

Dear Pat,

Thank you for writing us at Christian Questions Radio. You asked if we were able to disprove 1 John 5:1.

1 John 5:1 from the King James Version reads, “Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him.”

The King James translation of this verse is not the best rendering. The word “born” (from the Greek word *gennao*, Strong’s #1080) is the same word as “begat” and “begotten” that are also used in the verse. *Gennao* has several meanings: to procreate by the father, bear, beget, be born, bring forth, conceive, or be delivered of. Therefore, a translator must carefully determine the thought being expressed in the verse and use the word that best puts forth the concept. Although the two ideas, begetting and birth, are always implied in the word *gennao*, when the active agent is a male, it should be translated *begotten*; when the agent is a female, it should be rendered *born*. Thus in 1 John 2:29; 3:9; 4:7 and 5:1 and 18, *gennao* should be translated *begotten*, because God (masculine) is the active agent.

A much better translation (American Revised Version Improved and Corrected) of John 5:1 reads, “And whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is begotten of God: and whosoever loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him.”

This translation now makes beautiful sense. Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ, the only begotten Son of God who came to redeem the fallen human race, loves the Father who begat Jesus as well as all the dear ones who have also been begotten by the Father through his holy spirit.

Although Jesus was begotten of the holy spirit during his ministry on earth, his spirit birth did not take place until after he completed every aspect of his Father’s will, which included dying on the cross and being counted as a blasphemer in order to redeem the entire human race. Jesus’ reward from God for successfully completing his mission was one of honor, glory and immortality. This reward has also been offered to His faithful followers throughout the Gospel Age. “To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life.” (Romans 2:7) If these followers remain faithful to their covenant of sacrificing their wills, their spiritual begetting as embryonic new creatures will develop throughout their earthly lives until they die in the flesh and are resurrected, or born, in the spirit. “When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: ‘Death has been swallowed up in victory.’” (1 Corinthians 15:54)

You asked if we were able to disprove 1 John 5:1. No, that was not our intent. The scripture to us is clear and inspiring. We hope our explanation of it has helped you. Please write us again.

Sincerely,
Christian Questions Radio