

# **1 John 5:7,8**

## *"Johannine Comma"*

The "Johannine Comma" is a Latin term used to refer to a portion of 1 John 5:7-8.

"Johannine" meaning *"of, relating to, or characteristic of the apostle John or the New Testament books ascribed to him,"* And "comma" meaning *"a short clause of words cut off or isolated as a single group."*

### **I JOHN 5**

The underlined portion of verse 7 and 8 of 1 John 5 is the part known as the "Johannine Comma".

**7 For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are <sup>one</sup> united**

**8 And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.**

**9 If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the**

*"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one." 1 John 5:7-8*

The legitimacy of the "Johannine Comma" in the Bible is hotly debated by modern critical scholars today. In fact, many modern Bibles remove the Johannine Comma leaving behind only a hollow crust of the verses.

*"For there are three that bear record, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one." 1 John 5:7-8*

However, as we will see, we can trust God's word for He has given us sufficient evidence upon which to base our faith. Proofs for the Johannine Comma include:

- Its agreement with other Bible testimony
- Its mention by early writers
- Greek manuscripts that indeed contain it
- Erasmus inclusion has been vindicated
- Its inclusion in numerous Old Latin manuscripts
- Internal Evidence for its inclusion

### **The Johannine Comma Agrees with other Bible Testimony**

First of all, we must ask the question, does the Johannine Comma agree with the testimony of the Bible itself? Yes it does!

We find that the three persons of the Godhead are confirmed in both the Old and New Testaments (Hebrew and Greek) with texts such as Isaiah 48:16 (*a prophecy of Jesus*)

*"Come ye near unto me, hear ye this; I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, there am I: and now the Lord GOD, and his Spirit, hath sent me."*

and texts such as the Great Commission in Matthew 28:19:

*"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:"*

Therefore, we see that the "Johannine Comma" passes the *"to the law and to the testimony"* test (Isaiah 8:20). That means that the Johannine Comma agrees with the Bible itself.

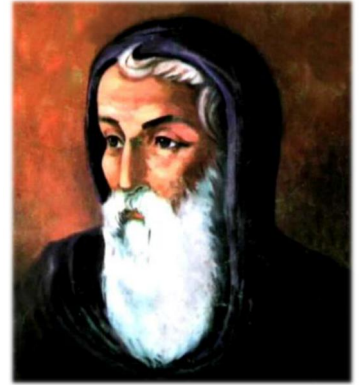
### **The Johannine Comma is Cited by Several Early Writers**

Critics claim that the Johannine Comma was not added to 1 John until sometime during the 5th century (400-500 AD). However, those who study history find a trail of evidence from several writers in the

early centuries who quote from, allude to, or reference to this text as early as the 2nd century. While these men were by no means infallible, their cumulative testimony is still strong evidence for the existence of the Comma at this time.

Around the year 177 AD, Athenagoras alluded to the Comma.

*"...what is the oneness of the Son with the Father, what the communion of the Father with the Son, what is the Spirit, what is the unity of these three, the Spirit, the Son, the Father, and their distinction in unity;..." (Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol. 2, ch. 12)*



Around 200 AD Tertullian, alluding to the verse, spoke of the three members of the Godhead as being one.

*"Thus the connection of the Father in the Son, and of the Son in the Paraclete [Spirit], produces three coherent Persons, who are yet distinct One from Another. These Three are, one..." (Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol. 3, ch. 25)*

Around 250 AD, Cyprian of Carthage actually quoted from the Johannine Comma. In fact, Cyprian specifically says "it is written" and then quotes "and these three are one".

*"The Lord says, 'I and the Father are one;' (John 10:30) and again it is written of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, 'And these three are one.' (1 John 5:7)" (Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol. 5, Treatise I. - On the Unity of the Church)*

About 350 AD, **Athanasius**, an anti-Arian, directly alluded to the Comma. By "Athanasius", it is meant Athanasius (c. 296 – 373 AD) or Pseudo-Athanasius (c. 350 - c. 600 AD). Athanasius quoted the Comma in *Disputatio Contra Arium*:

*"Τί δὲ καὶ τὸ τῆς ἀφέσεως τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν παρεκτικὸν, καὶ ζωοποιδὸν, καὶ ἁγιαστικὸν λουτρὸν, οὐ χωρὶς οὐδεὶς ὄψεται τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν οὐρανῶν, οὐκ ἐν τῇ τρισυκαρία ὀνομασίᾳ δίδεται τοῖς πιστοῖς; Πρὸς δὲ τούτοις πᾶσιν Ἰωάννης φάσκει· «Καὶ οἱ τρεῖς τὸ ἓν εἰσιν»" (Disputatio Contra Arium, PDF, pg. 21)*

*"But also, is not that sin-remitting, life-giving and sanctifying washing [baptism], without which, no one shall see the kingdom of heaven, given to the faithful in the Thrice-Blessed Name? In addition to all these, John affirms, 'and these three are one.'" (Translation by KJV Today, the portion in question double-checked by us)*

Also around 350 AD, the Spanish bishop **Priscillian** wrote in his *Liber Apologeticus*:

*"...sicut Iohannes ait, tria sunt quae testimonium dicunt in terra aqua caro et sanguis et haec tria in unum sunt, et tria sunt quae testimonium dicunt in caelo pater uerbum et spiritus et haec tria unum sunt in Christo Iesu."*

translated, **Priscillian's** quote reads

*"...as John says, there are three things which bear witness on earth, water, flesh, and blood, and these three are one, and there are three things which bear witness in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit; and these three are one in Christ Jesus."*

*(Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum, vol.18, p.6)*

About 360 AD, **Idacius Clarus** also quotes it as well.

