple *Ps. 19:7b*



©Living Scriptures Devotional

By Ginny Larsen

Where does all this false testimony come from? Did humans invent it? Jesus cleared that up when He told the Jewish religious leaders, *"You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies"* (John 8:44). Satan first began inspiring our lies after we fell for his false testimony in the Garden of Eden.

This presents a problem, though. Who do we believe, if everyone's testimony may be inspired by the devil? Well, there is someone Who is not inspired by the devil. There is one Who cannot lie – One Who tells only Truth: *"God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent; Has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?"* (Numbers 23:19) God is truth. God doesn't need to prove this to anyone, because He doesn't owe anyone anything – He doesn't have to defend Himself to anyone, but out of His love and mercy, He swore to us by Himself that the things He said were true, *"for men swear by one greater than themselves, and with them an oath given as confirmation is an end of every dispute. In the same way God, desiring even more to show to the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose, interposed with an oath, so that by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have taken refuge would have strong encouragement to take hold of the hope set before us. This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil, where Jesus has entered as a forerunner for us, having become a high priest forever"* (Hebrews 6:16-20a).

Jesus Christ is God's *"faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth"* (Revelation 1:5a). Jesus is God's perfect testimony on earth and in Heaven. *"He came as a witness, to testify about the Light, so that all might believe through Him"* (John 1:7), saying, *"I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but*

through Me" (John 14:6). Jesus told it like it is. His words are reality. *"And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth"* (John 1:14), *"for the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ"* (John 1:17). This was His testimony: *"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. For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God"* (John 3:16-21). Come to the light! Believe the truth!

People did not want to believe Jesus because His testimony shed light on their situation. It illuminated their responsibility to God for what they were doing in their lives. It confirmed that they were in trouble with Him because of their sin, because their deeds were evil. Rather than confess that this was true, they tried to undermine His testimony by saying He was no better than sinners (Samaritans) and the demon-possessed. Jesus responded, *"Which one of you convicts Me of sin? If I speak truth, why do you not believe Me?"* (John 8:46), so they cast doubt on His testimony by saying He had no one to back up what He said, but *"Jesus answered and said to them, 'Even if I testify about Myself, My testimony is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going; but you do not know where I come from or where I am going'"* (John 8:14). Jesus is saying here that the truth is true regardless of whether someone can back it up or you believe it – you can dislike it

all you want, but that doesn't make it any less true.

When that didn't work, the people finally tried to silence His testimony, and Jesus replied, *"You are seeking to kill Me, a man who has told you the truth, which I heard from God"* (John 8:40a). Their final solution to silence Jesus' testimony was one they had used to silence the Prophets before Him (Luke 11:47)—they would kill God's true witness because He testified against their lifestyle of deception and wouldn't shut up. But they didn't count on the grave being unable to silence the Word of God. Jesus rose from the dead, having fulfilled God's plan in death of offering a way out of the penalty for our sin, having substituted Himself in our place of responsibility

and guilt before God. All we have to do to be free of the penalty is to confess that His testimony is true about us and submit ourselves to Him to save us as our personal Lord and Savior — *"know the truth, and the truth will make you free"* (John 8:32b). Jesus promises that *"he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life"* (John 5:24b).

Jesus cannot lie; therefore, His Testimony is the one we need to put our faith in. Think about it — the world is like a giant courtroom with millions of witnesses taking the stand claiming to "tell it like it is," and it is here that Jesus gave His testimony of truth and only a few people believed it. To the people who be-



By Maria Madsen



lieved God's testimony, His testimony was entrusted and they became witnesses for God after Jesus ascended back into Heaven. Rather than inspired by the devil, they became inspired by God. Of these people, Jesus asked His Father to "*sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth*" (John 17:17). These disciples whose testimony was sanctified by the true Word of God were "*brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles*" (Matthew 10:18). Many rejected it (like the Jewish leaders), because the testimony to the truth exposed the lies they stood on to avoid responsibility and gain advantage. Some people heard their testimony, believed it, and came to stand in the light of the Truth. We are among those who believe the testimony of God in Jesus Christ, brought to us through the witness of the disciples and the Holy Spirit, "*that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me, and you will testify also, because you have been with Me from the beginning*" (John 15:26b-27).

