

# 1 John 5:7

This verse known as the Johannine Comma is commonly used to discredit the validity of the Textus Receptus. It is a smokescreen that gets more credit than it is worth. Erasmus did not include this in his first two editions but did in his third. This verse is not in the Vaticanus or the Sinaiticus but is in the Vulgate. Erasmus passion was to amend Jerome's errors. He would have liked nothing more than to leave it out if it were really not legitimate.

Does it make any sense to throw out the Antioch manuscripts in exchange for Alexandrian over one verse? There is not any other verse in the Bible that contradicts this verse. The Eastern Church used Greek and the Western Church used Latin. Few of the Greek manuscripts but many of the Latin include 1 John 5:7. Bibles from as early as 170 A.D. included 1 John 5:7 and early writers quoted it. Many of these older Bibles were imprecise translations; therefore they are not considered the preserved word but do provide the proof that 1 John 5:7 was in the original letters.

In 250 A.D. Cyprian wrote: "The Lord says, "I and the Father are one;" and again it is written of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, "And these three are one." Again in 385 A.D., Priscillian wrote: "As John says, 'and there are three which give testimony on earth, the water, the flesh, the blood, and these three are in one, and there are three which give testimony in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, and these three are one in Christ Jesus.'"

Without 1 John 5:7 the rest of the chapter would be incoherent. 1 John 5:7 tells us that there are three that bear record in heaven, verse 11 goes on to explain what that record is. Without verse 7 we do not know who bears that record. Verse 7 assures us that God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost are in total agreement in heaven that we have eternal life in the only begotten Son of God.

1 John 5:7 For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. (In heaven the Godhead bears record but with just this verse it is not clear what is the record. In context, it has to do something with the Lord Jesus Christ.)

1 John 5:8 And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one. (On earth, the Holy Spirit agrees in one with the water and the blood. Again, this has to do with the Lord Jesus' ministry but exactly what is not mentioned.)

1 John 5:9 If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son.

(The witness of the Holy Spirit is greater than any witness of men. The witness has to do about the ministry of the Lord Jesus here on earth.)

1 John 5:10 He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.

(This is a very strong verse. It states that anyone who does not believe the record that God gave of His Son makes God a liar! I cannot imagine a verse stronger than this. This is so serious that the record is settled in heaven between the Godhead! But, we still do not know what is this record, but only that the Godhead bears witness to it in heaven.)

1 John 5:11 And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

(Now the record is revealed. The record that the Godhead agrees in heaven is that **WE HAVE ETERNAL LIFE IN THE ONLY BEGOTTEN SON OF GOD!** Our salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ is secure because the Godhead is in total agreement and the blood and water of the Lord Jesus on earth bear witness to the record in heaven.)

If verse 7 is removed, then the record of agreement by the Godhead in heaven is also removed! Verse 7 is not a mere proof of the Trinity, it is really a proof that believers have total assurance of eternal life, when they are in the Son of God! God bears record in heaven that we have eternal life! The proof of the Blessed Trinity is actually a side issue which I had never realized.

Erasmus omitted it from his first edition of the printed Greek N.T. (1516), because it occurred in the Latin Vulgate and not in any Greek manuscript. To quieten the outcry that followed, he agreed to restore it if one Greek manuscript could be found containing it. Two Greek manuscripts, Codex 61 and 629 were presented, so Erasmus included it in his 1522 edition. Since these manuscripts are late (15th and 16th centuries) some think the readings are corrupt. What do we answer?

### **Early manuscript evidence that exists for I John 5:7,8**

#### **Early church writers that used it:**

Cyprian 200 - 258 AD. "The Lord says, 'I and the Father are one;' and again it is written of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, 'And these three are one'." If Cyprian quotes I John 5:7 from his Bible in 200• 258 AD, it must be a valid reading. His Bible was copied from an older manuscript containing this verse.

Cyprian lived only 100 years after John wrote the book of I John. Cyprian would have had access to the original manuscript to check.

- Priscillian 350 AD, a Spanish bishop quotes I John 5:7,8.
- Idacius Clarus 360 AD, who opposed Priscillian quotes it.
- Varimadum 380 AD.
- Cassiodorus 485 AD.
- Cassian 435 AD.
- Victor Vita 489 AD.
- Jerome 450 AD.
- Fulgentius 533 AD.
- Ps. Vigilius 484 AD.
- Ansbert 660 AD.

#### **Early bible versions that include it:**

Old Syriac 170 AD.

Old Latin 200 AD, in North Africa and Italy.

Italic 4th and 5th century. – Italic • Monacensis 7th century.

Italic • Speculum 9th century.

Latin Vulgate 4th, 5th century.

#### **Greek miniscule manuscripts that include it:**

- 221 in the 10th century.(variant).
- 88 in the 12th century.(margin).
- 629 in the 14th century.(Ottobanianus)
- 429 in the 14th century (margin).
- 636 in the 15th century. (margin).
- 61 in the 16th century.(Codex Montfortianus)
- 918 in the 16th century. (an Escorial ms).
- 2318 (a Bucharest manuscript).

#### **Early writings:**

Liber Apologeticus 350 AD. Council of Carthage 415 AD.