

An Overcoming Faith
1 John 5:1 – 5
The Laurel Center
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Main Idea: We overcome the world through unconditional love and unyielding faith.

Introduction

everyone wants to be a winner. Nobody wants to be the person sitting in the corner crying over again. Even though I'm not very athletic, I've always enjoyed competition. I usually seek competition out in non-sport activities. I have a much better possibility of winning in academic ventures. I choose those for the purpose of being able to win.

More important than any game is waiting in life. To be an overcomer in this world, we turn to the word of God to help us in our battle with evil. Although it is fun to be the winner of the game, it is imperative that we win in matters of the world and our relationship with Jesus. John has answers for how to beat life and win the prize of eternal life.

Text – 1 John 5:1– 5

1 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of him. **2** By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. **3** For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome. **4** For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. **5** Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

I. Overcomers love God and people (vv. 1 – 3).

A We overcome by what we believe.

- 1 What we believe and who we put our faith in determine how well we treat one another. Trusting in Jesus and his teachings and loving our enemies and everyone else produces a foundation of love and peace.
- 2 **Illustration:** we have found that certain belief systems harbor ill will toward others innately. For instance, the Nazi regime of the 1930s and 40s gained its power by hating on juice and other minority groups. Because of what the Nazis believed they learned to hate other human beings. In the deep South and the United States when slavery reigns supreme, it took generations to learn how to love black people instead of hate.

- 3 But for Christians it goes deeper than having the right philosophy or teachings on love. Jesus does not just teach us a better way to behave on the outside.
- 4 He teaches us what happens on the outside when his Holy Spirit changes our inside. Salvation is not just a philosophy changed. It is a life change based on the power of the Holy Spirit to change our hearts.
- 5 We must be born again before we can fully understand the divinity of Jesus Christ. Otherwise we will question this fact or make fun of it. Full understanding of Jesus comes with salvation.
- 6 Belief is foundational to behavior. What we believe greatly influences how we behave. This also affects which groups of people we will accept and love unconditionally.
- 7 John ties those who believe in Jesus to those who love God and people. Those who have been born again believe in Jesus and love God. Love of God trickles down to love of God's people.
- 8 Loving God is not simply an emotional response. Emotions change over time. I can't tell you how many times I have had marriage counseling in my office and the wife usually says, "I just don't love him anymore."
- 9 Biblical love is not about emotion or passion as much as it is about commitment and action. Despite emotional barometers, unconditional love is demonstrated through following God's commandments.

B We overcome by following Jesus' commands.

- 1 John has hit on this point before in his letter. But an interesting connection is made between loving God's people and loving God through obeying the commandments, or keeping them.
- 2 When we look especially at the 10 Commandments, the most well-known commandments that God has given for moral excellence, we find a two-pronged attack to keeping our relationship with God strong.
- 3 The 10 Commandments are designed in a two-part system. The first four deal with our vertical relationship with God. The second six deal with our horizontal relationship with fellow human beings.
- 4 It is understood that if we do not follow the last six and the first four have also been violated. We cannot say that we love God but do not love his creation.
- 5 Our love for God is proved by the way we treat other human beings. And this is the statement that John makes in this passage. We have to love God and love people. It goes both ways.

- 6 John goes on to remind us that Jesus' commands are not burdensome. It was Jesus himself who told us that his yoke is easy and his burden is light. Following his commandments is easy because he helps us do it.
- 7 Jesus' Commandments are the same as you always in the Old Testament. However more than that he is concerned with following the Commandments inwardly as well as outwardly.
- 8 In his Sermon on the Mount Jesus internalized the Commandments of the law. Murder is no longer a physical act only but also an emotional active hating someone.
- 9 Jesus' law contains the two basic Old Testament commandments of loving God with everything that you are and have and loving people as you love yourself.

II. Overcomers win with faith (vv. 4 – 5).

A We overcome by our faith.

- 1 John reminds us that to overcome the world is simple if you are a believer in Jesus. If you are born again, you have overcome the world already. Your salvation grants you eternal life and the power to resist the devil and sin in the world.
- 2 Not only this, but those were born of God's love God, believe in Jesus and love their family in Christ. These are specific ways in which we have overcome the world. The world doesn't do any of these things.
- 3 Faith is the strength of our overcoming. Faith is the victory in Christ. The world does not trust anyone or anything. But being able to trust someone who is greater than ourselves affords us a relationship the world cannot have.
- 4 Our trust in Jesus is the victory over the world. Trusting in Jesus gives us the gift of being born again. We are new creatures to see the world in an entirely different light.
- 5 We see the struggles in the spiritual realm and see a whole different perspective on the physical realm. This new perspective, being salt and light in the world, makes us victors because we see everything differently than the world.
- 6 That ability to see the truth and what's really happening goes a long way in making us victors. We can see the things the world cannot and we can interact with the things that are changing the world around us.
- 7 We can fight spiritual battles where the world cannot even see that the battle exists. We have an advantage that the world does not have. Beyond this advantage to see the world as it truly is, we also have the gift of eternal life that the world is not share.

8 Our victory is guaranteed the moment that we are born of God. Our new birth grants us a new lease not just on this life but on eternal life. Our overcoming the world has several facets to it.

B We overcome by Jesus' authority.

1 John's final statement in this section will link with his first statement as he brings us full circle to his argument. Everyone who is born of God overcomes the world. The way they overcome the world is by believing Jesus is the Christ.

2 Belief in Jesus as the Christ is the way that we become born of God. We overcome through not only just believing in Jesus but in doing what he is said to do.

3 We put our trust where our faith is. We not only say that Jesus is the Christ but we acted out through obeying him. Obedience equal to love and John's theology.

4 In verse five John uses a rhetorical question to show the power of being born again and believing in Jesus. This is where the power for our victory comes.

5 This ultimate and unyielding trust in Jesus that follows through with action and not just mental ascension gives us a power the world does not have.

6 The power is not ours but comes through our relationship with Jesus. As we obey his commandments and show him love, he infuses us with the power to overcome the world's problems.

7 We do not fall prey to sin and are therefore weak before the enemy of our souls. We do not give in to the depressing picture that Satan paints. We see the power of God and we watch it being enacted through us.

8 Jesus empowers us with the yoke that is not burdensome at all and commands that we will already follow because the Holy Spirit keeps us pure. We cannot fill in this world with such power in our lives.

Conclusion

our faith overcomes the world because it is stronger than anything the world has to offer.

Trusting in Jesus as the son of God who paid our debt and made it possible for us to be born again as new creatures in Christ has given us the victory. We are no longer weighed down with the cares of this world such as death and hell. Now we can concentrate on the mission of God and be over comers because we follow Jesus' Commandments. The Holy Spirit helps us to be obedient to Jesus. We show our love for Jesus by demonstrating his commandments. And we overcome the world because we do not suffer the same fate. Since we appoint board Our life now is eternal in Christ.