In 380 AD, the written Christian document called **Varimadum** specifically stated: *"And John the Evangelist says, . . . 'And there are three who give testimony in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, and these three are one.'"*

Around 398 AD, **Aurelius Augustine** was also referring to the Bible text.

As you can see, it is obvious that the early Christians were well aware of the existence and authenticity of the Johannine Comma - and these references are all from the early centuries long before the modern critics supposed "5<sup>th</sup> century addition" lie.

Notice again, all these sources confirm the Johannine Comma, in one way or another, in the centuries prior to when the modern critics claim the Johannine Comma came into existence.

We also see that in 484 or 485 AD, **Eugene of Carthage** quoted 1 John 5:7 as evidence, *"Et ut luce clarius unius divinitatis esse cum Patre et Filio Spiritum Sanctum doceamus, Joannis Evangelistae testimonio comprobatur. Ait namque: Tres sunt qui testimonium perhibent in coelo: Pater, Verbum et Spiritus Sanctus et hi tres unum sunt."* – which means, in English, *"And as a shining light teaching the unity of the divinity of the Father and Son and Holy Spirit, the testimony of John the Evangelist demonstratively testifies: 'There are three who bear witness in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit, and these three are one.'"*

*(Victor Vitensis quoted in Maynard's The History of the Debate over 1 John 5:7, pg. 43)*

The Council of Carthage endorsed the Johannine Comma in its official document, which was endorsed by hundreds of church representatives.

*"Between three and four hundred prelates attended the Council which met at Carthage; and Eugenius, as bishop of that see, drew up the Confession of the orthodox, in which the contested verse is expressly quoted. That a whole church should thus concur in quoting a verse which was not contained in the received text is wholly*

*inconceivable; and admitting that 1 John v 7 was thus generally received, its universal prevalence in that text is only to be accounted for by supposing it to have existed in it from the beginning."* (Inquiry Into Integrity of the Greek Vulgate, p.296-297)

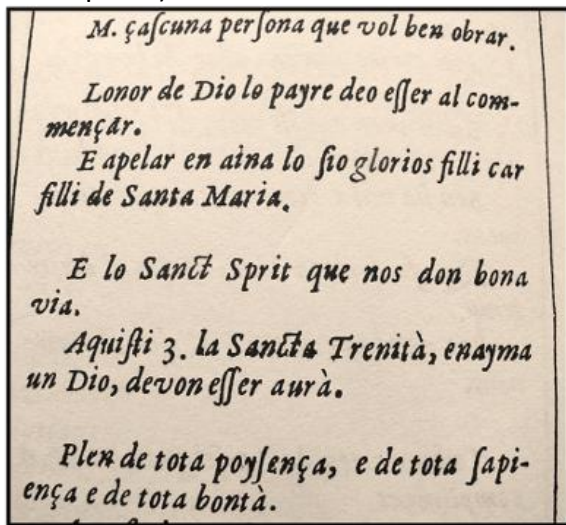
Of this piece of evidence one man stated *"In my mind, this is absolutely convincing evidence all by itself. Even if there was no other evidence (and there is more evidence) this single piece of evidence is extremely convincing."*

More evidence could be shared, but we will suffice with an evidence from the Vaudois Line. Indeed, from the Waldensians we also find external evidence of the truth of the three persons of the Godhead or Heavenly Trio. This we find in the "Noble Lesson" written in the Language of the ancient inhabitants of the





Valleys (The Waldenses); in the Year 1100 AD. Extracted out of a most authentic manuscript, the true original whereof is to be seen in the public library of the famous University of Cambridge. (Translation from "The History of the Evangelical Churches of the Valleys of Piemont." by Samuel Morland. 1658. CHRAA. 1982. p.100)



### The Noble Lesson

*Wherefore every one that will do good works,  
The honour of God the Father ought to be his  
first moving principle.  
He ought likewise to implore the aid of His  
glorious Son,  
the dear Son of the Virgin Mary\*,  
And the Holy Ghost which lightens us in the true way.  
These three (the holy Trinity\*) as being but  
one God, ought to be called upon.  
Full of power, wisdom, and goodness.*

(Translation from "The History of the Evangelical Churches of the Valleys of Piemont." by Samuel Morland. 1658. CHRAA. 1982. p.100)

\*NOTE: Santa can mean blessed which is Biblical. (Luke 1:28) The Waldensians did not worship Mary.

\*Also note Trineta can also mean triad. "A triad is three things or people considered as one unit. A triad is a trio." <https://www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/triad>

### A Little History

And I suppose that before we continue with the manuscript issue, it will be helpful for the reader to understand a basic point about the Godhead. Many people throughout history and at present, refer to the triple members of the Godhead as a "Trinity".

The word "Trinity" simply means "the condition of being three" and can be viewed as being made from the combination of the words "tri (three)" and "unity", as representing 3 things operating together in one action. We actually use a form of this word when referring to 3 men or 3 women who are singing together, we call them a "Trio." So there is nothing technically "wrong" with the word "Trinity".

But, that being said, it is important to understand that this word "Trinity" means different things depending on who you are talking to, because it means different things to different people, depending on how they were taught to believe. And this confusion over the word "Trinity" can be found all the way back in the first several centuries of the Christian Church.

