

## 1 John 5

The Apostle John concludes his letter with some repetition of prior teachings. This chapter is, for me, a summation of the more critical thoughts he has shared with us. Repetition was part of the teaching style in John's day.

I want to dive right in this morning without a lot of "set up". But a few thoughts might be helpful:

1. It's not what we do that makes us "saved"; it's Who He is AND therefore who we are IN HIM.
2. We can rest in our salvation knowing that we are held secure in the arms of our Savior.
3. It is only Jesus, not Jesus +, not Jesus -, that fully satisfies the soul: ***The LORD is my shepherd shall not want!***

(1 John 5:1 NKJV) Whoever **believes** that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him.

John didn't say "whoever believes in Jesus Christ", he is saying you need to believe that HE is the Messiah, the Christ, the Anointed One, begotten of the Father. He was the Anointed One who is the Prophet, the High Priest and the King.

**Galatians 4:4-7 NKJV** But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, (5) to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. (6) And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!" (7) Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

And John says that loving the Father is loving the Son and loving the Son is loving your fellow co-heirs in Christ who were spiritually "begotten" meaning we were regenerated and declared is born-again into new life. Lehman Strauss writes in a paper on Bible.org:

Regeneration then, may be defined as an act of God whereby He bestows upon the believing sinner new life. This life is God's own life, the imparting of His own nature. God Himself is the Source and Bestower of His life, so that believers are said to be "partakers of the Divine nature" ([II Peter 1:4](#)), "created in Christ

Jesus" ([Ephesians 2:10](#)), "born of God" ([John 1:13](#)), "born again" ([John 3:3, 7](#)), "a new creation" ([II Corinthians 5:17](#)).

And that, beloved of God, is who we are.

(1 John 5:2 NKJV) By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments.

Once again, John defines loving the children of God as a reflection of our love for God. And we show our love to Him by our obedience to Him.

This is analogous to faith-and-works. If you say you love God but do not do what He asks, then how can you say you love Him...Show your love by loving others!

John Gill writes:

but true love to the brethren springs from love to God: such who love the saints aright, and by which they may know they do so, they love them because they themselves love God, and in obedience to his command; they love them because they belong to God, and are the objects of his love; because his grace is wrought in them, and his image stamped upon them.

This is NOT a generated feeling that constantly changes due to circumstances or even chemicals in our body which come and go depending on what we eat. It truly is an act of our will! But we still cannot boast: Paul writes in Romans 5:5, that "the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us".

Is Paul saying we cannot love without the Love of God being poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit?

YES!

(1 John 5:3 NKJV) For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.

Repeating his thought in a different way, the proof of our love is doing what he asks.

And what He asks of us is NOT burdensome...

[Matthew 11:29-30 NKJV](#) (29) Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. (30) For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

And what commandment has He given us? Loving others by which we know we are loving God. Loving God by loving His children as He loved them.

Question:

Is it difficult to love someone?

Answer:

It depends. I do find, at times, it very difficult to love some people. They take and take and give nothing in return. **But, am I truly loving them if I expect them to appreciate it?** No, because I'm loving them to be credited with loving them. And that is NOT Christ-like sacrificial love.

So, it is difficult, at times, to love sacrificially. But, it can be a lot easier if I would just Love as Christ loved us – not with any expectation of what that love would do or how it would be received and certainly without any strings attached.

I am going to revisit this shortly.

(1 John 5:4 NKJV) For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—**our faith**.

This is important! Because this is the 4<sup>th</sup> time he wrote about overcoming.

[1Jn 2:13](#) and [v14](#) Because you have **overcome** the wicked one.

[1Jn 4:4](#) You are of God, little children, and have **overcome them**, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. THEM=SPIRITS WHO DENY JESUS

It is our faith that provides the victory. And our faith isn't a wishy-washy 'I hope so'. Our faith is based on what has been proven to be true because of the historical evidence that supports it. More on this in another verse or 2.

(1 John 5:5 NKJV) Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

We believe that Jesus is the SON of GOD! And our faith manifests itself by becoming over-comers. We know that throughout life we will have many tribulations, sorrows, difficulties and stresses. But we know that He who overcame the world will enable us to do the same.

Overcoming the world isn't physical – it's spiritual.

[John 16:33 NKJV](#) **These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may**

have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

When did Jesus say this? Was it after His resurrection when He clearly defeated death? **No**, it was the Passover night before He was arrested, beaten, scourged and crucified!!!

