

The Testimony of the Lord Is Sure'

by H.J. Vine

The testimony of God is a sure and faultless communication of God's power, divinity, and love, which imparts understanding and wisdom to those who believe and respond to it.

Scripture: Exodus 25:16, Psalm 19:7, Romans 8:4, Romans 10:18, 1 Timothy 2:1, 1 Timothy 2:6, 2 Timothy 1:8

Topics: "Gods Testimony", "Divine Revelation"

Description

H.J. Vine preaches on the unchanging and faultless testimony of God to humanity, emphasizing the wisdom and understanding it imparts to those who believe with open hearts. The sermon delves into God's testimonies in creation, the law given to Moses, and the ultimate testimony in Christ, highlighting the surety and importance of each revelation in guiding humanity towards God's grace and salvation.

Transcript

Psalm 19:7

There is nothing variable or uncertain in the testimony which God Himself gives to men. The many may not receive it, and the others who do may but feebly respond to it, but the testimony itself is faultless, like the One who grants it in grace to a sinful world. Where it is believed--where the heart and mind are open before God--where there is singleness towards Him, it imparts understanding and wisdom. "The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple."

This beautiful scripture from Psalm 19 refers of course to the testimony which God gave to Moses in the mount. Although given so long before, the Holy Spirit reverts to it as still being at the foundation of the people's relations with God. The early verses of the Psalm celebrate the unceasing testimony of creation, at least on its heavenly side, to God's greatness and glory. They also tell us of a tabernacle set in the heavens for the sun. At the appointed time it comes out, radiant with brightness and warmth, so that nothing is hid from its shining. This reminds us of the testimony of the present times--of that which was to be rendered when "its own times" arrived (1 Tim. 2:6).

As we look briefly at these three testimonies which God has given to men, we shall see how sure they are, and how utterly without excuse they leave those who have not the knowledge of God. And as we weigh them before Him, in the sense of His grace, they will grant wisdom to us, helping us to walk consistently with them for His praise, while our assured hearts exclaim, "Thy testimonies are very sure" (Ps. 93:5)--yea, all of them!

God's Testimony in Creation

The heavens declare His glory, and the firmament gives unmistakeable evidence of His handiwork. For the full, revelation of God the world had to wait for Christ to come; nevertheless, creation clearly makes manifest to all His power and divinity. It is plain to any thoughtful and upright mind that the One who made that which we see above and below and around us must have power far beyond the creature, also that He Himself must be above man altogether. And like the testimony sent in grace to man today, the voice of creation has gone out into all the earth, and its words unto the ends of the world (Rom. 10:18). The powerful eloquence of this ancient preacher has doubtless been fruitful in multitudes of cases, in bringing home to their souls the great fact that God is, and in bringing them to cry to Him in their need. More than one has said, "When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained; what is man that thou art mindful of him?" Nor have the words of Isaiah been in vain, "Thus says the Lord that created the heavens; God Himself that formed the earth and made it; He has established it, He created it not in vain, He formed it to be inhabited: I am the Lord; and there is none else . . . a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside Me. Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I AM GOD, AND THERE IS NONE ELSE."

Moreover, when the Apostle Paul was preaching to the turbulent crowds at Lystra, he reminded them that though the nations had been suffered to go in their own ways in past times, nevertheless the rain given from heaven and the fruitful seasons, the food and gladness that filled their hearts, were a testimony to the Creator. He did not leave Himself without witness. The unceasing testimony of God in creation to men is sure.

God's Testimony in the Law

As we have said, this was given to Moses at Sinai. It was the moral law which was preserved in the ark and in the tabernacle. These therefore were afterwards called the ark of the testimony and the tabernacle of testimony. The ark, with the mercy-seat of gold above and the golden cherubim, formed the throne of Jehovah on the earth. The law within the ark--"the testimony," was the moral foundation of that throne. The Lord said to Moses, "Thou shalt put into the ark the testimony which I shall give thee" (Ex. 25:16). Although constantly overlooked, a little meditation upon this will give us to see the great importance of this testimony. The previous one had to do with providence; this with government; the third with grace. Here was to be found the foundation of right relations with God. But because man was a sinner, the law necessarily condemned him--righteously so; and all the world comes under judgment to God. By the works of the law no flesh could be justified. It gave the knowledge of sin, and stopped every mouth; so that, if God had not found redemption for us in Christ Jesus, we must have remained under judgment eternally. But, through that redemption, He now justifies freely by His grace all those who believe in Jesus.