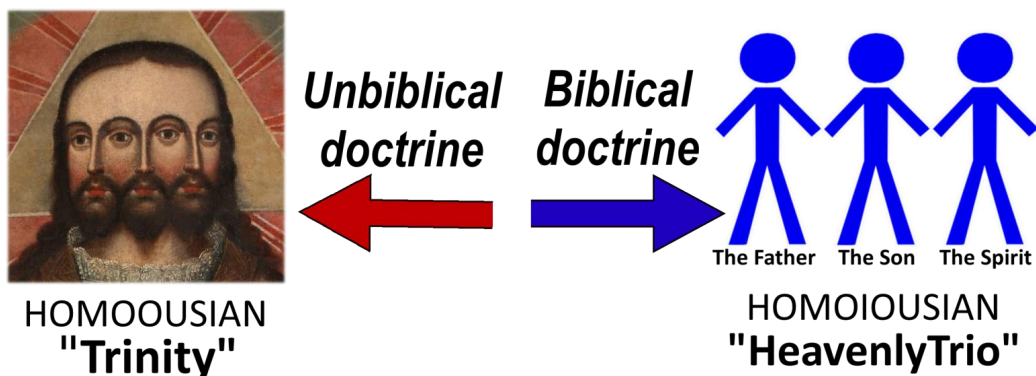
The Greek term "homoousian" which basically means "of one substance" or "identical substance" was the word that was first developed and used by the Gnostics to describe the Godhead. This word was what first became associated with the term that it is more commonly called today "Trinitarianism" (the doctrine of the Trinity).

The problem is that this term "homoousian" (aka. Trinity) can basically be taken to mean that there is no division or separation involved. In other words, the Godhead is viewed sort of as one single being (same substance) who can display himself in any one of 3 different modes, as either the Father, Son, or Holy Ghost, depending on which aspect he wants to show at the moment - sort of like a single being with 3 faces. This is the unbiblical teaching that is involved with the Catholic doctrine of the "Trinity"!

Even though some claimed that "homoousian" could mean that the Father and the Son were two separate persons made of the same "divine type" of substance, because this term was so vague and could be easily understood to represent the false "one being with three modes or faces" concept, many of the early Christians refused to use or accept the term "Trinity" for the Godhead.

The opposing side that believed in the true Biblical teaching on the Godhead, chose the word "homoiousian" which means "similar substance", to show that the Godhead, while being of the same "divine type" of substance as far as all 3 being "God," yet they were in reality, 3 separate and distinct individual beings, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, who were united in "one" goal or purpose - very much like a trio of singers are three separate and distinct individuals, each with their own distinct personality, yet they operate in "one unity" to sing their song.

These two concepts can be easily illustrated by these pictures.



This is why, even though there is nothing wrong with the word "Trinity" by dictionary definition, the "connotation" of the term portrays the wrong, unbiblical doctrine taught by Rome. But many Protestant Christians today, were raised believing the dictionary definition, so they sometimes use it to refer to the Biblical Heavenly Trio doctrine instead, and there is where the confusion and misunderstanding is.

Now having established that concept, let's return to the manuscript issue.

#### **A Biblical View on "Original" Manuscript Evidence**

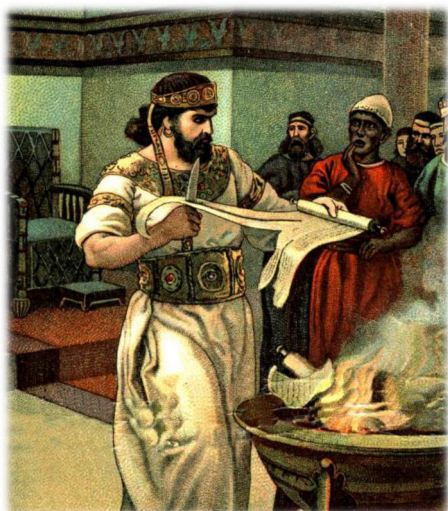
Skeptics and critics like to claim that they will only believe the "original manuscripts" and since the "original manuscripts" are all long gone, they will only accept the "oldest" existing manuscripts.

But contrary to their ideas, God is not as interested in preserving the "original manuscripts" as He is interested in "preserving" His word.

#### ***Psalm 12:6-7***

***"The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever."***

When "original manuscripts" are burned in fires, torn up, sunken in the sea, eaten by beasts, erased, buried, or destroyed in any other way, God can "preserve" His word through memory, through copying, or through any number of other methods.



When God told Jeremiah to write his book, and then king Jehoiakim cut up Jeremiah's "original manuscript" and threw it in the fire - that was the end of the "original manuscript" of Jeremiah (Jeremiah 36:23).

But God had Jeremiah make a copy, a 2<sup>nd</sup> manuscript of Jeremiah (Jeremiah 36:28).

It wasn't about preserving the "original manuscript" - it was about "preserving God's word."

Then later, in Jeremiah 51:63, we find that Jeremiah's manuscript was tied to a stone and thrown into the Euphrates river - again, another manuscript destroyed. But today, we have the whole book of Jeremiah, because God has preserved it - by having His people copy it through the years!

We also see this same principle illustrated at Sinai. God wrote His Law on tables of stone (the original manuscript) and when Moses reached the foot of the mountain, by God's direction, He threw down the "original" and broke it = end of "original manuscript".

Then God had Moses make a 2<sup>nd</sup> set of tables of stone (2<sup>nd</sup> manuscript) and God wrote the same information on them. Years later, this 2<sup>nd</sup> set of tables (2<sup>nd</sup> manuscript) was taken and buried in a cave, where it still remains to this day. Yet we have the complete record of it listed in Exodus 20:1-17.

Here again, it wasn't about "preserving the original manuscript" - it was about "preserving the words of God"!

God's word is not some old cracked, broken, moldy "dead" fragment of an "original manuscript" - God's word is **"quick and powerful"** (Hebrews 4:12 'quick' = 'alive/living'). God "preserves" His word, by the "Power" that is "in" His word.

God's pure word contains in itself the power to preserve itself and to explain itself. That is why we are to let the Bible be its own interpreter! God's pure word has been "preserved" down through the centuries in many languages (ex. in English = the King James Bible).

But back to the manuscript issue.



