

# Three Tests Of Authentic Christianity

**1 John 5:1-5**

**Study 15**

**(Not entirely original with me)**

## **INTRODUCTION:**

Every Church has a long list of church members who never show up, never participate in any way and some nobody even knows who they are or where they live. Sadly, there are strangers among the active Church members. For sure not everybody who "says" he/she is a Christian is an authentic, genuine, real Christian. So how does one know for sure whether a person who "says" he/she is a Christian is really a Christian? John gives some simple ways to know for sure about a person's profession of faith.

## **I. THE TEST OF “BELIEF”**

### **A. IN PARTICULAR, BELIEF IN JESUS...**

1. As the Christ - **1 Jn 5:1a**
2. As the Son of God - **1 Jn 5:5b**
3. Who has come in the flesh - cf. **1 Jn 4:2**

### **B. TO DENY JESUS AS THE CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD...**

1. Makes one a liar and antichrist - cf. **1 Jn 2:22**
2. Makes fellowship with the Father and the Son impossible - cf. **1 Jn 2:22-23; 2 Jn 7-9**

### **C. THE IMPORTANCE OF SUCH FAITH IN JESUS...**

1. Necessary for one to be “born of God” - **1 Jn 5:1a**
  - a. Just as faith in God is necessary to please Him - **He 11:6**
  - b. So faith in Jesus is necessary to experience eternal life - cf. **Jn 8:24; Ac 8:36-37**
2. Necessary for one to “overcome the world” - **1 Jn 5:4-5**
  - a. We can overcome the world only through the One who lives in us - cf. **1 Jn 4:4**
  - b. But with such strength, we can do anything God desires of us - cf. **Ph 4:13**

[Without faith in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God who came in the flesh, we cannot be born of God and so live so as to overcome the world! But is “belief in Jesus” the only test of authentic Christianity? Not according to Jesus, as found in **Jn 8:30-31**.

## **II. THE TEST OF “LOVE”**

### **A. JESUS HAD MADE BROTHERLY LOVE...**

1. A mark of discipleship - **Jn 13:34-35**
2. A commandment to prove we are His friends - **Jn 15:12-14,17**

### **B. JOHN HAD STRESSED BROTHERLY LOVE...**

1. As evidence of abiding in the light - **1 Jn 2:10**
2. As evidence of being a child of God - **1 Jn 3:10**
3. As evidence of having passed from death to life - **1 Jn 3:14**
4. As evidence of knowing God and being born of God - **1 Jn 4:7-8**

### **C. AND NOW, IN DISCUSSING BROTHERLY LOVE...**

1. John describes it as a necessary corollary to loving God - **1 Jn 5:1a**
  - a. If you love God who brings forth children...
  - b. ...then you must love those children who have come from Him!
2. John reveals how we can be sure that we love God's children (i.e., have brotherly love): by loving God and keeping His commandments - **1 Jn 5:2**
  - a. I may claim to love my brethren...
  - b. But if I do not love God and keep His commandments, my claim is a shallow one!

(One who is truly “born of God” not only believes in Jesus, then, but also loves the children of God.)

## **III. THE TEST OF “OBEDIENCE”**

### **A. JOHN HAD EMPHASIZED THIS TEST EARLIER...**

1. As essential to having fellowship with the Father - **1 Jn 1:6-7**
2. As essential to knowing Jesus - **1 Jn 2:3-4**
3. As essential to loving God - **1 Jn 2:5**
4. As essential to abiding in Jesus - **1 Jn 2:6**
5. As essential to being a child of God - **1 Jn 3:10**
6. As essential to having our prayers answered - **1 Jn 3:22**

## **B. NOW HE STRESSES THAT IT IS ESSENTIAL TO...**

1. Loving the children of God - **1 Jn 5:2**
2. Loving God Himself - **1 Jn 5:3a**

## **C. TO JOHN, HOWEVER, THIS “TEST” IS NOT A BURDEN...**

1. The commandments of God are not “burdensome” - **1 Jn 5:3b**
2. Though he had served the Lord for many years (possibly 50 or more), he had not found the commandments “grievous” (KJV)
3. His attitude toward “commandment-keeping” was like that of David’s - **Psa 19:7-11**

## **CONCLUSION:**

1. In these three areas, then, we find the proof of authentic Christianity:
  - a. Belief in Jesus as the Son of God who came in the flesh
  - b. Love for the brethren
  - c. Obedience in keeping the commandments of God
2. It is interesting that today...
  - a. Many people do not have any problem with the first two (belief and love)
  - b. But will often balk when told they need to be obedient to the commands of Jesus Christ (“Oh, you are just being legalistic!”)
3. But if we really love God and His children, if we really believe in Jesus as the Son of God who came in the flesh and died for our sins, then the commandments of the Lord will not be grievous...  
***“If you love Me, keep My commandments.” - Jn 14:15***
4. Are we passing the tests of authentic Christianity?

(Material from Mark A. Copeland)