

The Good News

1 John 5:1-13

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Last Sunday Casey expounded on 1 John 4

- God is love
- God's children should reflect God's love
- God's love is contrasted with the world's love

This Sunday: 1 John 5:1-13

- Continues to build on the importance of love
- Agape love: sacrificial act of the will vs world's view: an emotion or feeling that can be fleeting
- The purpose of 1 John: eternal security

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.

To believe that Jesus is the Christ is to believe that He is God's Anointed to save the world; Hebrew: Messiah

- Believing Jesus is the one God said would come
- Whoever believes Jesus is the Christ is born again

Have you ever wondered if you really are born-again?

- If you believe that Jesus is the promised Messiah who came to be our Savior, you are born again!
- Only those who have been born again can believe that
- not a mere intellectual assent to Jesus as Messiah, instead: a trust in and reliance in Jesus as Messiah

The emphasis has been on love, but don't think anyone earns salvation by loving others.

Second part: Being born of God has these two effects:

- we will love God (*Him who begot us*)
- we will love others *who are begotten of Him* — our brothers and sisters in Christ.

This love is the common ground of Christians; not race, class, culture, language, denomination, nor anything else

- Parents never want to see their children not getting along with each other. How must God feel when He sees His children fight among themselves?

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

² By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. ³ For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.

Our love for God's people reflects our love for Him

- And our applying His commandments also reflects our love for Him
- We demonstrate our love for God by our obedience to Him and loving our fellow Christians

It is sometimes said that the best thing a father can do for his children is 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.
- If you love the parent, you will love the child. You can't have one without the other.

His commandments are not burdensome

- It is the perception of unbelievers that they are... Psalm 2:2-3 – *The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and against His Anointed, saying, "Let us break Their bonds in pieces and cast away Their cords from us."*

But seeing the wisdom of God's commandments... they are in our best interest to avoid consequences

- 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 – this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people

During the Church Age, we are already enjoying the benefits of the New Covenant

What is burdensome are the religious rules men make up.

- Jesus said the rules & regulations of the Scribes & 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).
- There is simplicity in just loving God and following Him.

I like the way Jesus simplified for us all of the Law...

Matthew 22:37-40 – “*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.*’ *This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.*”

Jesus fulfilled the requirements of the Law for us

- So, we are not under the Law but under His grace
- That does not mean the Law has no value to us...
 - reveals mind of God & represents principles we can apply to please Him

God’s commands are not a burden when we really love Him. old proverb: “Love feels no loads.”

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

⁴ *For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.* ⁵ *Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?*

if we are born of God, we will overcome the world.

- The way of this fallen world is death
- The idea that anything born of God could be defeated by this world was strange to the Apostle John

How do we know we have victory over the world?

- our faith: believing in Jesus is the key to being born of God
- This is not only an initial, saving faith, but an abiding faith, an ongoing reliance & trust in Jesus Christ.
- The life of abiding faith in Jesus Christ is the life that overcomes the pressures & temptations of the world

What do we need to do to overcome the world?

- We overcome because of who we are in Christ, not because of what we do.
- We overcome because we are born of God,
- And we know we are born of God because we believe that Jesus is the Son of God

Is faith a simple matter of just believing Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God?

- Greek lexicons: the word “faith” does not merely mean to believe, but to trust, to confide in, to commit to, entrust with, etc.
- Spurgeon: “the very marrow of the meaning of faith is confidence in and reliance upon.”

We can become world-overcomers in Jesus because:

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

- 1 John 2:13-14... those who were growing in their walk with Jesus have overcome the wicked one
- We no longer have to be subject to the temptations and oppression of demons

Overcomers have a special place 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.*

Jesus said in Matthew 6:20, *lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven*

- There will be rewards for good works
- Both the Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25) & Minas (Luke 19), the reward for faithfulness was greater responsibility in God’s kingdom
- Rewards will be a greater capacity to participate in what God will be doing in eternity

1 John 5:6-8 – Helps us precisely identify the One in Whom we must believe.

⁶ *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.* ⁷ *For there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one.* ⁸ *And there are three that bear witness on earth: the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three agree as one.*

What does it mean that Jesus came *by water & blood*?

- The point is: Jesus was not a Gnostic “phantom”
- Gnostics applied Greek mythology to believe only the spiritual is holy while the physical could not be.
- In other words, Jesus was not just a spirit, He had a real flesh and blood nature.
- Important: Jesus had to have a human nature to pay the penalty for our sin

There has been much speculation about what is meant by Jesus coming *by water and blood*:

- water speaks of our own baptism; blood speaks of receiving communion
- water and blood which flowed from Jesus' side when He was stabbed with a spear on the cross
- water spoke of Jesus' birth, being born of the "waters of the womb," & blood of His death.
- the water of Jesus' baptism, and the blood of His crucifixion.

