

So That You May Know

An Expository Study of the Epistle of **1 John 5:1-5**

Chapter 25- Overcoming the World

217 Overcoming the World- Part 1

WAOY Wednesday 07/09/08

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We're continuing our verse by verse "journey" through the Epistle of **1 John**, and today we're going to begin a new section of our study by looking at what John meant when he said "Whoever is born of God overcomes the world". So let's read **1John 5:1- 5** together:

1 Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and whoever loves the Father loves the *child* born of Him.

2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments.

3 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.

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 the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

Now first of all, I want to draw your attention to verse 3 to see just how John defines love for us- so let's read verse 3 again together:

For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.

Now contrary to popular opinion- love is not what many people have made it out to be. The Apostle John teaches very clearly here that love; true love; genuine love; is wrapped up in humble obedience to what God has commanded. So Love is defined by the degree to which we obey. Now when you consider that lost people have neither the desire nor the ability to obey God- it becomes very clear, dear friends,

that John is saying that obeying Jesus is the hallmark of the love of genuine believers.

So we who make up the visible Church on the earth today- should have the very *same* standard of measurement for love that John had. The love of God is that you and I obey Jesus Christ- period. Therefore it is true to say that since saved people have been gloriously saved by Grace through Faith in the finished Work of Jesus Christ alone; and since it is true that all saved people have been forever sealed with the Holy Spirit of Promise; and since it is true that all saved people now have within themselves the new divine nature; and since it is true that God has worked in them to give them both the desire and the ability to love and serve God; and since it is true that by virtue of the new birth- we are not improved versions of the same old man- but we are completely new recreated beings- then it is also true that obedience should be the normal natural and loving result that we display to God based on all that God has sovereignly done for us and in us.

Now this Truth is particularly important in an age when obedience is being looked at by far too many people as something that is *optional*- as though *some* saved people obey while others- who are equally saved- do *not* obey. And this Truth about obedience being equated with the love of God is epically important for us to know in a time when so many of us have been so wrongly taught about Jesus' Lordship.

You see, it is very popular today for many to believe that Jesus can be your Savior right now and then at some future date- when we feel like it- we can then make Jesus, "the Lord of our lives". But that teaching cannot be found anywhere in Scripture. Jesus is Lord right now- whether you have made Him that in your life or not. We humans are not going to "make" or "unmake" Jesus to be Lord, dear friends- God has already made Jesus to be Lord- not us. So, Jesus is already Lord right now. Let's read **The Acts 2:36**:

Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ — this Jesus whom you crucified.

So here we see that God made Jesus to be both Lord and Christ 2,000 years ago- way before we were ever born; way before Columbus discovered America and way before there was free enterprise or

Capitalism or American Democracy.

Jesus is Lord right now. And as we have already studied earlier in our journey through **1John**- that phrase is not simply a slogan that we say when we don't like what is going on in our culture. Jesus being Lord means something very specific. It means that Jesus is Deity; that Jesus is God Almighty wrapped in human flesh; that He is Immanuel; that Jesus is Yahweh in a body. And as we have previously studied- Paul taught in **Romans 10:9** that nobody can be saved unless and until they believe that and unless they openly and publicly confess that with their mouth.

But this term, "Lord" also means something else. You see, a "lord" is a lord precisely because he "lords over" or "rules over" or "governs" something and someone. And it is his *governing* and *ruling* capacity that makes that person to be a "lord" in the first place. And what differentiates between a lord and the subjects that he lords over- is the fact that the lord of those subjects has the right and the authority and the power to limit what the subjects can and cannot do. And this is the real rub about Jesus being Lord.

So when we say or we confess with our mouths "Jesus as Lord"- we are saying that Jesus is now the Master and the Sovereign and the Ruler over our lives. It also means, by default, that we are now subjects or in the Biblical terminology- we are now "bond slaves" to this Lord.

So if we are to rightly understand what John teaches here in verse three about obedience being a true example of the love of God- we are going to have to get this concept in our minds and hearts.

You see, because Jesus paid for all our sins- we are now bought and paid for. In other words- Jesus owns us outright. He bought us and paid for us by His sinless Life; His substitutionary Death; and His glorious Resurrection. So, we are now owned by Jesus. And that makes Jesus to be Lord- right now. The only way that Jesus would not be "Lord" is if you are not saved- and then satan is your lord and master. But every single soul who has been genuinely saved- Jesus is- right now- Lord.

