

## **Born of God 1 John 5:1-5**

### **Introduction**

The apostle John keeps taking up themes he has introduced to us earlier and weaving them together tightly into a fabric of truth that cannot be torn apart.

In JD Crowley's recently published commentary on 1 John, *True Religion and Counterfeit Religion*, he illustrates these interwoven truths with his diagrams through the book. Born of God is in the middle, connecting to be holy, believe truth, love God, love others. We now have 20 copies of that helpful commentary available in our bookstore.

The tests of whether someone is a false teacher or a genuine child of God all root themselves in God having given us life from Him. Regeneration. Being born again. Born of God. We see those words appear multiple times in our passage this morning.

<sup>1</sup> 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. <sup>2</sup> By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. <sup>3</sup> For this is the love

of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome. <sup>4</sup> For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. <sup>5</sup> Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

Born of God—begotten of God  
The Father (1)—the one begetting  
Children—different vocabulary, but the same word John as used before to emphasize their being born ones of God

1. Those born of God believe Jesus is the Messiah (1a).
2. Those born of God are loved by those who love the Father (1b-3).
3. Those born of God overcome the world (4-5).

### **1. Those born of God believe Jesus is the Messiah (1a).**

<sup>1</sup> Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God.

If you have God's life in you, you will trust in Jesus for who He really is as revealed by the predictions of God's prophets and by the eyewitness testimony of Christ's apostles. Everyone who has received life from God believes in the Lord Jesus Christ. If you don't believe, it's because you don't have life.

What does John mean when he says “Jesus is the Christ”?

Jesus’ name means “Yahweh saves.” An angel of God gave Mary and Joseph that name to use for the child born of the virgin Mary would “save His people from their sins.”

Christ—Greek version of the Hebrew Messiah. Not so much a name as a title. A title with a long history full of promise. The Messiah means “the Anointed One,” whom God throughout the OT centuries. The offspring of the woman who would crush the serpent’s head, the offspring of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in whom all the families of the earth would be blessed, descendant of Judah, son of David, the son of Yahweh crowned King of the universe by Yahweh Himself, who will crush all earthly powers and set up an eternal kingdom, the suffering Servant of Yahweh who would bear our iniquities and die for them in our place, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

To believe Jesus is the Messiah is to believe God’s promises of deliverance from sin and death through the God-man Savior.

This is the doctrinal test of whether someone is born of God or not.

How seriously do you take the promises of God regarding the Messiah Jesus? What He came to do and what He will yet do?

If you hold these promises to be reliable and Jesus to be the Savior-King, it is because you have life given to you by God. With that life comes power, strength, hope, love. Live the life God has given you.

Jesus said that His words are spirit and life. 1 Peter 1 teaches that we are born again by incorruptible seed (God's not man's) through the living and abiding word of God. It lasts forever. Then Peter says, "This is the gospel that has been preached to you."

## **2. Those born of God are loved by those who love the Father (1b-3).**

**1<sup>b</sup>** and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of him.

Father—the one begetting  
 Born of him—begotten of him  
 Emphasis on the family genetics—in fact, the word John uses is the word we get *genetics* from.

If we truly love the God who gives life to His born ones, we love His born ones too. We sense an intrinsic kindred spirit. You cannot separate love for God and love for His born again children. Nobody truly loves God who

does not also love God's born ones. This is the social or practical test.

This world has an inborn hatred for born-again Christians. *People may talk of love and even go so far as to say they love God. But if they don't love true believers, they don't really love God either.* They are still part of the world in rebellion against God.

<sup>2</sup> By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments.

We would expect John to say "we know we love God and keep his commandments when we love the children of God," but he turns it around.

How do I know I'm really showing love to the children of God?

I show them love by loving God and keeping His commandments.

*It is not loving toward the children of God to hate their heavenly Father.* He loves them and has given them life. And they love Him more than anything or anyone else. When I love Him, I will love those made in His image and it shows in practical ways. They benefit from my love for God. They suffer from my lack of love for God. My not loving God puts me out of sync with Him and the universe He created, including the people in it.

*Nor is it loving to the children of God (or to anyone else for that matter) to disobey God's commandments.* His commandments flesh out what love looks like in practical ways.

They are for our good not our harm.

Disobedience to God's commands is sin, and sin inherently harms myself and those around me. Obedience is righteousness, and righteousness is inherently good for others and for myself.

Further, we cannot separate love for God from obedience to God. God deserves my highest regard as the supremely beautiful and good Being in the universe, the Creator, Sustainer, Redeemer, Truth-teller, Justice-bringer, Love-giver. Rebellion against such a God must first devalue and dishonor Him for who He is.

Romans 1:21

For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

*In other words, ungodliness—the failure to honor God—is the root of unrighteousness—the failure to obey God. My sin problem is rooted in a worship problem.*

Satan's tactic in the Garden of Eden was to question what God has said, creating doubt

about God, then to deny what God has said—making God a liar, then to assign to God evil motives for what He has commanded—trying to keep you from advancing. The devil continues these same strategic lies to this day. He hates God and wants us to do the same.

But the one who loves God wants to obey God.

<sup>3</sup> For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome.

Loving God and obeying God are inseparable. Keeping God's commands is to guard and treasure them so that we can obey them. Jesus: Teach them to observe all that I've commanded you.

