

## Early Word: 1 John 5:9-13

Easter 7, Year B

By Beth Barnett

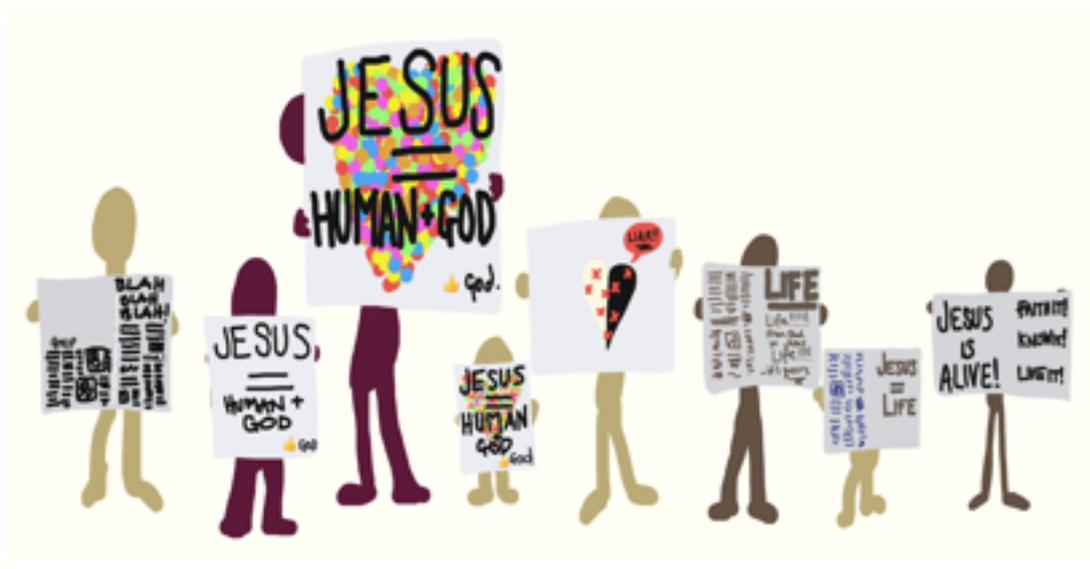
This is an Intergenerational Bible reading with simple newspaper props using 1 John 5:9-13 .

You will need:

- 8 'newspapers' prepared with outside covers according to the picture below, and with the corresponding verses of 1 John 5: 9-13 stick inside, in clear large print for the readers.
- 8 Readers of different ages willing to hold up a paper and read one verse. Those who are not strong readers (or readers at all) can still participate by memorizing the verse (some are much easier to remember than others), or having someone else read.
- Cards with image of multi-coloured heart 'Jesus = Human+God' and blank space for people to write on.
- Optional: add 3 people with large cardboard mobile phone props. On the screen of each of these is a 'thumbs up' emoticon. Place these three phones after papers 2, 3 and 4. This simply accentuates the thumbs up icon on the bottom of each of these, signalling the greater 'thumbs up' testimony of God affirming Jesus as the source of life.

Time required:

5 minutes



## Introduction

(optional longer version, if you think your community needs this background)

Our Bible reading today comes from a book in the Bible called First John. It's right near the end of the Bible. It's really a book of sermons, but it's been written to sound like a letter to a community of Jesus' followers. If you were a follower of Jesus in the first half of the first Century, you might have seen and heard Jesus as a human bodily person living in Israel. But if you lived later in the first century, somewhere out and about in the vast Roman Empire, you wouldn't have had a chance to meet Jesus. You might have heard about Jesus from his first followers or other followers who had heard about Jesus from his first followers. We know about Jesus today from stories in the Bible, which his first followers told the things they'd seen and heard and experienced of Jesus to other followers, who told other followers. All of this telling about the things people had seen and heard and experienced of Jesus is called testifying.

(or for a shorter introduction, start here:)

Sometimes when important or amazing things happen media writers, journalists in newspapers and for websites, try to find witnesses to testify or tell what they saw and heard or experienced. Through the season of Easter, celebrating the Risen Jesus alive and living amongst us, we've been exploring some readings from the book of First John. We've heard about how followers of Jesus – then and now – see and hear and encounter Jesus alive, and then testify, or tell what they've seen and heard.



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There's more of that idea of testifying – telling what we've seen and heard and encountered and know – in today's reading.  
To help us with today's reading we have some Newspaper readers at the ready.  
Let's listen as they report to us what was written to followers of Jesus in First John.

## Set up

A line of 8 people stands in the front or centre of your space, as if waiting for a bus, standing in order as shown below, each person has one newspaper tucked under their arm.

In order, each person opens their newspaper up so that the outside is clearly visible to the gathering. They read the corresponding verse which should be stuck to the inside of their newspaper so it can be read easily (see below for headlines corresponding to the verses)



5:9a If we receive human testimony,  
Normal sized (A3) News paper

***Blah Blah Blah! War! Gossip!***



5:9b ...the testimony of God is greater; for this  
is the testimony of God that he has testified to  
his Son.

Huge (A0) News paper

***Jesus = Human+God  
Thumbs up God!***



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5:10a Those who believe in the Son of God have the testimony in their hearts.  
Multicoloured Heart Newspaper

**Jesus = Human+God**  
**Thumbs up God!**

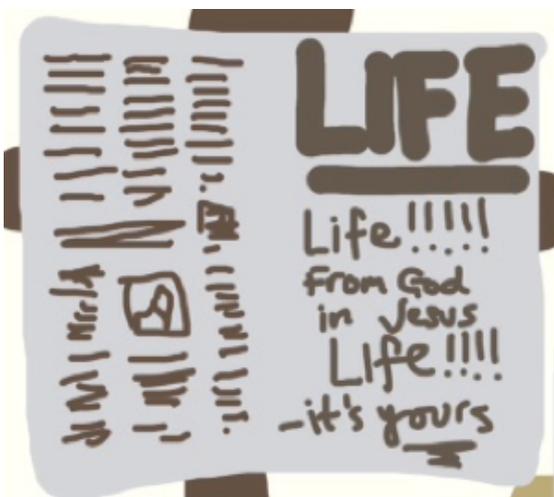
\*nb as in the illustration have a couple of different aged people holding this.