### **There are Greek Manuscripts that contain the Comma**

The most prominent argument used against the Johannine Comma is that it is not contained in some Greek manuscripts. While containing some truth, we will demonstrate that this argument is often exaggerated. It is true that there are some early Greek manuscripts that do not contain the Johannine Comma, but when we understand what was happening in the first few centuries in the Greek speaking church and the battles that were raging, we can better understand this supposed "lack" of the text in some of those early manuscripts.

Despite less manuscript evidence many diligent Bible students have placed their faith in the Johannine Comma's authenticity. For example, John Wesley wrote concerning the Johannine Comma that one Bible commentator's *"doubts were removed by three considerations: (1.) **That though it is wanting in many copies, yet it is found in more; and those copies of the greatest authority: — ( 2.) That it is cited by a whole gain of ancient writers, from the time of St. John to that of Constantine. This argument is conclusive: For they could not have cited it, had it not been in the sacred canon: — (3.) That we can easily account for its being, after that time, wanting in many copies, when we remember that **Constantine's successor was a zealous Arian, who used every means to promote his bad cause, to spread Arianism throughout the empire; in particular the erasing this text out of as many copies as fell into his hands.** And he so far prevailed, that the age in which he lived is commonly styled, Seculum Aranium, — "the Arian age;" there being then only one eminent man who opposed him at the peril of his life. So that it was a proverb, Athanasius contra mundum: "Athanasius against the world."***

*(John Wesley, Sermon 55)*

Indeed, we know there were many corrupting the word. Paul wrote to the Corinthians

***"For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God..." 2 Cor. 2:17***

So it is likely that some manuscripts do not contain the Comma because they were altered by Sabellists (who denied the plurality of persons in God), Nicolaitans (Rev. 2:6,15), Gnostics or others.

During the 2nd and 3rd centuries, there was a large movement to "worship knowledge" which was called Gnosticism, and because the Johannine Comma undermines the error of Gnosticism, the Gnostics would have had motivation to remove it from every manuscript that they had any control over. In other



words, it is possible that the various manuscripts that have been discovered that lack the Johannine Comma, could very well be manuscripts that the Gnostics had altered to match their false belief systems.

Also, *"With respect to 1 John v. 7,8 it has been already observed, that it was directed against the peculiar errors of the Nicolaitans and Cerinthians. Of those sects it has been likewise observed, that they respectively denied that Jesus was "the Son of God," and "came in the flesh," though they mutually expressed their belief in a Trinity. Such are the fundamental errors which the apostle undertakes to refute, while at the same time he inculcates a just notion of the Trinity, distinguishing the Persons from the substance by opposing τρεῖς in the masculine to ἐν in the neuter."* (Inquiry Into Integrity of the Greek Vulgate, p.276)

It is important to realize first of all, that for most of the manuscripts, we have no idea whose hand they originated from. Did they come from a Bible-believing Christian or were they copies and counterfeits made by skeptics or Gnostics? Common sense would tell us that if a Bible manuscript was "translated" by an unbelieving skeptic, that manuscript would not be trustworthy. We also have no way of knowing what manuscripts we have discovered - did we stumble across several libraries of manuscripts from a Christian society, or from a pagan/occult society? What if some of the manuscripts we have found today, originated as "fakes" or "counterfeits" produced by pagans to lead Christians astray?



Bring this thought down to today - what if our society was suddenly "lost" and 1000 years from now, some archeologist was to "dig up" a "Christian" bookstore from the year 2022. What would they find? Hundreds if not thousands of Bibles (manuscripts) that were translated by skeptics and higher critics (ex. NIV, ESV, NLT, etc.) - while only a very few, if any, that were translated from the pure-line of manuscripts (ex. KJV, Tyndale, Erasmus, Waldensian, etc.) See the point? Who was involved with the translation, will determine in a great degree, whether it is accurate to the original or not.

However, the promise of God is that He will guide His people (those who love and obey Him) into all truth.

**John 16:13**     *"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth:"*

**Acts 5:32**     *"And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him."*

**John 7:17**     *"If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God..."*

In addition, it should be pointed out, that just because some Greek manuscripts do not contain the text, that does not in any way discredit the text itself. We will see that to claim that the Commas absence in some manuscripts is proof that it doesn't belong there, is what is known as a **logical fallacy**, very similar to claiming that *"since Joe didn't visit the grocery store in Denver, that means he wasn't hungry"* - when in reality, the facts reveal that Joe lives in Atlanta, so he wasn't anywhere near Denver to go to any store..

For example, the critics like to claim that out of the 140+ papyrus fragments and the 5,800+ Greek manuscripts that we have today, very few actually contain the Johannine Comma, which, they claim as "proof" that it shouldn't be there. But that reasoning is using **skewed numbers** and **logical fallacies** to attempt to "prove" itself.

### Papyrus Fragment Argument Exposed

The fact of the matter is, any knowledgeable person should never be so foolish as to make any claims against the Johannine Comma based on papyrus fragments, as there are only 2 known fragments in the entire world that even contain a fragment of 1 John.

Papyrus #9, which only contains part of 6 verses from chapter 4, it doesn't contain any of the 5th chapter, and

Papyrus #74, which is missing more than 76% of the 5th chapter (including verses 1,2,5-8,11-16,18-21).



**Papyrus 9**

**In other words, Papyrus fragments have absolutely no bearing on the Johannine Comma at all.**

### Greek Manuscript Arguments Unmasked

With the Greek New Testament manuscripts, we find a somewhat similar situation as the papyrus.

Of all the various 5,800+ Greek manuscripts that have been discovered to date, the vast majority of them actually do not contain the whole New Testament from beginning to end (remember these had to be hand copied, there were no printers available).

In other words, whether the manuscripts were partial copies from someone's personal study endeavors or were originally complete New Testament copies that have just had parts of them lost through the centuries, what they are today are only partial manuscripts which many times only contain a few of the New Testament books.