Like them, everyone who believes is called to carry the testimony of God in Jesus Christ to the world, for "*this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come*" (Matthew 24:14). You and I are in that world courtroom with all those false witnesses. God has commanded us to bear His testimony before all men – that testimony is to confess His Word and the personal relationship we have with the Lord Jesus through the Holy Spirit, "*for from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen*" (Romans 11:36).

"I will also speak of Your testimonies before kings And shall not be ashamed."
(Psalm 119:46)

The Testimony of Christ

By Ginny Larsen

I have a hard time when I go to a website selling some product and they have a list of testimonies all raving about how wonderful this product is and the miracle it did for them. I know testimonies can be fabricated. They are meaningless to me. I want some real hard evidence that there is something to this product. In Christendom as well, we have many giving testimony to some spiritual experience, some vision of Heaven or Hell, or some special word from God supposedly that we all are just supposed to believe and not question. What is the evidence that such is true? Just because they claim it is?

"He who comes from above is above all. He who is of the earth belongs to the earth and speaks in an earthly way. He who comes from heaven is above all. He bears witness to what He has seen and heard, yet no one receives His testimony. Whoever receives His testimony sets his seal to this, that God is true. For He whom God has sent utters the words of God, for He gives the Spirit without measure. The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand. Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him" (John 3:31-36 ESV).

"If I alone bear witness about Myself, My testimony is not true. There is another who bears witness about Me, and I know that the testimony that he bears about Me is true. You sent to John, and he has borne witness to the truth. Not that the testimony that I receive is from man, but I say these things so that you may be saved. He was a burning and shining lamp, and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light. But the testimony that I have is greater than that of John. For the works that the Father has given Me to accomplish, the very works that I am doing, bear witness about Me that the Father has sent Me. And the Father who sent Me has Himself borne witness about Me. His voice you have never heard, His

form you have never seen” (John 5:31-37).

We have a sure testimony from Heaven itself, a sure Word that is God’s own testimony to mankind. We are so quick to believe the testimony of man without so much as a critical thought to examine it at times, yet we have doubts over the testimony of God Himself. Peter tells us of the sure testimony of Christ, that it cannot be “interpreted” of man as he chooses, but it is of God Himself. We must learn it of Him, *“for we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, and the voice was borne to Him by the Majestic Glory, ‘This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased,’ we ourselves heard this very voice borne from heaven, for we were with Him on the holy mountain. And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone’s own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit”* (2 Peter 1:16-21).

“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. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life” (1 John 5:9-13).

It is by believing His testimony alone that we receive anything from God. We run to this man or that woman to receive their testimony about God or hear their experiences, but we

don’t value the clear testimony of Jesus Christ Himself through His written Word to us. How shameful. How sad. Men depart from Christianity because of false testimonies about it and about God. Men misrepresent His testimony of who He is and distort His character, turning many away from Him. How very sad that we don’t go directly to His testimony about Himself and all that He has to say to us of the wonderful gift of salvation, grace to live, and eternal life and joy in store for us. Instead we let men give their own testimony about Him, never checking out what they say for ourselves. Is it any wonder these who raise themselves up above the Body of Christ because of supposed heavenly visions or special revelations disregard His Word and stir the Church away from it, even calling love for the true testimony of Jesus Christ “bibliolatry”? Yet they receive idol worship of themselves and their word from others. They build for themselves little “kingdoms” where followers are faithful to them as long as they tickle their ears.