This does not, however, abrogate the testimony given to Moses. How could it? The law is holy, and the commandment, which may bring sin home to us, is holy and just and good also. Moreover God has given the Spirit to those who trust in Christ, and though they are not under the law, but under grace, yet "the righteous requirement of the law" is now fulfilled in them--"who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Rom. 8:4). Indeed, the inward man of the real soul delights in the law of God, and it is as true now as ever--Blessed is the man that finds delight in the law of the Lord, and in His law doth he meditate day and night. Although justification is not to be found there, but only in the blood of Christ, yet true blessedness is tasted as we find Christ in this wondrous testimony of God.

The Lord Jesus said to a scribe, who questioned Him as to which is the first of all the commandments, "Hear, O Israel: THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE LORD: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these." The scribe acknowledged that this was the truth; and the Lord said to him, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God." Later we are told in Romans 13:10, "Love is the whole law" (NT.). How abiding therefore is this testimony which was put in the ark. It is indeed sure, and it makes wise the simple. Such are enabled to see Christ in it. He said, "Thy law is within My heart." HE loved in fullest perfection.

God's Testimony in Christ

"Its own times" having come for the present-day testimony of God to men, Paul tells us he was appointed a herald and apostle to make it known. He was not the testimony, nor was any other servant of Christ or company of people, but he was fitted and appointed for the announcement of it. He carried it to Corinth, and knowing the worldly wisdom which characterized that Grecian people, as a wise servant of the Lord, he did not announce the testimony of God with words of man's wisdom, lest they should trust in that instead of in the power of God. He preached Jesus Christ and Him crucified. The testimony of Christ was confirmed in those who received it (compare 1 Cor. 2:1-5 and 1:6). It is called the testimony "of God" for He is the Source of it, and "of Christ" because He is the Subject of it. Paul also carried it to Thessalonica, where it was believed (2 Thess. 1:10). He exhorted Timothy not to be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of himself, the Lord's prisoner on account of it, but to suffer evil along with the gospel, according to the power of God, who has saved us (2 Tim. 1:8). Another has said, "Persons who live in the ease of Englishmen do not know what this suffering is, but where Popery is rampant and liberty unknown, to be put into prison, or taken by the gendarme daunts and cows people. The world's reproach is on them. The testimony reduces itself to its simplest elements--not being ashamed of Christ, set before the world in testimony" (see J.N.D. Letters, vol. 2, p. 306; 2nd ed., 309).

From the scriptures given above, we are enabled to gather seven things concerning the present testimony: (1) It is of God; (2) it is concerning Christ; (3) it was announced in the preaching; (4) it was believed; (5) it was confirmed in those who received it; (6) it was in reproach; (7) it was given of God for all men. This last is confirmed by 1 Timothy 2:1-6. There we are told to pray for all men, for this is good and acceptable before our Saviour-God, who desires that all men should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. The Holy Spirit then leads us on to the present-day testimony, and to its bearing towards all. For "GOD IS ONE"--the same who speaks in creation and in the law to men. And now we have made known something which just suits poor, sinful man--something which did not exist before--"the Mediator of God and men one, the Man Christ Jesus"; and, wonderful love and grace!--He "gave Himself a ransom for all." This indeed is just what man needed, and this is what our Saviour-God provided in grace for man, blessed be His name for ever.

The Spirit at once adds as to this gracious provision of God for man--"The testimony to be rendered in its own times" (N, T.). This testimony of God still remains, and, like the others of which we have spoken, it is sure. The times for it to be announced arrived when Christ rose and ascended to God's right hand in glory, and the Holy Spirit was given as the power for its heralding. Those times still last. Christ is still at God's right hand. The Spirit is still here to give power for the announcing of the testimony of God. Are we ready to further this in every way possible? Are we awake as to its importance? Are we prepared, if needs be, to suffer along with the gospel? Or have the ease and liberty referred to above lulled us to sleep? If Satan

cannot succeed as a roaring lion, we may be sure he will seek to spoil us by his wiles. But greater is He that is in us than he that is in the world. How then do we stand as to the testimony of God? May we be helped to understand it better, to value it more, and to seek its furtherance for God's praise and glory.

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