How did He overcome the world?

First, look around this world with your physical eyes and you will question if anything has been overcome. You may have become cold, cynical, frustrated and perhaps a bit hopeless. I confess that I have at times – especially over the past 10+ years or so – especially with those who are our leaders! And not just our secular leaders, but even those in the church!

But, we are not called to look with our physical eyes but our spiritual eyes. With our Spiritual Eyes we **know...truly know...take it to the bank kinda know** the TRUTH, the whole TRUTH and nothing but the TRUTH:

Listen to Paul after he was so stressed by his life of doing what he didn't want to do, not doing what he wanted to do to the point that he cried out: **O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?**

That was us before Jesus went to the cross! That was us before He overcame the world! He overcame the world in that, before, we were dead in our sins subject to the prince of this world. He overcame the world by dying for it, dying for us, dying for you and dying for me! He overcame the world by giving us His Holy Spirit, by Whom we have the power to overcome the lust of the eyes, lust of the flesh and the pride of life.

This next passage is quite long, but as with all scripture, it's worth our time to listen with our spiritual ears:

**Romans 8:1-39 NKJV** *There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus*, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. (2) For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. (3) For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God *did* by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, (4) that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the

flesh but according to the Spirit. (5) For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those *who live* according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. (6) **For to be carnally minded *is* death, but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace.** (7) **Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.** (8) So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. (9) But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His. (10) And if Christ *is* in you, the body *is* dead because of sin, but the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness. (11) **But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.** (12) Therefore, brethren, we are debtors—not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. (13) For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. (14) **For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.** (15) **For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father."** (16) **The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,** (17) **and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him*, that we may also be glorified together.** (18) For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

(26) Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

(31) What then shall we say to these things? If God *is* for us, who *can be* against us? (32) He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? (33) Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? *It is* God who justifies. (34) Who *is* he who condemns? *It is* Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. (35) Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *Shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? (36) As it is written: "FOR YOUR SAKE WE ARE KILLED ALL DAY LONG; WE ARE ACCOUNTED AS SHEEP FOR THE SLAUGHTER." (37) Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. (38) For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, (39) nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Therefore, **Anything** the world throws at us is to be examined and tested. If it

comes against any of these and all TRUTH as revealed by God, it **must** be rejected. Paul write in 1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians:

**5:21-22 NKJV (21)** Test all things; hold fast what is good. **(22)** Abstain from every form of evil.

So far, we are Children of God. We love God and we love our fellow believers. We do this out of obedience to His commandments which are summed up in two commandments: Love God. Love Others.

And this love and our obedience and our acceptance as children of God makes us overcomers of sin, self and satan.

But John does not want us to believe just because someone came along and said "Believe in Jesus". Now belief, and our faith are wholly different from those who are "of the world".

So, the next section is about testimony or witness. John has spent many verses talking about believing Jesus is God. But we do NOT do this by "blind faith" or "believing it to be so". No, our belief is based on facts, historical facts that were never refuted.

The biblical concept of testimony or witness is closely associated with the Old Testament legal sense of testimony given in a court of law. It remains the same in the New Testament.

Deuteronomy 19:15 NKJV "One witness shall not rise against a man concerning any iniquity or any sin that he commits; by the mouth of two or three witnesses the matter shall be established.

Matthew 18:15-16 NKJV "**Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. (16) But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that 'BY THE MOUTH OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES EVERY WORD MAY BE ESTABLISHED.'**

Testimony or Witness is valid when it consists of objective facts, certified by 2 or more witnessing parties. As we saw in the 2 verses, the testimony of one witness is insufficient for testimony to be acceptable

Testimony or witness in the new testament was intricately tied with the gospel message. The apostles could preach the life, death and resurrection of Jesus because these events were "not done in a corner" as Paul told King Agrippa in [Acts 26:26](#) . In other words, these events were well observed by many.

The new church could not have had any success with the gospel message unless the message had historical reliability of the gospel events themselves. It would have been difficult, if not impossible, for Jewish Christians to use the Old Testament legal procedure for establishing the legitimacy of the gospel via the testimony of multiple witnesses, **if all the while** knowing that historically the events had not transpired in the way they had so claimed. Jewish opponents of Christianity would, otherwise, have been able to find real witnesses of their own (something historically they were never able to do) to refute the claims of the Apostles.