But we do have a testimony in Christ that is important. Those who have received His true testimony into their hearts and believed on Him will have their own true testimony. Because His testimony about Himself is true, those who receive Him will find Him true in their lives as He lives in them. Their lives will change. The true testimony they will give and leave behind is that of a life that shows His truth in them, lived through them, and the fruit that is produced because of that. We can say many things in testimony to something, but if there is no proof behind the testimony of words, it is meaningless. It’s all fluff and will blow away like the wind some day and won’t stand. If what we have is based on that sure Word from Him, we know it’s true and can be believed and others can have the same results as they put their trust in Him as well. He won’t fail them. His testimony about Himself won’t fail them. His testimony about their sin won’t fail, nor His testimony of His eternal salvation.

I know when I am in doubt or fear I can go to His Word and find encouragement and faith, because His testimony will not fail me. I know

if I need guidance or direction in my life, His testimony will not fail to give it, and I can be sure if I obey what He says, no matter what the cost or pain involved, that the reward He tells me I have in Him He will surely give. I can be sure that if I disregard His testimony about sin and its consequences that I will suffer those consequences. His testimony is sure and the testimony of how I treat it will be seen in me, one way or the other.

Our testimony of faith in Him is the most important thing we have in this world. What it says to the world about Christ they will have to answer to one day. How do we live in front of unbelievers? How do we talk in front of them? Is what comes through us in our speech and our lives a true testimony of the life of Christ inside of us, if we have been born again? One thing the persecuted Believers ask we pray for

is that they might hold fast their testimony of Christ and not deny Him - *"And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death"* (Revelation 12:11). They had gotten victory over the beast or satan, even though from the world's eyes they were defeated by being put to death. Yet they were victorious because they held onto their testimony of faith in Christ even to death. When we face the enemy, what will our testimony be to them? They stood because of the testimony of Christ to them and in them, and His testimony became theirs. They were enabled by that faithful Word and the power in it to stand. We also in our lives conquer the world, the flesh, and the devil by that same testimony. When doubts and fears arise, we can hold onto that testimony. When all seems to crumble around us, we can hold on to that testimony. It gives us strength to endure no matter what.

How great a God we serve! Is there anything more sure, more convincing, more wonderful than the testimony of our Lord's love to us? Thank You, Lord, for such a great Word that is sure, that is solid, that we can stand on, that we can hope in, that we can give our lives wholeheartedly to and know that one day we'll see the final fulfillment of all its promises. Amen.



"I WILL also SPEAK of Your TESTIMONIES before KINGS And shall not be ASHAMED."

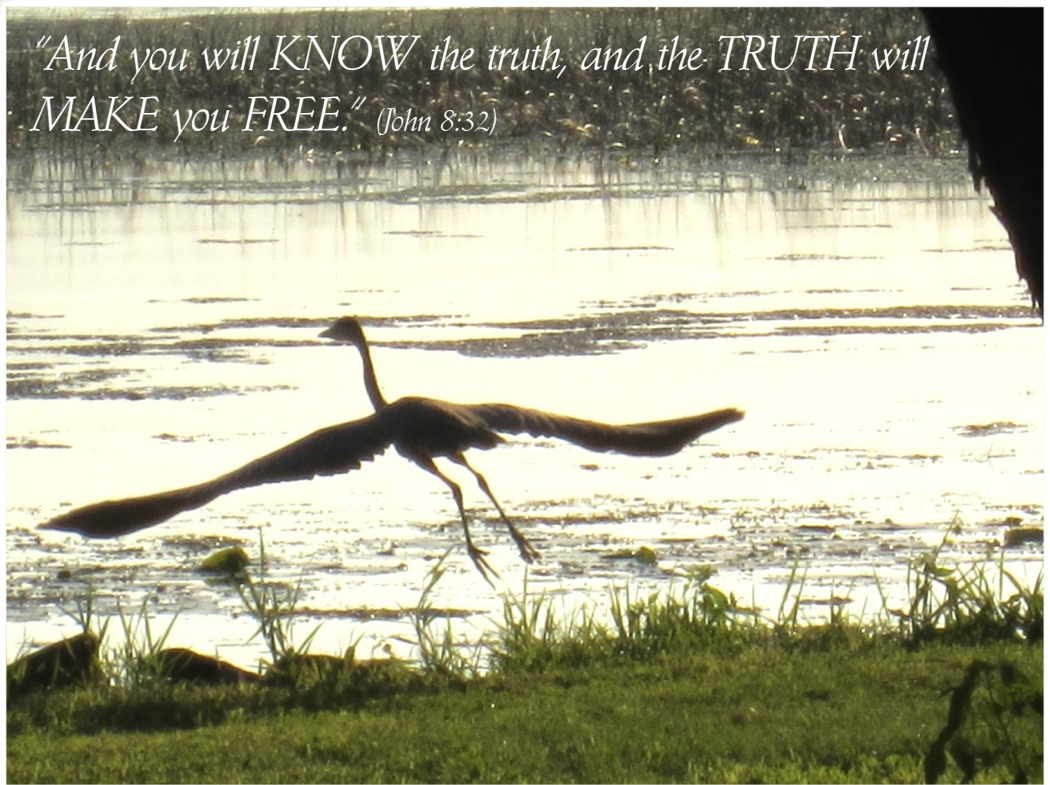
(Psalm 119:46)

