

1 John 5:1 (NKJV)

5 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.

Jesus told Nicodemus, you must be born again

John 3:16 (NKJV)

16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

- Here again John tells us how to be born again... by believing that Jesus Christ is the Son of God
- The evidence that we are born again is we love Jesus and we love one another
- Jesus said by this shall all men know you're my disciples, by your love for one another (John 13:35)
- In 1 John 4, John writes if you say you love God and hate your brother you're a liar (1 John 4:20)
- Thus John is pressing this point... whoever believes Jesus is the Son of God is born of God and those who are born of God love Jesus and love one another

1 John 5:2 (NKJV)

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

- The proof of love is not what you say, but what you do
- If I say I love my wife, but I continually do things that she says not to do or act in ways that constantly offend her, after a while she will question my love for her
- How do I know my love for God is real? When my love is demonstrated by keeping His commandments

1 John 5:3 (NKJV)

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

- We often think that it's difficult, impossible to love God or love others the way God loves them

- We think it's impossible to keep His commandments
- But John says the commandments of Jesus are not burdensome
- Burdensome literally means heavy or oppressive
- Jesus said my yoke is easy and my burden is light (Matthew 11:30)
- Thus if God's commandments are burdensome, then you're not following God's commandments

1 John 5:4–5 (NKJV)

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

- Jesus said I have overcome the world (John 16:33)
- Just like Jesus, those who are born of God also overcome the world
- The word overcome means to win a victory over in a military conflict

Two things to consider

- FIRST, Temptation is not simply desire or lust... temptation is an attack
- It's not a sin to be tempted... it's a sin to surrender to temptation
- SECOND, Jesus is the Overcomer, the Victorious One
- Whoever lives under His Kingdom rule and reign is living under His victory
- We enter into His Kingdom by faith, by believing that Jesus is the Son of God
- I want you to understand, it's not based on you having the power to overcome the world because Jesus has already overcome
- What allows us to live as overcomers is simply resting in what Jesus did at the cross and we enter into this rest by faith

1 John 5:6 (NKJV)

⁶This 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.

- He who comes by water refers to natural birth
- It can also refer to baptism and of course Jesus is God in the flesh, born of a virgin but also baptized by John the Baptist at which time God spoke and said this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased

- Water and blood refers to the cross
- Death on the cross was a slow agonizing death by suffocation and it was Passover, so they broke the legs of the 2 criminals on either side of Jesus
- When they came to Jesus, He was already dead so they thrust a spear into His side and out came blood and water
- In essence John is saying Jesus was born to die on the cross and the Spirit (known as the Spirit of truth) bears witness with our hearts that Jesus is the Messiah, the Christ

1 John 5:7–8 (NKJV)

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.

- The law states every matter is established by two or three witnesses (2 Corinthians 13:1)
- Thus Jesus being the Messiah, the Son of God is established in heaven by the Father, the Word (Jesus) and the Holy Spirit... and these three are one
- This is the mystery of the triunity... God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit
- It is also established on earth by the Spirit, the water and the blood
- The Spirit convicts the world of sin, righteousness and judgment and now you have Jesus established as Messiah, the Son of God in heaven and on earth

1 John 5:9–10 (NKJV)

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.

- How easy it is to receive the witness of men
- Someone accuses someone of sexual assault without any evidence and the country is protesting in the streets... receiving the witness of men
- John says the witness of God is greater... we ought to believe it!

- God testifies that Jesus is His Son!
- Now, everyone who believes in the Son of God has the witness in Himself
- Paul said His Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are sons of God, that we've been given the spirit of adoption whereby we cry Abba Father (Romans 8:14-16)
- To deny that Jesus is the Son of God is to call God a liar because they do not believe God's testimony that Jesus is His Son

1 John 5:11–13 (NKJV)

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.

- Here it is! God's testimony to you... God has given us eternal life in Jesus
- If you have Jesus, you have life
- If you do not have Jesus, you don't have life
- John says everyone who believes in the name of the Son of God can know they have eternal life...
- You have the assurance of God's testimony, God's Word

1 John 5:14–15 (NKJV)

¹⁴ Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. ¹⁵ And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.