Another New Testament form of testifying to Jesus and the gospel is **through proper Christian conduct**. Jesus tells his disciples ( [John 13:34-35](#) ), "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." By loving as he has loved, we will show the world Jesus whom they do not know. Any inquiry into the reason for this selfless love will encounter the good news of Jesus' saving work and events which are historically reliable and theologically certain. Loving others is our testimony to Jesus' perfect and transforming love.

So what is John's witness?

(1 John 5:6 NKJV) This is He who **came by** water and blood—Jesus Christ; not only by water, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who bears witness, because the Spirit is truth.

The idea of water and blood has many different interpretations, most of which are reasonable. The problem is, what did John mean?

First, once again John was coming against the "phantom" idea proposed by the Gnostics. So, in this context, blood and water implies a real, flesh-and-blood person.

What are some of the other interpretations? David Guzik teaches,

1. Water speaks of our baptism and the blood speaks of communion. But the phrase "came by" in the verse seems to indicate a past event.
2. Water and blood pictures what happened when He was stabbed in the side while on the Cross. Even John himself wrote:
  - a. [John 19:35 NKJV](#) And he who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you may believe.
  - b. But again, the phrase "came by" just doesn't quite fit.
3. Water and blood describes Jesus' birth. I first thought of this when I read the verse. It speaks of His humanity not a spiritual being who materialized into the world
4. But, evidently, the one explanation that the earliest Christian scholars had was the water of Jesus' baptism and the blood of the crucifixion.
  - a. Jesus' baptism wasn't a baptism of repentance of sin. It was a statement

of "I am one of you".

- b. The blood – he came by blood to stand in our place of judgment for our sin.

I still like the water and blood of His birth. But, any interpretation that witnesses to Him as our Savior is good.

**(1 John 5:7 NKJV)** For there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one.

**(1 John 5:8 NKJV)** And there are three that bear witness on earth: the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three agree as one.

Verse 7-8 are very controversial because they evidently do not appear in the earliest manuscripts of John's letter as 2 verses. Some have said that it was a scribe's addition "in the margins" but somehow made it into the actual text..... My NKJV says it should read:

**For there are three that bear witness the Spirit, the water and the blood; and these three agree as one.**

*Some will say, how can we trust the scriptures if there have been comments inserted into the text? As long as the translation has a footnote, I think it actually testifies to its accuracy. There are many copies of the scriptures and trusted biblical scholars have read them and translated them according to the most reasonable or most often used manuscripts. In this case, it was the omission of this verse in many earlier manuscripts that led to the footnote. And, in this case, what was scribed wasn't wrong.*

The next 2 verses should perhaps be read together:

**(1 John 5:9 NKJV)** If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for this is the witness of God which He has testified of His Son. **(1 John 5:10 NKJV)** He who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself; he who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given of His Son.

The ultimate witness of the Son of God is His Father. John was there when God spoke on the Mount of Transfiguration:

**Matthew 17:5 NKJV** While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!"

But the witness of God the Holy Spirit in us is a witness as well:

**Romans 8:16 NKJV** The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,

This has a practical application since we know we are in the end-times:

**Matthew 24:3-5 NKJV** Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what *will be* the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"

(4) And Jesus answered and said to them: "**Take heed that no one deceives you. (5) For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many.**

This can be read several ways:

1. Some will come and say that they themselves are the "Christ", the anointed one.
2. Some will come and declare that they are Jesus himself who has returned
3. Some will say "yes Jesus is the Christ", but they will not be speaking of Him as Scripture and the Holy Spirit has taught us!

**These are the ones who make God a liar!**

**(1 John 5:11 NKJV)** And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. **(1 John 5:12 NKJV)** He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.

This is what God has said: I give You eternal life and this is life is IN my Son. If you have Him, if you believe on Him, if You have surrendered your own ways to salvation (which are not ways to true salvation), then you too have this life. If you insist on doing it your way by your own stubborn will, you cannot say with any degree of certainty that you have this Life!

**(1 John 5:13 NKJV)** These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may *continue to* believe in the name of the Son of God.

And ultimately, this is why John is writing this letter! We have assurance of our salvation once we believe.

**(1 John 5:14 NKJV)** Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.

And this confidence we have allows us to continue to abide in Him, and to continue to cling to Him, and speak to Him and to ask for anything – but – ACCORDING TO HIS WILL. He will hear us if we ask according to His will in the matter.

