

## Combating Heresy (vv. 6-9)

## Water and Blood (vv. 6-8)

**VERSE 6 This is the One who came by [through] water and blood, Jesus Christ;**

**not with the water only, but with the water and with the blood** (Οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ ἐλθὼν δι' ὕδατος καὶ αἵματος, Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, οὐκ ἐν τῷ ὕδατι μόνον ἀλλ' ἐν τῷ ὕδατι καὶ ἐν τῷ αἵματι· [*pro.nom.m.s. houtosthis + pres.act.ind.3s. eimi + d.a.w/aor.act.part.nom.m.s. erchomai come + prep dia + noun abl.nt.s. hudor water + conj kai + noun abl.nt.s. aima blood + noun nom.m.s. Jesus + noun nom.m.s. Christ + neg ouk + prep en + d.a.w/instr.nt.s. hudor + adv. monos only + conj alla + prep en + d.a.w/noun instr.nt.s. hudor + conj kai + d.a.w/noun instr.nt.s. haima blood*]).

**It is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth** (καὶ τὸ πνεῦμά ἐστιν τὸ μαρτυροῦν ὅτι τὸ πνεῦμά ἐστιν ἡ ἀλήθεια [*conj kai + d.a.w/noun nom.nt.s. pneuma + pres.act.ind.3s. eimi + d.a.w/pres.act.part.nom.nt.s. martureo bear witness + conj hoti + d.a.w/noun nom.nt.s. pneuma + pres.act.ind.3s. eimi + d.a.w/noun nom.f.s. aletheia truth*]).

**VERSE 7 For there are three that testify** (ὅτι τρεῖς εἰσιν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες (*conj hoti for + adj.nom.m.p. treis three + pres.act.ind.3p. eimi + d.a.w/pres.act.part.nom.m.s. martureo*]):

**VERSE 8 the Spirit and the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement** (τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ τὸ ὕδωρ καὶ τὸ αἷμα, καὶ οἱ τρεῖς εἰς τὸ ἓν εἰσιν [*d.a.w/noun nom.nt.s. pneuma + conj kai + d.a.w/noun nom.nt.s. hudor water + conj kai + d.a.w/noun nom.nt.s. haima blood + conj kai + d.a.w/adj.nom.m.p. treis three + prep eis w/d.a.acc.nt.s. to + adj.acc.nt.s. heis one + pres.act.ind.3s. eimi*]).

**ANALYSIS: VERSES 6-8**

1. In v. 6 John identifies “the One who came” (a reference to the 1<sup>st</sup> Advent of the God-Man) in his reference to “water” and to “blood.”
2. To appreciate John’s reference to “blood and water” some historical perspective is necessary.
3. The Gnostics, led by John’s contemporary one Cerinthus, denied that Jesus was the Son of God while on the cross.
4. Cerenthus and his followers taught that the heavenly Christ descended on Jesus at His baptism, but withdrew from Him just before the cross.
5. Another heresy of Cerenthus taught was that the world was created by an angel who held it in bondage, by not by God.
6. According to him Jesus was a normal man, the son of Joseph and Mary, who differed from others in wisdom and righteousness.
7. To him, Jesus was chosen by God to proclaim God and to release the world from bondage.
8. For this task, the Christ descended on Him at His baptism and left just before the cross event.
9. Church tradition says the Cerenthus and John were opponents and lived in Ephesus.
10. With this heresy in mind, John’s otherwise inexplicable reference to water and blood becomes meaningful in light of the current theological debate.
11. What John is teaching is that Jesus was the Son of God and the Christ before and after His baptism all the way to the cross (blood reference).
12. In v. 6 the preposition *dia* with the genitive means ‘through.’
13. “Water” refers to Jesus’ public baptism which is narrated in all four Gospel accounts of the life of Christ.
14. At His baptism He received the Holy Spirit without measure and officially began His public ministry.
15. The ritual symbolized Jesus identification with the messianic program for the 1<sup>st</sup> Advent which was administered by His forerunner John the Baptist.
16. The reason John says “not with water only” is to underscore the fact that His divine nature persisted all the way to the end of Jesus natural life on earth.
17. “Blood” refers to Jesus bearing sins on the cross during the three hours of darkness.
18. Blood is used in the NT in connection with propitiation.
19. Blood is a representative analogy not a direct analogy.
20. Jesus shed literal blood starting at Gethsemane (Lk. 22:44) and when He was scourged and had a crown of thorns placed on His head.
21. He bled through the wounds associated with the piercing of His hands and feet.
22. He retained enough blood to remain conscious through His ordeal as evidence by the spear thrust into His side after His physical death (Jn. 19:34; only by John who was an eyewitness).
23. To associate water with His birth or with Jn. 19:34 is unsatisfactory since singling out blood makes no sense.
24. Only in light of Cerenthus’ heresy does any of this make sense.
25. Another view of water and blood is the Christian rituals of the Eucharist and water Baptism.
26. He didn’t come via these things.
27. The voice from heaven declaring His God’s Son and the descent of the Dove, confirmed that Jesus was the Son of God.

28. The pronouncement from the Father at His baptism confirmed that Jesus perfect life qualified His to be fit to be the Savior.
29. This pronouncement was repeated on the Mount of Transfiguration.
30. John the Baptist baptized Jesus based on Jesus word and then came the confirming sign of the descent of the Holy Spirit that was previously revealed to John.
31. John knew that the Messiah was on the earth and the Baptism of Jesus was the only time John saw Jesus in the flesh.
32. In v. 6b John affirms that it is the Holy Spirit that bears witness to the Person of Christ.
33. "It is the Spirit who bears witness" to the facts regarding Jesus' human and divine natures.
34. The Holy Spirit, who is God, can only promote what is true (Jn. 16:13-15).
35. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Person of the Godhead is designated "Spirit of truth" in Jn. 14:17; 15:26; 16:13 and here in 1 Jn. 4:6.
36. The Holy Spirit in His role of revealing truth is featured in 1<sup>st</sup> John at: 4:2, 6, 13; 5:6, 8 as well as 2:20, 27 regarding His indwelling ministry.
37. The last phrase of verse 6 should read: "because the Spirit is truth" (no def. article).
38. John is a somewhat cryptic statement (v. 7) that "there are three that bear witness" to the deity of the humanity of Jesus Christ.
39. Some translations (texts) read: "...in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit, and these three are one."
40. This has been added as a sort of commentary.
41. But we find out in v. 8 who the "three" are.
42. It is true that all three members of the Godhead bear witness to who and what Christ is.
43. Perfect God and Man united beginning at Jesus' birth and continuing through His life on earth and in His glorified hypostasis.
44. So John appeals to three witnesses, and he insists that they are in full agreement.
45. Surprisingly John does say it is the members of the Godhead.
46. V. 8 lists: "the Spirit, the water, and the blood."
47. And he insists that the three are in agreement regarding the Person of Christ.
48. God the Holy Spirit stands first in the listing and rightly so as He bears witness to the Son of God in connection with the inauguration of Jesus' public ministry (water baptism) and the conclusion of His ministry (the blood).
49. Water and blood are personified here and represent two seminal events in the life of Christ.
50. Events in the Bible continue to bear witness, not just to those who witnessed them, but to those who learn of them by the Word of God.
51. Example: Righteous Abel speaks to posterity though he is dead (Heb. 11:4).
52. In this listing the Holy Spirit is preeminent as He bears revelatory witness to the significance of the water and the blood events.