*"He who has
RECEIVED His
TESTIMONY has
set his SEAL
to this, that God is
TRUE." (John 3:33)*



By Maria Madsen

*"And you will KNOW the truth, and the TRUTH will
MAKE you FREE." (John 8:32)*



Lucifer's Perjury

By Natalie Warner

"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, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world."

(1 John 4:2-3 NASB)

The word "testimony" is prevalent in Scripture. On one hand, some verses speak of physical testimony – we testify with our mouths of someone's innocence or guilt, to speak truth or expose lies – and on the other, some speak of spiritual testimony – that of our consciences and sins testifying against us. Noah Webster's 1828 Dictionary defines "testimony" as "a solemn declaration or affirmation made for the purpose of establishing or proving some fact." In other words, the testimony of an individual validates or proves a given fact. In a court situation, the witness giving testimony does so under oath – being thus bound by law to tell the truth. If the witness gives false testimony (lying), they commit perjury, an offence of the law. Perjury is defined as "the act or crime of willfully making a false oath, when lawfully administered" (Webster's 1828 Dictionary).

In this world, we have two spiritual testimonies about the existence of man, the place of man on this earth, and the responsibility of man. One testimony is that of Lucifer, the angel who rebelled against God's holiness, and one testimony is that of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. These two testimonies, however, are in conflict with each other, and logic states that if two things are in opposition to each other, they both cannot be true. One, then, is true and the other is perjury.

So what is the testimony of Lucifer? From the first lie until the last, Lucifer has said that *"I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, and I will sit on*

the mount of assembly in the recesses of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High'" (Isaiah 14:13-14). He promised the same dream to mankind through the serpent in the garden: *"The serpent said to the woman, 'You surely will not die! For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil'"* (Genesis 3:4-5). Lucifer's desire is to usurp God's authority, and he deceives humanity by offering them the same temptation of "do what you will." With this false testimony, *"the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God"* (2 Corinthians 4:4).

Lucifer's testimony is perjury. For though he knows the truth, he deceives those on the earth. Jesus Christ told the unbelieving Jews the devil has no truth in him: *"Jesus said to them, 'If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and have come from God, for I have not even come on My own initiative, but He sent Me. Why do you not understand what I am saying? It is because you cannot hear My word. You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies'"* (John 8:42-44). John wrote a warning in the first of his epistles: *"Little children, make sure no one deceives you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous; the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning"* (1 John 3:7-8a).