This means that well over **91%** of those 5800+ Greek manuscripts do not even contain the book of 1 John. So here again, all those fragmentary manuscripts that make up that **91+%** have absolutely **no bearing** on the Johannine Comma and can not be used as evidence for or against it!

There are, in reality, only about **8.5%** of the existing Greek manuscripts that even contain part of the book of 1 John, and quite a few of those, being fragments themselves, do not contain the 5th chapter, so they cannot be used as evidence for or against it either.

This means, that instead of having thousands of manuscripts being contrasted to the few, like the skeptics and critics claim - because only **8.5%** contain the book in question, and an even smaller percentage contains the chapter under question - **all the thousands of manuscripts that do not contain both the book and chapter under question, cannot be used as any kind of evidence either for or against 1 John 5:7.**

One of the arguments of the critics is that there are not any "early" manuscripts that have been found that contain it but rather that all the manuscripts that contain it are what they call "late" manuscripts from the 10th century or later.

But what they fail to point out is that among the Greek manuscripts which do contain the book of 1 John but omit the Johannine Comma, **97%** are what the critics admit are "late manuscripts."

In fact, it should be noted too that Michael Maynard, author of The History of the Debate over 1 John 5:7, significantly points out that there are only 5 remaining Greek manuscripts that even contain the epistle of 1 John in whole or in part that date from the 7th century or before.

This means **97%** of the discovered manuscripts that the critics use for "proof" against the Johannine Comma are not from the early centuries either but rather from the 10th century or later, so in essence, their arguments are basically pitting "late manuscripts" against "late manuscripts."



And contrary to what the critics want people to believe, there are Greek manuscripts that do contain the Johannine Comma.

Some known Greek Manuscripts that do contain the Johannine Comma in their text include,

Date	Designation #	Name	Contents
1300 - 1400	629	Codex Ottobonianus	Acts - Jude
1480 - 1520	61	Codex Montfortianus ( <i>Britannicus</i> )	Entire NT
1500 - 1600	918	Codex Escorialensis	Romans - Jude
1634	2473	Minuscule 2473	Acts, James - Jude
1700 - 1800	2318	Minuscule 2318	Romans - Jude

Here are some Greek Manuscripts that contain the Johannine Comma in the their margin,

Date	Designation #	Name	Contents
900 - 1000	221	Minuscule 221	Acts - Jude
1000 - 1100	635	Codex Regius Neapolitanus	Acts - Jude
1000 - 1100	177	BSB Cod Graec. 211	Acts - Revelation
1100 - 1200	88	Codex Regis	Acts - Revelation
1200 - 1300	429	Guelferbytanus XVI. 7	Acts - Revelation
1400 - 1500	636	Minuscule 636	Acts - Jude

### **Erasmus Inclusion of the Johannine Comma Vindicated**

One of the commonly used stories promoted by the critics to try to undermine the Johannine Comma is the story they relate of the Greek text of Erasmus.

The story they relate basically claims that *Erasmus didn't include the Johannine Comma in the first couple editions of his Greek text, because he believed that since he didn't have any Greek manuscript that contained it, that meant the comma was false, so he left it out. But then he haphazardly made the rash promise that if anyone could produce a Greek manuscript with that text, that he would then add it to his New Testament, whereupon someone forged a Greek manuscript with this text and Erasmus, not wanting to break his promise, then added the text to his 3<sup>rd</sup> edition even though he knew the manuscript was false.*

***But this commonly circulated story is totally fictitious and was concocted in the attempt by the critics to discredit Erasmus.***



The part of the story that is true, is that Erasmus had not included the text of 1 John 5:7 in his first two editions of the New Testament.

This was because it was Erasmus' desire to provide the best translation that he could, and, of the Greek manuscripts that he had available to him at the time of his translation of his first two editions, none of them contained this text, so he just left it out of his translation.

*"If he had had a Greek manuscpt with the Comma Johanncum then he would have included the Comma but he had not found a single such manuscpt and consequently he omitted the Comma Johanneum."*

*(Erasmus and the Comma Johanneum, H.J. DE JONGE)*

But the part of the story claiming Erasmus made a rash promise and someone forged a manuscript and Erasmus compromised to save face, is **total fiction**. There is not one shred of evidence to support this part of the story, and not one single historian of that time period ever mentioned anything about it.

Evidence shows that this false story first originated with Westcott, Hort, Tregelles, and the other higher critics that began attempting to change the Bible in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and this lie has been continued and promoted by Nestle, Kenyon, Bruce Metzger, and various other higher critics ever since.

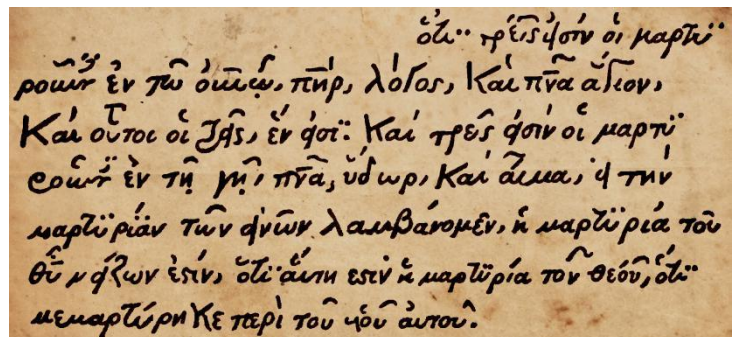
The renowned historian, H. J. de Jonge, who is known worldwide as the “authority” on the life and writings of Erasmus, completely debunked this fictitious story on Erasmus. So much so, that even Princeton Theological Seminary professor and textual critic Bruce M. Metzger, who was one of the most outspoken critics that was promoting this fictitious story, was forced to retract it.