Now anytime one person owns another person- you have a slave/Master relationship existing. And in Salvation- Jesus is the Master and we are the slaves- who have been purchased in the very same way that slaves were purchased throughout history.

The master of the slaves owns them in every sense of that word. So let's go over this so this will sink in. The Master owns the bodies of the slaves; he owns their labor; their ambitions; and their dreams. The master is in complete charge of whatever the slave receives and what the slave is prohibited from receiving is strictly up to the master to decide.

No true slave has any say so over his future at all- or what he is allowed or what he is forbidden to do. Every single aspect of the slave's life is now controlled totally by the Master. The master decides who the slave will marry and how many children he will have. The master decides where the slave will work and how he will be compensated for his work. The master has complete control over whether the slave will live or die and by what means the slave will die.

Now there is one more aspect to the slave/Master relationship that is very important for us to understand and that is that the entire focus of the slave's life is to do nothing but bring honor and glory and praise and benefit to his master. So a slave has no identity outside of his master; he has no personal ambitions or personal dreams that he is going to fulfill. No, a real slave is bound to his master forever and the only joy that a slave gets is when his master is elevated.

So the concept that is so popular today that saved people are somehow on equal footing with Jesus or that Jesus owes us a good life or that Jesus is standing at our beckon call to jump whenever we speak is completely foreign to the Bible. That is *not* the language used in the Bible to describe our relationship with Jesus. The language used in the Bible to describe the relationship that a saved person has with Jesus is Lord and slave language.

Now we need to know that every single time that you see the words, "servant" or "bondservant" in the Bible- the correct interpretation of that word is "slave". And every time that you see the word, "lord" in all capitals- that means God and every other time you see that word, "lord" used- it means, "master".

Now I think that you can already begin to see how unpopular this teaching is. And let me say that this teaching has *never* been popular with the masses of people. But we need to understand, beloved, that this is exactly what the Bible teaches.

So as saved people- we have a great need today to learn the language and mentality of a slave and to learn the acceptable behavior

of a slave and to learn how to do things that slaves do- like submit and decrease and die and cast our crowns down and to humble ourselves and to pick up our cross and deny ourselves and follow Jesus in humble and joyful obedience. Because obedience is the hallmark of slavery.

For a slave to rebel against the one who owns him and the one who has bought and paid for him would be unthinkable. For a slave to live his life in blatant rebellion to his master would cause that slave to be severely punished. For any slave to be so arrogant to assume that his own personal agenda; his own personal plans; his own personal ambition or dreams would in any way matter to his master would be to think wrongly. No, what makes for a *good* slave; what defines a *productive* slave; and what distinguishes a slave that brings honor to his master is one single criteria- how obedient that slave is to his master.

And we must remember that the slave did not seek out the master. No, the master sought out the slave. And the master has purchased the slave for no other reason than the master wants the slave.

So we can see then that John taught that we are the slaves and Jesus is the Master and the only reason that this slave/Master relationship insults us and stings us is because of the fact that we are fallen creatures who are born in sin and shaped in iniquity and we rebel against *anyone* trying to control our lives- even God. And that is what Salvation is designed to do- change us so dramatically that we *enjoy* being owned by Jesus; that we *delight* in the prospect of living our lives with abandon to the Glory of God; to truthfully find the fullness of our own Joy is dying to self and living for Jesus.

And so we have to know that our rebellion to God is not freedom- because as sinners- we are not free. It is not true to think that lost people are free to do what they want to and only the Christians are bond slaves. That is *not* the way it is at all. The Bible teaches that lost sinners are slaves too. Read with me **John 8:31-36:**

31 So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine;

32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."

33 They answered Him, "We are Abraham's descendants and have never yet been enslaved to anyone; how is it that You say, 'You will become free'?"

34 Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin.

35 "The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son does remain forever.

36 "So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.

Jesus said here that those who are under the domination of sin are the slaves of sin. So this shows us that nobody is truly “free” in the sense that we are autonomous or that we are our own masters. So lost sinners are the slaves of sin and saved people are the bond slaves of Jesus Christ- but every single human being is a slave to someone or something- and *nobody* is totally “free”.

So as a good slave to sin- you will obey your lusts and you will be driven by your carnal desires and you will follow your master faithfully and fully. And as a bond-slave of Jesus Christ- you will obey His Commandments and you will be led by His Spirit and you will follow Jesus faithfully and fully. And this is exactly what John is saying here.

Well, I have to stop right here, but please join me on the next broadcast as we continue our journey through the Epistle of **1John**. May God help us all.

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