Could this be an example of synonymous parallelism?

- a poetic literary device which involves the repetition of one idea using different words

This is similar to this classic example:

John 3:5 – *Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.*

Born of the water and Spirit is speaking of the same thing: being born from above by the Holy Spirit

- Water is a common symbol of the Spirit (life giving, cleansing)

The key to understanding what is meant by Jesus coming *by water and blood* is the context...

- It is also helpful to realize some of this text referring to the Trinity is not in the oldest manuscripts
- Verse 7 in the NKJV & the distinction between bearing witness in heaven & earth is not in the earlier
- Probably an over-zealous scribe thinking the doctrine of the Trinity needed more support added some words
- 1 John 5:7-8 should read: *For there are three that bear witness: the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three agree as one.*

We don't need the additional words; we know that this speaks of the Trinity

- Spirit = Father (God is Spirit)
- Water = Holy Spirit (rivers of living water)
- Blood = The Son (flesh and blood; His humanity)

So, Jesus coming *by water & blood* refers to His virgin birth; being born of the Spirit of God & a human woman.

Does the possibility that some un-inspired scribe added words to Scripture give us more or less confidence in the Bible?

- We have plenty of textual evidence & scholarship that reveals this error
- It is not like something was added that contradicts God's Word

We can have confidence that true God's Word shines through even with the errors of His flawed scribes

1 John 5:9-10 – The witness of men and God.

⁹ 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. ¹⁰ 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.

Because of the witness of God & men our faith is not blind faith as unbelievers consider faith

- The witness of men pales in importance to the witness of God
- Our faith is based on the most reliable testimony possible, the witness of God.

How do we receive the witness of God?

When we believe in Jesus, we receive the Holy Spirit as an inner confirmation of our standing before God.

Romans 8:16 – *The Spirit Himself bears witness with our Spirit that we are children of God.*

God wants everyone to be saved...

- But not everyone will respond to the conviction of the Holy Spirit to believe in Jesus Christ
- Those who reject the conviction of the Holy Spirit are effectively calling God a liar
- This is the great sin of unbelief.

1 John 5:11-13 – Assurance of eternal life in the Son.

¹¹ And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. ¹² He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. ¹³ 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.

Receiving the testimony of God is serious business

- Those who have a here-and-now relationship with Jesus have eternal life

God's essential message to humanity: eternal life is a gift from God, received by believing in Jesus Christ.

- He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.
- It is all about Jesus, and having a relationship with Him... this is the evidence of having eternal life.

Verse 13 gives the whole purpose of the 1 John epistle:

- Emphasizes the importance of believing in Jesus & assures us that our eternal destiny is secure
- We don't have to wonder if we are going to heaven
- God wants us to know for sure that our salvation is a settled matter

If we had to work to earn God's favor for eternal life, that would hardly be the abundant life Jesus came to give us.

12 reasons to have confidence in our eternal destiny:

1. 1 Jn 5:12 – We have saving faith – believe in Jesus – born again
2. 1 Jn 1:7 – We have fellowship with God – He speaks to us from His Word and in our spirit – we speak to Him in prayer – relationships have communication
3. 1 Jn 1:8 – We have sensitivity to sin – It bothers us when we sin – we repent of our sin
4. 1 Jn 2:5 – We obey God – we get to know Him and His commands
5. 1 Jn 2:15 – We reject the world – we are in the world but not of the world
6. 1 Jn 3:3 – We look forward to Jesus' return – His return is our Blessed Hope – when we are resurrected
7. 1 Jn 3:9 – We have a decreasing pattern of sin – get rid of habitual sin
8. 1 Jn 3:13 – The world rejects us – there will be persecution
9. 1 Jn 3:14 – We love fellow children of God – this is what identifies the disciples of Jesus
10. 1 Jn 3:22 – Our prayers are answered – We know God well enough to pray according to His will
11. 1 Jn 4:1-5 – We discern the spirits of truth & error – knowledge of God and His Word helps us distinguish what is of Him & what is not
12. 1 Jn 5:10 – We have the ministry of the Holy Spirit – we are witnesses because we have the fruit of the Spirit such as love, joy & peace which surpasses all understanding

Well, I've only left 8 verses in 1 John but there is so much there, I decided it is best if I stop right there. It would be easy to have a whole message on any one of the several topics addressed in the remainder:

- Confidence in prayer
- The sin leading to death
- Protection from the Wicked One
- Keeping from idols

I hope this passage has built up your faith in Christ...

- God wants us to be secure in our relationship
 - The more we get to know Jesus and apply His Word in our lives, the more abundant our lives will be
- Before I close in prayer, what insights have come to mind from this passage we looked at this morning?