- Notice our confidence comes when we are in Christ
- When we are in Christ, we know that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us and will answer our prayers
- Emphasis is on praying according to His will
- Now a lot of people will pray, if it be thy will as if saying that will make their prayer more answerable
- Lord heal this person if it be Thy will... but that is not what John is saying

- To pray according to God's Will is to pray according to His Word
- We can know God's will by knowing His Word

1 John 5:16–17 (NKJV)

¹⁶ If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin *which does not lead to death*, he will ask, and He will give him life for those who commit sin not *leading to death*. There is sin *leading to death*. I do not say that he should pray about that. ¹⁷ All unrighteousness is sin, and there is sin not *leading to death*.

- What is sin leading to death?
- Jesus said all manner of sin and blasphemy will be forgiven except the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit
- Blasphemy of the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven in this world or the world to come (Matthew 12:31, 32)
- Thus, the sin leading to death is the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit
- What is the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit?
- Jesus said when the Spirit is come, He will testify of sin, of righteousness and of judgment to come. Of sin, because they don't believe in me (John 16:8,9)
- There is only one sin that leads to death and that is the sin of rejecting the witness of the Holy Spirit
- Rejecting the testimony of the Spirit that Jesus is the Son of God and thus declaring the Holy Spirit is a liar is to blaspheme the Holy Spirit
- John says if you see your brother committing an act of sin, rebellion against God... he will ask...
- We are to pray for those who are caught in sin... we are to pray that Jesus would allow them to experience life
- Satan has blinded their eyes from seeing the life that is theirs in Jesus
- They're not rational on the issues of eternal life because Satan is controlling their mind
- We can pray and ask God to bind the work of Satan that is keeping them blinded and set them free from Satan's stronghold on their mind so they can make a free will choice to choose life

1 John 5:18–19 (NKJV)

¹⁸ We know that whoever is born of God does not sin; but he who has been born of God keeps himself, and the wicked one does not touch him.

¹⁹ We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies *under the sway of the wicked one*.

- Vs. 18 is better translated does not practice sin
- Being born again doesn't mean I will never sin... I make mistakes
- It does mean I don't make sin the normal practice of my life
- I'm no longer under the control of the wicked one, like the world is
- I'm led by the Spirit of God

1 John 5:20–21 (NKJV)

²⁰ And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life. ²¹ Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.

- John ends with the exhortation to keep yourselves from idols
- Why end with this exhortation?
- Because anything other than Jesus is a false god, an idol
- The child of God who is born again has an internal understanding, the witness of the Spirit that Jesus is the Son of God and in Jesus we have eternal life
- Any other god is a lie

2 John 1–3 (NKJV)

¹The Elder, To the elect lady and her children, whom I love in truth, and not only I, but also all those who have known the truth, ²because of the truth which abides in us and will be with us forever: ³Grace, mercy, *and* peace will be with you from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.

- John is writing to an influential Jewish lady who was a believer
- We really don't know who she was but John's greeting tells us the basis of his relationship with this lady and her children... the truth of Jesus Christ

2 John 4–6 (NKJV)

⁴I rejoiced greatly that I have found *some* of your children walking in truth, as we received a commandment from the Father. ⁵And now I plead with you, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment to you, but that which we have had from the beginning: that we love one another. ⁶This is love, that we walk according to His commandments. This is the commandment, that as you have heard from the beginning, you should walk in it.

- One of the sad lessons of church history is over time people do not continue in the truth
- Peter, Paul and John were concerned that false prophets, false teachers would arise and lead the early church into deception
- Pastor Chuck was concerned that Reformed Theology would infiltrate Calvary Chapel and instead of winning the lost, they would be more concerned about winning the found to Christ
- But the greatest concern of John was that this lady and her children would love one another
- John says this is the commandment you've heard from the beginning

2 John 7–8 (NKJV)

⁷For many deceivers have gone out into the world who do not confess Jesus Christ *as* coming in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. ⁸Look to yourselves, that we do not lose those things we worked for, but *that* we may receive a full reward.

- In 1 John 5, John warns the believers to test the spirits

- The test is do they confess Jesus Christ is the Son of God come in the flesh
- This is the fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith
- If they don't, they are a deceiver and an antichrist
- A deceiver is someone who leads you into something that isn't true
- An antichrist is someone who puts themselves in the place of Christ and usurp the position of Christ in their life
- In John's day Gnosticism was spreading throughout the church
- There was a group of Gnostics out of Ephesus referred to as Cerinthian Gnostics
- They denied the deity of Jesus
- John says look out for yourselves that you don't lose the things we worked for but that we may receive a full reward
- What is John talking about?
- Paul said I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me at that day (2 Timothy 4:7-8)
- John warns them... don't be taken in by deceivers and lose your salvation

2 John 9–11 (NKJV)

⁹Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. ¹⁰If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him; ¹¹for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds.