However, the testimony of Jesus Christ is in stark contrast to that of Lucifer. According to the testimony of Christ, our sins testify against ourselves, and this testimony damns us to eternal separation from God. We know from the testimony of the disciples, Jesus Christ Himself, and the Spirit who testifies with our spirits that the Father loves His creation so

much so that He sent His only begotten Son to earth to die for us (John 3:16). Scripture testifies that God is very involved in His creation. In fact, in Christ all things hold together! We also know from John that *“the Word [Jesus Christ] became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. John testified about Him and cried out, saying, ‘This was He of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.’” For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace. For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ. No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him”* (John 1:14-18).

When the Pharisees challenged His testimony in John 8:14-16, Jesus answered, *“Even if I testify about Myself, My testimony is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going; but you do not know where I come from or where I am going. You judge according to the flesh; I am not judging anyone.”* The Father testified of His Son when John the Baptist baptized Him in the Jordan River. Jesus said in John 5:30-32, *“If I alone testify about Myself, My testimony is not true. There is another who testifies of Me, and I know that the testimony which He gives about Me is true.”* A little later, He said, *“But the testimony which I have is greater than the testimony of John; for the works which the Father has given Me to accomplish – the very works that I do – testify about Me, that the Father has sent Me. And the Father who sent Me, He has testified of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time nor seen His form”* (John 5:36-37). Jesus Christ’s testimony is TRUTH. God testifies to His Son.

Even Lucifer’s demons know Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and though they testify against Him, they tremble at His name. James wrote, *“You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder”* (James 2:19). In his Gospel account, Mark said of Jesus, *“And He healed many who were ill with various diseases, and cast out*

many demons; and He was not permitting the demons to speak, because they knew who He was” (Mark 1:34). Luke recorded also that *“demons also were coming out of many, shouting, ‘You are the Son of God!’ But rebuking them, He would not allow them to speak, because they knew Him to be the Christ”* (Luke 4:41). Even the demons tremble before Christ and yet He did not need their declaring Him to be the Son of God to prove He is TRUTH, for God and the Spirit testify to Him.

God created us as spiritual beings, and He has not left us alone to figure out which testimony is true. Before Jesus Christ ascended into heaven, He promised a Helper – the Spirit of truth – for the Believers: *“I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you”* (John 14:16-17). Jesus also said, *“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you”* (vs. 26).

Through faith in Jesus Christ, we receive the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit testifies to the truth. Romans 8:16-17 declares that *“the Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him.”* The writer of Hebrews stated: *“For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified. And the Holy Spirit also testifies to us...”* (Hebrews 10:14-15a). John also testified in 1 John that *“this is the One who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ; not with the water only, but with the water and with the blood. It is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth”* (1 John 5:6). The Spirit moved men to testify to what they’d seen and heard from Jesus Christ, too. Luke, for instance, wrote at the beginning of his account, *“It seemed fitting for me as well, having investigated everything carefully from the beginning, to write it out for you in consecutive order, most excellent Theophilus;*

so that you may know the exact truth about the things you have been taught" (Luke 1:3-4).

Scripture says we might know Him. This knowing isn't just head knowledge – it's deep understanding brought about by a relationship in faith and the Spirit of truth. Proverbs 1:7 says, *"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction."* Isaiah 43:9-11 says, *"All the nations have gathered together so that the peoples may be assembled. Who among them can declare this and proclaim to us the former things? Let them present their witnesses that they may be justified or let them hear and say, 'It is true.' 'You are My witnesses,' declares the LORD, 'And My servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe Me and understand that I am He. Before Me there was no God formed, and there will be none after Me. I, even I, am the LORD, and there is no savior besides Me.'" When Jesus prayed before being betrayed by Judas, He prayed, *"This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent"* and that *"the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me."* He also prayed, *"...I have made Your name known to them, and will make it known, so that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them"* (John 17:3, 23b, 26).*

