

## Jesus Came By Water and Blood (2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Easter, Year B)

### 1 John 5:1-6—Jesus Came By Water and Blood

<sup>1</sup> Every one who believes that Jesus is the Christ is a child of God, and every one who loves the parent loves the child. <sup>2</sup> By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. <sup>3</sup> *For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments.* And his commandments are not burdensome. <sup>4</sup> For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that overcomes the world, our faith. <sup>5</sup> *Who is it that overcomes the world but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?* <sup>6</sup> *This is he who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ, not with the water only but with the water and the blood.* (1 John 5:1-6)

1. Commandments: keeping the commandments = “love of God” (5:3; cf. Exod 20:1-17)
  - a. Tablet 1: Love of God (Idolatry, Blasphemy, Sabbath)
  - b. Tablet 2: Love of Neighbor (Honoring Parents, Murder, Adultery, Theft, False Witness, Coveting Neighbor’s Spouse or Property”
2. The World = “the world” (Greek *kosmos*), the realm opposed to God (5:4)
3. Water and Blood: Jesus “came by water and blood” (5:6)
  - a. Water = Baptism
  - b. Blood = Cross
  - c. “*Not* with water [baptism] only,”
  - d. “*But* with the water [baptism] and the blood [the Cross]” (5:6)

### The Living Tradition

Irenaeus of Lyons: Cerinthus, again, a man who was educated in the wisdom of the Egyptians, taught that the world was not made by the primary God, but by a certain Power far separated from him, and at a distance from that Principality who is supreme over the universe, and ignorant of him who is above all. *He represented Jesus as having not been born of a virgin, but as being the son of Joseph and Mary according to the ordinary course of human generation, while he nevertheless was more righteous, prudent, and wise than other men. Moreover, after his baptism, Christ descended upon him in the form of a dove from the Supreme Ruler, and that then he proclaimed the unknown Father, and performed miracles. But at last Christ departed from Jesus, and that then Jesus suffered and rose again, while Christ remained impassible, inasmuch as he was a spiritual being.* (Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, 1.26; trans. ANF, 1.351-52; cf. Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 3.3.4; 3.11.1; Eusebius, *Church History*, 3.28.6; 4.14.6; Epiphanius, *Panarion*, 28)

Bede of Northumbria: “He who came by water and blood,” the water, namely, of his *baptismal cleansing* and *the blood of his passion*. “Not in water only but in water and blood.” Not only did he deign to be baptized for the sake of our cleansing, that he might

consecrate and pass on to us the sacrament of baptism, but he also gave his blood for us, he redeemed us by his passion, that being always restored to health by his sacraments we might be nourished for salvation. (Bede, *Commentary on 1 John 5:6*; trans. David Hurst).

### Questions for Discussion and Reflection (2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Easter, Year B)

1. What does John mean he refers to Jesus coming by “water and blood” (1 John 5:6)? Why does he seem to think this so important?

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### For Further Reading

1. Bede the Venerable. *Commentary on the Seven Catholic Epistles*. Translated by Dom David Hurst, O.S.B. Kalamazoo, Mich.: Cisterican Publications, 1985.