*“Erasmus promised that he would insert the Comma Johanneum, as it is called, in future editions if a single Greek manuscript could be found that contained the passage. At length such a copy was found—or made to order.” (Bruce Metzger)*

*However, on pg 291 (n2) of the (new) 3rd edition of The Text of the New Testament Bruce Metzger writes:*

*‘What is said on p. 101 above about Erasmus’ promise to include the Comma Johanneum if one Greek manuscript were found that contained it, and his subsequent suspicion that MS. 61 was written expressly to force him to do so, needs to be corrected in the light of the research of H.J. de Jonge, a specialist in Erasmian studies who finds no explicit evidence that supports this frequently made assertion; see his “Erasmus and the Comma Johanneum”, Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses, lvi (1980), pp 381-9.” (<https://www.theopedia.com/johannine-comma>)*

The facts show that, rather than 1 John 5:7 being “added” because of some rash promise like the critics claim, Erasmus wisely chose to include the Johannine Comma in his 3<sup>rd</sup> edition because he was constantly trying to improve his Greek New Testament to remove any flaws. By the time that his 3<sup>rd</sup> edition came out, there were other Greek manuscripts containing the Johannine Comma that had been discovered and brought to his attention.



Codex Montfortianus

### The Johannine Comma is included in Numerous Old Latin Manuscripts

It is also important to understand that the original Old Latin manuscripts were translated directly from the Greek originals, and we have many more Latin manuscripts that date earlier than the Greek manuscripts that we have.

The original Itala Bible was translated by the Christians in Antioch within the first couple decades of the 2nd century. It was proven to be in existence by 157 AD, with some evidence pointing to as early as around 120 AD.

Scrivener points out this early date from which Latin copies were first made by stating:

*“The Old Latin version was likely translated from the Greek in roughly 157 AD.”*

*(A Plain Introduction to New Testament Criticism, II, 1894; p.42-42)*



This Itala is the “Old Latin” Italic Bible that was used by the early Christian missionaries to Italy and Europe and the very Bible of the early Waldensian church that arose in the 2nd century.

Beza himself stated that the Waldenses could trace their church back to 120 AD.

*“The Bishop of Meaux highly chargeth **Beza** for saying, that **the Waldenses**, time out of mind, had stiffly opposed the abuses of the Romish Church, and that **they held their doctrine from father to son, ever since the year 120**, as they had heard and received it from their elders and ancestors.”*

*(Some Remarks Upon the Ecclesiastical History of the Ancient Churches of Piedmont, p. 193)*

The Itala traced from Asia Minor to Northern Italy, Europe, and the British Isles during the first 3 centuries, is the pure Bible manuscripts that the later Waldensian church was using to translate all their various Romaunt Bibles from.

*"The Waldenses were the first of all the peoples of Europe to obtain a translation of the Holy Scriptures. Hundreds of years before the Reformation, they possessed the Bible in manuscript in their native tongue. They had the truth unadulterated, and this rendered them the special objects of hatred and persecution." Great Controversy, 1888, p.65*

In other words, the Old Latin Itala that the early Christian church used, **has the same antiquity and the same authority** as the early Greek manuscripts! And since the Latin speaking areas were not having the same extent of the Sabellianism and Gnosticism heresies to deal with that the Greek church was, there was not the same temptation to leave out the Johannine Comma from the Latin translations.

Speaking of the Itala Bible, well known theologian and linguist Frederick Nolan tells us:

*"The Scripture was not less committed to the keeping of the Latin than of the Greek church, as the witnesses of its authenticity, and the guardians of its purity; and the knowledge of the languages spoken by those churches, was nearly commensurate with the Roman and Macedonian conquests. The former church possessed a translation, which, as generally quoted by the Latin fathers previously to the council of Nice, was consequently, made previously to any alterations which the original might have undergone under Constantine. This translation has been celebrated for its literal fidelity, and we have this security of its having long continued unaltered..."* (Inquiry Into Integrity of the Greek Vulgate, p.56-57)

In the 5th century AD, Augustine refers to the faithful purity & accuracy of the Itala by stating,

*"Now among translations themselves the Italian (Itala) is to be preferred to the others, for it keeps closer to the words without prejudice to clearness of expression."*

*(Augustine of Hippo, On Christian Doctrine, Book II, ch. 15).*

It has been stated that even though there are currently about 6,000 Latin manuscripts that have not been examined yet, because of the sheer amount that have been examined that contain the Johannine Comma, it is estimated that about 95% of the roughly 10,000 Latin manuscripts that we have today contain the Johannine Comma.

What we for sure know, from the ones that have been examined so far, that at least 12 Old Latin manuscripts from the 7th century, 21 Old Latin manuscripts from the 8th century, & 189 Old Latin manuscripts from the 9th century, all contain the Johannine Comma.

For example, here are just a few of the many Old Latin manuscripts we have today that contain the Johannine Comma.

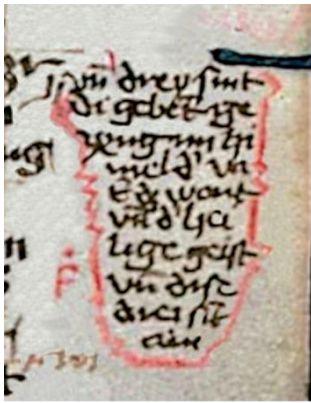
Date	Designation #	Name	Contents
400	m	Codex Speculum	New Testament
500	r	Codex Frisingensis	Romans-Phil./Tim./Heb./1John
750	l	León Palimpsest (Codex Legionensis)	James/1Pet./1-3John
1150	p	Codex Perpinianus	New Testament

Interestingly, here are a couple of Old Latin manuscripts that were confirmed in the past to contain the Johannine Comma, but, either through carelessness or purposeful intent, they have gotten **"Lost"** through the years and researchers can now no longer find them.