His commandments are not burdensome. They are not too heavy to bear. Unlike all the rules of the Pharisees. Jesus says in Matthew 11:28-30

<sup>28</sup> Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup> 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. <sup>30</sup> For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

This week Ben Fetterolf sent me some of his meditations on this statement that God's commands are not burdensome. I think he will post it to our website soon. Here's a summary of his *Ten Reasons God's Commands Are Not Burdensome*:

1. God's commands are in line with how he created the world.
2. God's commands are for our good.
3. God's commands are simple. (Unlike the complex religious systems of the day)
4. God's commands are not the means by which his approval is gained.
5. God enables what he commands.
6. God commands *us*, not just *me*.
7. God commands, yet God forgives.
8. God's commands are not his only word.
9. God's commands are worth singing about.
10. God's commands do not change.

Listen to the testimony of Psalm 19:7-11:

<sup>7</sup> The law of the LORD is perfect,  
reviving the soul;  
the testimony of the LORD is sure,  
making wise the simple;  
<sup>8</sup> the precepts of the LORD are right,  
rejoicing the heart;  
the commandment of the LORD is pure,  
enlightening the eyes;  
<sup>9</sup> the fear of the LORD is clean,  
enduring forever;



the rules of the LORD are true,  
and righteous altogether.

**10** More to be desired are they than gold,  
even much fine gold;  
sweeter also than honey  
and drippings of the honeycomb.

**11** Moreover, by them is your servant warned;  
in keeping them there is great reward.

How can I love my brothers and sisters  
better?

Start with loving God more and letting His  
Word drive how you express your love. That's  
the kind of love people need most. Husbands.  
Wives. Fathers. Mothers. Children. Neighbors.  
Friends.

### **3. Those born of God overcome the world (4-5).**

**4** For everyone who has been born of God  
overcomes the world. And this is the victory  
that has overcome the world—our faith.

What does "overcome the world" mean?

Remember what John has already had to say  
about the world:

1 John 2:15-17

**15** Do not love the world or the things in the  
world. If anyone loves the world, the love of  
the Father is not in him. **16** For all that is in  
the world—the desires of the flesh and the  
desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not

from the Father but is from the world. <sup>17</sup> And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.

The world is the organized system in rebellion against God. We see it at every level of our society and our world. Entertainment. News. Media. Education. Government. Public policy. The kings of the earth and their rulers set themselves against the Lord and against His Messiah (Psalm 2). Every human being feels its pull on mind and heart. How can we possibly overcome it, when our very nature is to sin against God?

“This is the victory that has overcome the world”—the verb tense John uses points to a decisive event, not an ongoing process.

It points to a turning point in our lives. And that turning point is when we cross over from death to life to trust in Jesus.

“Everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world,” and the one who “believes that Jesus is the Son of God” “overcomes the world.” Both of these are present tense, pointing to ongoing action, but this ongoing reality is rooted in the decisive victory of faith over the world.

If we are born again, we were children of darkness, but now we are light in the Lord. Our nature was to disobey. But when we received life from God through His Spirit, our disposition changed. Our heart is to obey Him rather than our old sinful desires. And we can obey through the power of God at work in us. "Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would be losing. Were not the right Man on our side, the man of God's own choosing. You ask who that may be? Christ Jesus, it is he; Lord Sabaoth His name, from age to age the same; and He must win the battle." Martin Luther

John 15:18-19

**18** "If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. **19** If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

John 16:33

I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.

King Jesus has conquered the world, and those who belong to Him through faith are part of His kingdom.

## 1 John 5:5

Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

The human being Jesus is God the Son come to earth as the promised Messiah. His mission was to rescue His people, His saints and make them part of His forever kingdom, in contrast to the kingdoms of this world, which is passing away.

Jesus has already won the victory at the cross and at the empty tomb. If you are relying on Him as your Savior, that victory is yours.

## Colossians 1:13

He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son.

That kingdom will never pass away. What a victory! It is possible only by the almighty power of God Himself. His life in us.

“We are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.” Romans 8:37

No need to fret, to fear, to cave, to join the enemies of God. They will all be swept away with this world in rebellion against God—like chaff in the wind. But His kingdom will never

end, and He will reign forever. Total victory. In Him we have overcome the world.

## **Conclusion**

Faith, love, and obedience are inseparable tests of being born of God. The root of all three is the new birth.

1. Those born of God believe Jesus is the Messiah (1a).
2. Those born of God are loved by those who love the Father (1b-3).
3. Those born of God overcome the world (4-5).

## **Discussion Questions**

1. Life from God and faith in Jesus the Messiah are inseparable. What does this truth tell you about the relationship between doctrinal integrity and godly living?
2. Why is loving those born of God proof you love the God who gave them life?
3. Showing genuine love for God's children calls for loving God and obeying His commandments. Why would that be?
4. According to 1 John why would practicing or affirming disobedience to God's commands not be truly loving?
5. How does loving God more help you love others better?

6. We often think of God's commands as what condemns us as sinners. How is it that God's commands are not burdensome but for our good?
7. According to verses 4-5, we can live in the state of overcoming/conquering the world because of the decisive victory over the world through faith. In what ways does it help you to know that through Christ you are a conqueror of the world system in rebellion against God? (Romans 8:37 We are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.)
8. In what practical ways are believing in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, loving God's children, loving God, keeping His commands, and overcoming the world all intertwined?