

Born of God

1 John 5:1-5

By Scott Huckaby

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1 John 4:17-21 Summary: Describes how love may be perfected in us. Also reinforces the importance of loving the brethren.

Applications from this passage...

- The love of God enables us to be bold before Him.
- Christians do not fear the judgment of God, that is the opposite of boldness.
- God loved while we were yet sinners; that is amazing love!
- Our love for others will enhance our love for God.

1 John 5:1 – Being born of God is the source of love

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.

How do we know we are born of God?

Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: John has often mentioned being *born of God* (as in 1 John 2:29, 3:9, and 4:7).

- Here he tells us *how* one is born of God: *whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ.*
- This means believing that Jesus is *his* Messiah, not just the Messiah in the generic sense.

What is the role of loving others in being born of God?

John's emphasis has been on love, but he doesn't want anyone to believe he *earns* salvation by loving others.

- We are **born of God** when we put our trust on Jesus and on His saving work in our lives.
- We love others because we are saved, not in order to be saved.

What does it mean to believe that Jesus is the Christ?

This is not talking about a mere intellectual assent to Jesus being Messiah (as even the demons might have, as described in James 2:19).

- This means a personal trust in and reliance on Jesus as the One sent by the Father to make the way of salvation.

What should we make of the New Age claim that Jesus had the “Christ-spirit”?

We must believe *Jesus is the Christ*. There are many, of a new-age sort of thinking, who believe Jesus *had* the “Christ-spirit” — as they claim also for Confucius, Mohammed, Buddha and certain moderns did.

- But we would never say Jesus “has” the Christ — *Jesus is the Christ*.

Who is *Him who begot* and *who is begotten of Him*?

The first reaction might be referring to God the Father and God the Son because Jesus is the only begotten Son of the Father.

- But the context here is in being *born of God*. So, it is the believers who are the *begotten* and it is God who is *Him who begot*.

What is the result described here of being *born of God*?

Being born of God has these two effects...

- It is assumed that we will love God (*Him who begot us*), because we are born again into His family.
- But we will also love others who are *begotten of Him* — our brothers and sisters in Christ.

What is the common ground of all Christians?

It is not race, class, culture, language, nor any other thing except for a common birth in Jesus Christ, and the common Lordship of Jesus.

How should differing Christian denominations be seen in regard to loving others in the family of God?

Our love should not be limited our own denomination or group, our own social or financial status, race, political perspective, or theological persuasion.

- If any of these things mean more to us than our common salvation, and the Lordship of Jesus Christ, then something is very wrong.
- Parents are exasperated, and even disgusted, when they see their children fight and seem to hate one another. How must God feel when He sees His children fight among themselves?

1 John 5:2-3 – The demonstration of God’s love.

By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.

What goes hand-in-hand with loving *the children of God*?

Just as much as our love for the people of God reflects our love for God (as expressed in 1 John 3:10, 17), so our love and obedience to God is a demonstration of love to the body of Christ.

What is the best thing a father can show love to his children?

To love his wife and their mother. Likewise, the first way for a child of God to love his brothers and sisters in Christ is to love God and to obey Him.

- And, if you love the parent, you will love the child. It all works together.

What is the impact of Christians who do not love God and keep His commandments?

Such a Christian is of little effective use in the body of Christ. This is true even though he or she might be involved in much ministry and hold an official position of service in the church.

- When our love and obedience for God grows cold, we not only harm ourselves — we harm our brothers and sisters also.
- The damage is done because we are a “drag” on the spiritual progress of God’s people.
- If we will not love and obey God for our own sake, then we should at least do it out of love for others.

How do we demonstrate that we love God?

For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: To love God is also to keep His commandments.

- The one who says he loves God, yet walks in a lifestyle of conscious disobedience is like the believer who says he walks in fellowship with God, yet walks in darkness (as in 1 John 1:6, he is lying).