1250	dem	Codex Demidovianus	Acts - Revelation
1250	div	Codex Divionensis	Romans - Revelation

Besides the Itala Bible from 157 AD and all those other old Latin manuscripts, the Johannine Comma can also be found many other sources, such as:

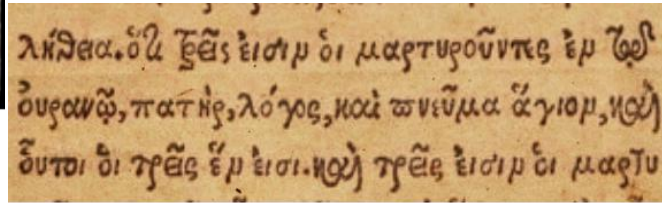




**Tepl Bible  
1350 AD**

cause the sprete ys' trueth. For there are thre  
whyh beare recorde in heven / the father / the  
worde / and the holy goost. And these thre are  
one. And there are thre which beare recorde in

### 1526 Tyndale NT



### Erasmus' Greek NT 1522 AD

(Dat de geist warheit  
ys) Wor de geist ys/  
dar ys nēn hūchelent/  
sunder alle dince geit  
rechtshapen vnd war  
hafftigen tho / wat de  
minsche redet / deit / vñ  
leuet. Wor de geist  
nicht ys / dar ys hūche  
lye vnde lōgen.

### Luther Bible 1534 AD

te is the trueth. (For there are thre which  
beare recorde in heauen: the father, the wor  
de, and the holy goost, & these thre are one.)

### 1535 Coverdale Bible

**La premiere Epistre de**  
Saint Jehan Apostre. **Chapitre. V.**  
que le spirit est la verite. \* Car il en ya troys qui donēt  
tesmoignage au ciel: le pere / la parolle / & le saint espe  
rit: & ces troys sont vng. Aussi en ya troys / qui donēt

### French Olivetan Bible (Waldensian) 1535 AD

S. IOHANNIS. P R I M A.		
<p>7 (דְּתַלְתָּא אֲבוּן דְּסְהַדִּין בְּמִלְתָּא אֲבָתָא מְלִיכָא וְרוּחָא דְּקִידְשָׁא וְתַלְתְּהוּ יְהוּ אֲבוּן :)</p> <p><i>Periache tresmo cherendeno testi- monianz, a in cielo, il Padre, la Parola, &amp; la Spirito sancto: &amp; que stante jomo vno.</i></p>	<p>7 (כִּי־שְׁלוֹשָׁה הָיוּ הַמַּעֲדִידִים בְּשִׁמְלֵים הָאֵלֶּךְ הַדָּבָר וְרוּחַ חֲקֹדֶשׁ וְשְׁלוֹשָׁה הָיְלָה אֶחָת תְּהֵא :)</p> <p><i>Porque tres son losque dan testimonio en el cielo, el Padre la palabra y el espiritu sancto, y es- tos tres son vno.</i></p>	<p>7. "Οι τρεῖς εἰσιν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες ἐν τῇ ἁγορᾷ, ὁ πατήρ, ὁ λόγος, καὶ τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα· καὶ οἱ τρεῖς ἐν εἰσι.</p> <p><i>Car il y en a trois qui donnent tes- moignage au ciel: le Pere, la parole, &amp; le saint E. prit: &amp; ces trois la sont vn.</i></p>

Syriac, Italian  
Latin, English

Hebrew, Spanish  
German, Danish

Greek, Gallice (French)  
Bohemian, Polish

<p>7. Quoniam tres sunt qui testimonium dant in caelo, Pater, Verbum, &amp; Spiritus sanctus: &amp; hi tres unum sunt.</p> <p><i>For there are thre: which beare tes- timony in heauen: the Father / the Word de / and the holy Ghost: and these thre are one.</i></p>	<p>7. (Denn dreue sind die da zeugen im Himmel / der Vater / das Wort / vnd der heilige Geist / vnd diese dreue sind eins.)</p> <p><i>(Zhi de ere ere som vidne paa Himmelen / Fader- ren / oc Ord / oc heilige Aand / oc de ere ere tilfammen.)</i></p>	<p>7. Nebo tšij gsau kšcišj fšrš dectwij wpdawagij na Nčbi/ Dtec / Slovo / a Duch swatš: a ti tšij gedno gsau.</p> <p><i>Abowiem trzey sa trzey świādi cia nā nšebi / Dtec / Slovo / y Duch swiaty / a ci trzey sednoc sa.</i></p>
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### Hutter's Nuremburg Polyglot 1599 AD



7 For there are thre , which beare recorde in heauen,the Father,the Worde,and the holie Gost:and these thre are one.

## 1560 Geneva Bible

Οτι τρεῖς εἰσιν οἱ μάρτυρες ὁ πατήρ ὁ λόγος, καὶ τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα· καὶ οὗτοι οἱ τρεῖς ἐν εἰσι.

## Beza's Greek NT 1565 AD

7 Nam tres sunt qui testificātur in cælo, Pater, Sermo, & Spiritus sanctus: & hi tres vnū sūt.

## Beza's Latin NT 1565 AD

7 Percioche tre. sono quelli che \* testimoniano nel cielo, il Padre, e \* la Parola, e lo Spirito Santo: e questi tre sono \* vno.