5:10b Those who do not believe in God have made him a liar by not believing in the testimony that God has given concerning his Son.

Black and white heart,  
**Speech bubble "Liar!"**

After reading this, take a spare plain piece of newspaper from inside the newspaper and tear it into little pieces and throw them up in the air, letting them fall down around you. Keep the outside page and the inside page with the text for reading again.



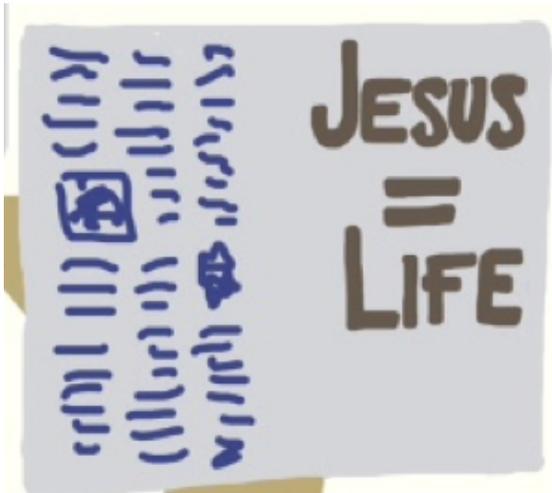
5:11 And this is the testimony: God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.  
Big news paper (turn page)

**LIFE!!!! From God in Jesus!**  
**Life! Its yours!**



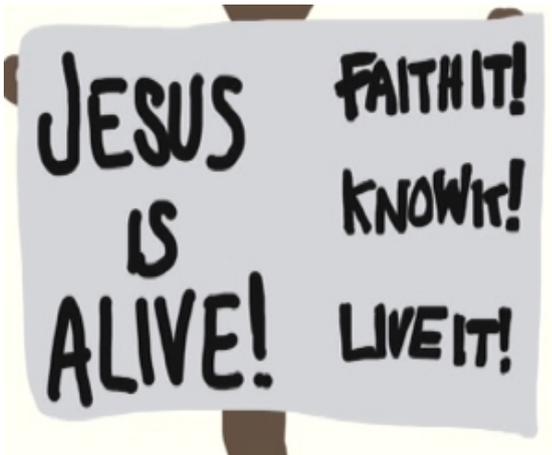
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5:12 Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.

***Jesus = Life***



5:13 I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.

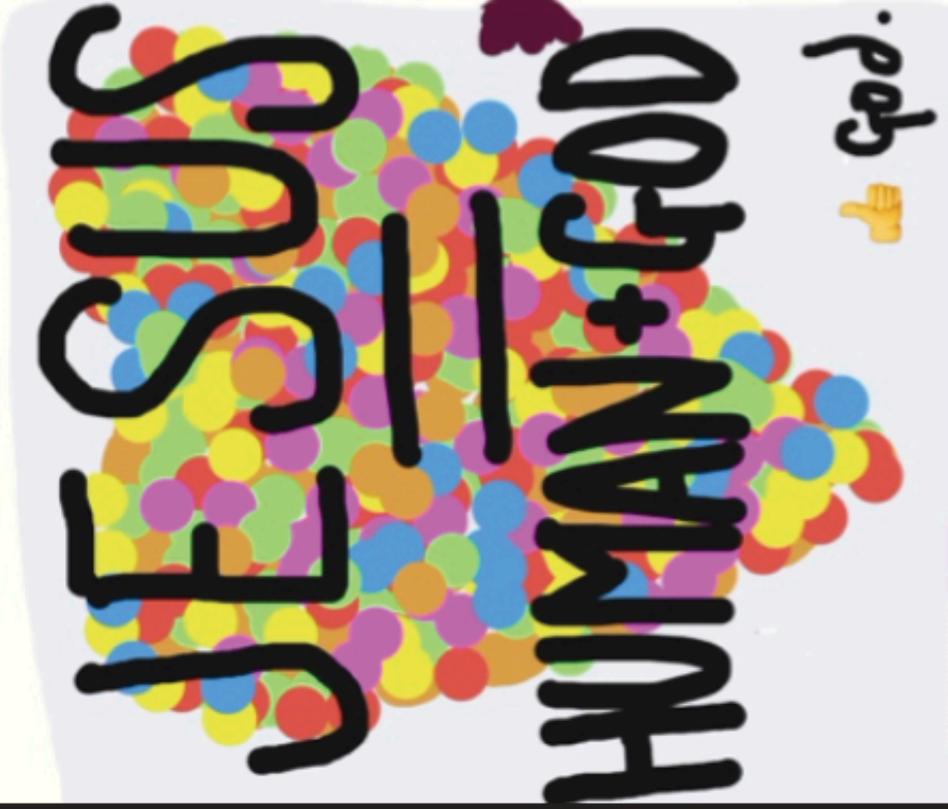
Jesus is alive!  
Faith it!  
Know it!  
Live it!



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Distribute Postcards and invite participants to write their own good news story of God + humans in the world. Provide a display board to leave these on for others to read.



The postcard features a light grey background with a dense cluster of colorful dots in shades of red, yellow, green, blue, and purple. The words "JESUS" and "HUMAN + GOD" are written in large, bold, black, hand-drawn letters across the top. To the right of the text, there is a yellow thumbs-up icon and the word "God." written in a black, cursive font.

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