Lucifer's perjury is not limited to the early days in the Garden or the temptations he tried with Jesus Christ in the desert. Lucifer is still actively testifying against the Savior of the world, deceiving the world with his perjury. Paul wrote so rightly in Ephesians 6:12, *"For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places."* The forces of wickedness testify of Lucifer and against Christ, thus blinding the minds of the unbeliever. But, Jesus Christ testified of Himself, the Father testified of His Son, and the Spirit testifies of Him to us, and this is the only TRUE testimony. This true testimony is in opposition to Lucifer's, *"for what partnership have righteousness and law-*

lessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness? Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever?" (2 Corinthians 6: 14b-15) As Believers, we need to be on the alert in this world and not be deceived by the many false testimonies of Lucifer. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth, and we need Him to guide us and open our eyes to the only TRUTH, which is Jesus Christ.

"Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. 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, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world. You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world. They are from the world; therefore they speak as from the world, and the world listens to them. We are from God; he who knows God listens to us; he who is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error."
(1 John 4:1-6)



A Salvation Testimony

By Bob Larsen

I grew up in a mainline church. I am grateful for all that I learned there. I believed very strongly in God, and I believed the Bible was all true. I believed that if I dared to question the Bible, God might strike me dead. I am grateful for the truth that I receive in the United Methodist Church. However, after 14 years in that church and being “confirmed,” I did not know that I needed to be born again, as Jesus said in John 3:7-8. My conclusion, based on what I had learned at the UMC, was “I am a good person, and I believe in God; therefore, when I die, I will go to heaven.” I did not know that Jesus said, “*You must be born again.*” I did not know that my life could never be good enough to warrant eternal life.

After this, I joined the Navy. That is where I first began to hear the complete Gospel. Many Christians were sharing the Gospel in downtown San Diego, and there was a servicemen’s center that I went to. I heard a Gospel message there, and I raised my hand and prayed what I now know is a “sinner’s prayer.” I still didn’t get it. I still thought that my “good life” was all I needed to be right with God. There was a guy on my ship who explained more, but he also told me something wrong: “You have to join my church to be in a right standing with God.” I didn’t buy that.

When I got out of the Navy at age 22, I found a job in a print shop at the Coast to Coast Hardware headquarters in St. Louis Park, MN. My life and my conversation did not show evidence of having any belief in God. There was a Christian stock-boy there whose name was Tory. He had a deep concern for me. He gave me a “Four Spiritual Laws” tract and asked me to take it home and read it. I did, but I didn’t mention it again to him. He finally asked me what I thought of it. I told him that I didn’t buy it, primarily because of the wrong info that I had learned from my shipmate. I also had a couple of questions that needed answers, and Tory provided them to

my satisfaction. I had no more arguments. I tried to get it off my mind, but I couldn’t. A day or two later, just before going to sleep, I read the booklet again, and for the first time in my life, I realized that I was not on my way to heaven but was in danger of hell. Finally, I prayed the prayer in the booklet, but most importantly, I understood it and meant it. That was the beginning of my new life in Christ. I was drastically changed from the inside, through no doing of my own. I started to read my Bible every night, and I would often wake up with the light on and the Bible in my bed. I couldn’t get enough. Then, I found that there were others who had also come to Jesus and were very excited about their new life. I found that I was thinking about Jesus always. I later realized this was the presence of the Holy Spirit. My interests changed drastically without effort on my part. For one thing, I no longer hung out at Joe Houle’s Peanut Bar. There were Christian coffee houses to replace that, and there were people there who also were excited about their life in Christ.

I could write pages about all that God has done in my life, “*for the eyes of the LORD move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His*” (2 Chronicles 16:9a), and He has! For those who are Believers, God is willing to work in every church where He is welcome, but there is a problem: many members prefer to ignore His Word. When they do that, they automatically create a false god—a god who will not bother them. The God of the Bible will not force Himself upon people who do not want the truth. He allows them to go their own way and create a false god—a god who makes no claim on their lives and allows them to write their own gospel.