8 E tre sono quelli che testimoniano \* so-

## Diodati Italian Bible 1607 AD

7 For there are three which beare recorde in heauen,the father,the worde,and the holy ghost,and these three are one.  
8 And there are three which beare re-

## Bishop's Bible 1568 AD

## Robert Morrison's Chinese NT 1814 AD

nelle, becaule the Spirit is trueth.  
7 For there are three that beare record in heauen, the Father, the word, and the holy Ghost: and these three are one.  
8 And there are three that beare witnesse in earth, the Spirit, and the

## King James Bible 1611 AD

7 Nebo tři jsou, kteříž svědectví vydávají na nebi: Otec, Slovo, a Duch svatý, a ti tři jedno jsou.

## Czech Kralicka Bible 1613 AD

以水連而又是風作証者因風爲眞蓋在天有三作証即父者言者聖風者而斯三爲一又在地有三爲証即風者

Other English Bibles such as the: 1535 Coverdale's Bible / 1537 The Matthew's Bible / 1539 The Taverner Bible / 1539 The Great Bible as well as various other Waldensian (Vaudois) and Albigensian Romaunt Bibles & manuscripts, Spanish Bibles, Dutch Bibles, Bohemian Bibles, Danish Bibles, the old Russian Synodal Bible, the old Gaelic Bible, and old Syriac manuscripts from the 2nd century, etc.

- in other words, many other Bibles and manuscripts from all over the world.

But even with all the various old manuscripts for evidence, those manuscripts are not the "foundation of proof", but rather are only further evidence for "confirmation purposes".

### Internal Evidence of the Johannine Comma

We must realize that it is "**Faith in God's word**" that is our true foundation. The word of God specifically states "**Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.**" **Hebrews 11:1**

God also didn't leave mankind any room to doubt. Instead He gave sufficient evidence on which to base our faith. He confirmed His "witness" by the way He had the original Greek written - a fact that can be confirmed by anyone who understands Greek grammar.

One question to ask the skeptics and critics might be, *"If 1 John 5:7 is mysteriously missing in some of the Greek manuscripts, and that is why you claim it shouldn't be included - why did renowned and scholarly men of learning like Erasmus, Beza, and the 54 King James translators choose to include this text in their Bible translations?"*

Certainly these well educated men would have been aware of the serious warnings against tampering with God's Word, such as Revelation 22:18,19, *"For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."*

For anyone who has done in-depth research into these translators of both the Greek text and the English KJV, the answer is obvious. These scholarly men were not just some random ignorant people off the street.

Both Erasmus and Beza were top scholars in the known world. In fact, all of Europe and England vied for Erasmus' attention. Kings pleaded with him to make their country his home.



As for the KJV, the 54 translators were the top scholars of the 16th & 17th centuries and every single one of them was fluent in at least 4 languages

**- English, Latin, Hebrew, and Greek.**

In fact, some of them knew many more languages (one of them knew 21 languages), and another one of them, John Reynolds, had a photographic memory and had studied all the ancient writings of the early church fathers and all the old manuscripts. It was shown that he could readily at any time, turn to any sentence in any manuscript or writing from the early centuries. He was so intelligent that he was known all over Europe as "The Living Library".

As scholars that were all extremely knowledgeable of the original Greek language, they would obviously recognize a detail about the Johannine Comma that many modern day critics either don't recognize or just chose to willfully ignore. **They would recognize that the "internal evidence" of the Bible's Greek confirms the authenticity of the Johannine Comma.**

When reference to the original Greek text is made, it is discovered that if the Johannine Comma is left out (like the modern critics want to claim), it leaves this Greek sentence, which all the KJV translators would easily recognize - is grammatically impossible!

ΟΤΙ ΤΡΕΙΣ ΕΙΣΙΝ ΟΙ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΥΝΤΕΣ ΤΟ ΠΝΕΥΜΑ ΚΑΙ ΤΟ ΥΔΩΡ  
ΚΑΙ ΤΟ ΑΙΜΑ ΚΑΙ ΟΙ ΤΡΕΙΣ ΕΙΣ ΤΟ ΕΝ ΕΙΣΙΝ

The problem with leaving the Johannine Comma out of the text is that the nouns translated as "Spirit" "Water" and "Blood" in verse 8 are 'neuter gender' in the Greek language and as such, they require accompanying words that are also neuter gender. But the words and phrases that accompany them, such as the phrase

**"there are three" ( οτι τρεις εισιν ) and "that bear witness" ( οι μαρτυρουντες )**

are masculine gender, as they would naturally be if they were accompanying masculine gender nouns. But only the nouns "heaven" "Father" and "Word" in the Johannine Comma in verse 7 are "masculine" gender.

This means that the Johannine Comma had to have been included in the original Greek manuscript as written by the apostle John.

If the Johannine Comma is left out (such as what is promoted by the modern critics and done in the text or footnotes of all the modern corrupted Bible versions) then the sentence in the original Greek doesn't make logical or grammatical sense. To give a simple example of this in the English language, it would be like writing the sentence, **"He agrees with themselves."**



This is why Dr. Gaussen in his famous book *"The Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures"* uses the grammatical argument and concludes basically:

***"Remove it, and the grammar becomes incoherent."***

*"Cette irrégularité, qui se justifie pleinement par ce qu'on nomme en Grammaire le principe d'attraction, le passage demeure dans son entier, devient inexplicable lorsque vous en voulez retrancher les paroles contestées." (Théopneustie ou Pleine Inspiration des Saintes Écritures, pg. 281)*

Also John Calvin wrote,

***"the passage flows better when this clause is added, and as I see that IT IS FOUND IN THE BEST AND MOST APPROVED COPIES, I am inclined to receive it as the true reading."***

So the Johannine Comma has not only been included in the line of Bibles that have been demonstrated to bear good fruit over the centuries - fruit like the Protestant Reformation - it also is required for the original Greek to make grammatical sense.

Therefore, it is obvious to the honest, thinking mind, that 1 John 5:7 is a true rendering of the original text as written by John.

Likewise, it becomes quite obvious who the powers and individuals are behind the scenes that might want to tear down the Bibles that include it.

Therefore, it would be well to heed the inspired counsel of Paul to Timothy and ***"Hold fast the form of sound words... in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." 2 Timothy 1:13***