Surely, John had the words of Jesus in mind: *If you love Me, keep My commandments* (John 14:15).

- Love for God will show itself in obedience.
- Christians sometimes attempt to turn love for God into a mushy emotional experience, but John does not allow this in his epistle.

How is it that *His commandments are not burdensome*?

Because the commandments of God are wise, good and beneficial. They are gifts from Him to show us the best and most fulfilling life possible.

- God’s commands are like the “manufacturer’s handbook” for life; He tells us what to do because He knows how we work best.
- God’s commands are not given to bind or to pain us, or because God is like an irritated old man.

How does being born again help us to realize *His commandments are not burdensome*?

Because when we are born again, we are given new hearts — hearts which by instinct wish to please God.

- As part of the New Covenant, the law of God has been written on the heart of every believer (Jeremiah 31:33).

Does God’s commandments not being burdensome mean that it is easy to not sin?

No, John has already acknowledged that we all do sin (1 John 1:8). John is thinking of the contrast Jesus made between the religious requirements of the religious leaders of His day, and the simplicity of loving God and following Him.

How does God’s commandments compare to the religious rules of men?

Jesus said all the rules and regulations of the Scribes and Pharisees were as *heavy burdens* (Matthew 23:4).

- In contrast, Jesus said of Himself, *My yoke is easy and My burden is light* (Matthew 11:30).

Instead of the burdensome requirement to keep hundreds of little rules and regulations, Jesus simply says to us, *“Love Me and love my people, and you will walk in obedience.”*

How does an attitude of gratitude make God’s commandments not be *burdensome*?

When we love God, we will *want* to obey Him and please Him.

- When you love someone, it seems little trouble to go to a lot of difficulty to help or please that person.
- You enjoy doing it, though if you had to do it for an enemy, you would be complaining all the time.

Just as the 7 years of Jacob’s service for Laban *seemed only a few days to him because of the love he had for Rachel* (Genesis 29:18), so obeying God’s commands does not seem a burden when we really love Him.

- An old proverb says, “Love feels no loads.”

1 John 5:4-5 – Being born of God is victory.

For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

What does it mean to overcome the world?

The way of the world is death... being born of God means having eternal life.

- We no longer have to fear the second death.
- The idea that anything born of God could be defeated by this world was strange to John and it should be strange to us.

How do we have victory in overcoming the world?

This is the victory that has overcome the world; our faith: Since believing on Him is the key to being born of God (1 John 5:1), the key to victory is *faith*.

What is faith?

This is not simply an initial, “come-to-the-altar-and-get-saved” faith, but a consistently abiding faith, an ongoing reliance and trust in Jesus Christ.

Who is he who overcomes the world?

he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God: The life of *abiding faith and trust* in Jesus Christ is the life that overcomes the pressures and temptations of the world.

What is the best way to overcome the pressures and temptations of the world?

We may overcome primarily because of *who we are* in Christ, not because of *what we do*.

- We overcome because we are *born of God*, and we are born of God because we *believe that Jesus is the Son of God* — not in any intellectual sense, but live in the reality that Jesus is the Son of God *for us*.

How will Jesus overcoming the world help us to overcome it?

John 16:33 – *In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world*
Because Jesus has overcome the world, as we abide in Him, we are overcomers in Jesus.

How does overcoming the wicked one per John 2:13 help us overcome the world?

The world system is under the influence of our spiritual enemies. As we walk with Jesus and grow in that walk, we will overcome our spiritual enemies.

What do overcomers get to look forward to in the world to come?

Revelation 3:21 – *To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne*

We will get to rule with Jesus during His Millennial Kingdom. And this only foreshadows the Eternal State. Part of our reward is the degree of responsibility we'll have in participating in what God will be doing in eternity.

What applications do we see from this discussion?

- All who believe that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.
- All who are born of God will love Him and His children.
- Loving God makes keeping His commandments something we'll want to do.
- Being born of God gives us victory over the world system.