How to you know His will?

(1 John 5:15 NKJV) **And if we know** that He hears us, whatever we ask, **we know** that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.

If He hears us, because we ask according to His will, our requests will be granted.

So, there are three answers: Yes, No, and not now.

As James has also taught:

**James 4:1-3 NKJV** Where do wars and fights *come* from among you? Do *they* not *come* from your *desires for* pleasure that war in your members? (2) You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. (3) You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend *it* on your pleasures.

(1 John 5:16 NKJV) If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin *which does not lead* to death, **he will ask**, and He will give him life for those who commit sin not *leading* to death. There is sin *leading* to death. I do not say that he should pray about that.

This is another tough one. A sin leading to death has, once again, multiple meanings. What is a sin leading to death?

1. Blaspheming the Holy Spirit? I don't like this idea because the context is with a brother in the faith.
2. The sin itself leads to death because of the consequence of acting on it.
3. The sins committed by a believer that the Lord, in His Grace and Mercy, releases him from further harm to which he is blind.
4. The above also relates to a believer's habitual sin that compromises his testimony so much that the Lord just brings them home so no further damage can be done.
5. Paul taught that because of the disgraceful actions of some in the church at Corinth, there were many that were sick and weak and even died! This again, is not condemning judgment, but as a corrective judgment as he says in 1 Cor 11:32.
6. Know however, that a brother or sister in sin will not suffer spiritual death, meaning, eternal separation from God.

The point however, is that the LORD wants us to pray for a brother or sister who is in sin. The Lord will honor such a prayer because the motivation to ask comes from the love we have for our brothers and sisters in Christ.

But if it's a sin leading to death, then our prayers will not be heard. How can we discern this? I think one answer is that if the person does not live in it, that is, he does not habitually or continually sin in this manner and, if after he falls, he

repents of his sin and turns to Jesus again, this sin is not a sin unto death. If the opposite is true, then the sin may lead to death as described before.

(1 John 5:17 NKJV) All unrighteousness is sin, and there is sin not *leading* to death.

Evidently, John wanted to clarify that all unrighteousness is sin and there is sin which we do that does not lead to death.

(1 John 5:18 NKJV) **We know** that whoever is born of God does not sin; but he who has been born of God keeps himself, and the wicked one does not touch him.

In keeping with the prior verse, we who are born of God do not continually sin, we are not in bondage to it.

‘God Keeps himself’ ... most believe this would be better translated as “God keeps him”, God protects them from the wicked one.

And this **we know** absolutely and with all confidence!

(1 John 5:19 NKJV) **We know that we are of God**, and the whole world lies *under the sway of* the wicked one.

And this **we know** absolutely and with all confidence!

(1 John 5:20 NKJV) And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.

And this **we know** absolutely and with all confidence that Jesus has come and given us a deep and permanent understanding that we can know Him as the Truth and we know that we are in Him, who is the Truth, and we are in His Son, Jesus the Christ – and John declares without any iota of doubt, that He is the True God and life eternal!

(1 John 5:21 NKJV) Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.

When I first read this, it seemed strange to end the letter in this way. But what has been the theme of the letter?

We who believe have a real, living relationship with God, the True and Living God, who is called Faithful and True:

**Revelation 19:11 NKJV** Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him *was* called Faithful and True, and in

righteousness He judges and makes war.

So, we've come to the point of the book:

If we KNOW as John says we KNOW, then why on earth would any believer want to turn from the real and living God. If you turn, what other thing, what other idea or philosophy or man-made religion could offer you salvation without conditions, without works, without obedience to man-made laws?

There is nothing like True Biblical Christianity. There is nothing else that will satisfy your soul. There is no One else that will fill you with Peace, Love and Assurance. Not your soul-mate, not your spouse, not your (grand) children, not your job, and certainly not your things. SO, keep yourself from any and all things or people that are just dumb idols. Keep Yourself from things that you think are satisfying you but just leave you as empty as you were before.

Everything the unbelieving world has to offer is wood, hay and stubble. The only song you will find yourself singing is "I can't get no satisfaction" when instead, you could be singing:

My sin, o, the joy of this glorious thought!  
My sin, not in part but the whole  
Is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more,  
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!  
It is well, it is well, with my soul.