The God of the Bible is working greatly in churches and in people who are willing to accept the truth that He has provided. He is also working in factories, offices, coffee houses, and anywhere people are willing to come to Jesus and allow Him to cause them to be born again. I am very thankful that He found me and caused me to be a new creature in Christ. There is nothing better!

Who Defines God?

By Lynn Warner

To give a testimony is to affirm a fact of truth or genuineness. But who defines truth and answers the questions: Who is God? Who am I? Why are we here? The New Testament is filled with testimony – the testimony of Gabriel, Simeon, and Anna; the testimony of John the Baptist, Jesus, the Father, and the disciples. And we also are instructed to testify.

God defines God; God defines Jesus as His Beloved Son Whom He delights in, and He gives Him the Spirit without measure. And God defines us: who we are, what we need, and why we are here. Jesus reveals God the Father and baptizes those who believe in Him with the Holy Spirit. We who believe are given the power to become God's children, and Jesus baptizes us with the Holy Spirit. Jesus abides in God's love, and we abide in Jesus' love and love others. All these relationships are our Testimony. John tells us the tes-

timony we share with others: *"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 does not have life"* (1 John 5:11-12 ESV).

Jesus, in His prayer for His disciples in John 17:3, defined the eternal life God gives us: *"And this is eternal life, that they know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent."* This "knowing" is relational and intimate, not just a mental knowing. In 1 John 1:3, John describes in his testimony the relational fellowship of eternal life: *"That which we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us, and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ."*

Eternal life is knowing God and being known by Him. To be known by Him is to be loved by Him. God loves Jesus. At the baptism He declared publicly: *"You are My beloved Son; with you I am well pleased"* (Mark 1:11b). God the Father loves Jesus, and Jesus loves us. We abide in His love: Jesus said,

"I HAVE made Your NAME known to THEM, and will make it known, so that the LOVE with which You LOVED Me may be in THEM, and I in THEM."

(John 17:26)



By Nathan Warner

"As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you. Abide in My love" (John 15:9). John testifies of this love given to us in 1 John 3:1:

"See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called the children of God, and so we are."

As His children, we are to be filled with all the fullness of God. Paul tells us how we may be filled with all the fullness of God in Ephesians. He prays that we may be granted *"to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith – that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God"* (Ephesians 3:16b-19).

Being loved changes everything. We become connected to God, Jesus, ourselves, and

others. We are given the strength to experience real fellowship. And God gives us discernment to know when a relationship isn't real. God defines reality and truth. God defines us – when we trust (believe) in Him, He defines us as His beloved children. And He relates to us as His beloved children – we have special fellowship with Him and His other children. And we have the gifts that come with His love. He wants us to abide in His love and to share – to testify of His great love and forgiveness. *"The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one; I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me"* (John 17:22-23). Amen.

*"For FROM Him and
THROUGH Him and
to Him are all THINGS.
To Him be the GLORY
FOREVER. Amen."*

(Romans 11:36)

By Natalie Warner



July/August Newsletter Theme— ETERNITY

Submission Deadline: July 26

Publish Date: August 4

Eternity...

- What is eternity?
- What does it mean that God is eternal?
- What is eternal life?
- How do we receive eternal life?
- Why is mankind obsessed with finding it?

Verses on ETERNITY (from the NASB version)

Ecclesiastes 3:11 — *“He has made everything appropriate in its time. He has also set eternity in their heart, yet so that man will not find out the work which God has done from the beginning even to the end.”*

Isaiah 45:17 — *“Israel has been saved by the Lord With an everlasting salvation; You will not be put to shame or humiliated To all eternity.”*

2 Timothy 1:8-10 — *“Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me His prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God, who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity, but now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.”*

John 17:3 — *“This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.”*

Matthew 25:46 — *“These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”*

John 5:24 — *“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.”*