- The word transgress means to go beyond so this word means to go farther than what is right or to go into an extreme
- The Gnostics claimed to have special knowledge, special revelation
- There are those today who claim to have special knowledge based on the latest scholarship that the Bible isn't the Word of God
- John simply says... if someone does not continue to teach the doctrine of Christ that John teaches, He does not have God and if someone teaches you something other than Jesus... don't receive him into your house or greet him
- By receiving him into your house you are sharing in his evil deeds

- This is a strong statement... John is saying by entertaining a false teacher you are showing support for them
- I am aware of who I partner with in ministry because I know that as a pastor I am responsible to God and thus I'm careful with pastors, churches or events I recommend or invite people to attend
- If one of our leaders invite you to something we haven't announced at church... let us know
- People who lack discernment can bring division into the church by asking you to share in the evil deeds of a false teacher
- As John says we don't want to lose the things we've worked for

2 John 12–13 John (NKJV)

¹² Having many things to write to you, I did not wish *to do so* with paper and ink; but I hope to come to you and speak face to face, that our joy may be full. ¹³ The children of your elect sister greet you. Amen.

3 John 1–4 (NKJV)

¹The Elder, To the beloved Gaius, whom I love in truth: ²Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers. ³For I rejoiced greatly when brethren came and testified of the truth *that is* in you, just as you walk in the truth. ⁴I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.

It is believed this is the last letter written by John

- It was written after the book of Revelation
- Revelation was written while John was in exile on the Island of Patmos
- History tells us John was released from Patmos and ended his life ministering in Ephesus
- Polycarp, one of the early church fathers, was John's disciple
- He took over the church in Ephesus after John's death and eventually made his way to Smyrna where he was eventually martyred, burned at the stake, for his faith in Jesus
- John writes to Gaius, whom I love in truth
- History tells us that John sent a man by the name of Gaius to be the pastor of the church in Pergamum, a city located not far from Ephesus
- At this point, John is an old man and thus he refers to himself as The Elder... the same in 2 John
- In his old age, John's primary concern is the church continue to walk in the truth
- Of the seven churches mentioned in Revelation, only Ephesus remains today
- Jesus said to the church at Ephesus... you have persevered and endured hardships for my name and have not grown weary... and today there are 3000 Turkish Jesus followers there

In vs. 2 John prays a blessing... I pray that you prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers

- Many have taken this as a promise from God, but it is not a promise from God
- It's John's greeting to Gaius
- It's essential to study God's Word in context, this is why we are expositors of the scripture
- We study verse by verse through the Bible, taking each verse in the context of the passage, in the context of the Book, in the context of the writer, of history and within the entire Bible

- If you take them out of context you can make any verse say what you want to say
- This isn't a promise that you will be prosperous and in good health, this is John's wish for Gaius
- But what gives John great joy is to know they are walking in truth

3 John 5–8 (NKJV)

⁵ Beloved, you do faithfully whatever you do for the brethren and for strangers, ⁶ who have borne witness of your love before the church. *If* you send them forward on their journey in a manner worthy of God, you will do well, ⁷ because they went forth for His name's sake, taking nothing from the Gentiles. ⁸ We therefore ought to receive such, that we may become fellow workers for the truth.

- John is commending Gaius for his hospitality
- This is one of the characteristics of a pastor, they were to be given to hospitality
- Peter exhorts them to be hospitable and the writer of Hebrews said to be careful to entertain strangers because you never know that you might be entertaining angels unaware
- So open up your home, open up your life to people... allow the Holy Spirit to flow through you and love people in practical ways
- There's nothing greater to me as a pastor than hearing people who visit our church bearing witness that we are a loving and hospitable church!
- Jesus said if you give a cup of cold water to the prophet in the name of the Lord, you will not lose your reward but receive the reward of a prophet
- So when we as a church bless a ministry, we supported students to go to Vaijta, Hungary... John says we do well
- We want the ministries to be blessed so they won't have to take anything from the Gentiles, the unbelievers they are ministering to
- The Church should always be supported by the believers who benefit from the ministry of the church that the church may continue its mission to be a lighthouse for the gospel
- By supporting the work of the church we become fellow workers for the truth... not only in our local church but with the ministries we support

3 John 9–10 (NKJV)

⁹ I wrote to the church, but Diotrefes, who loves to have the preeminence among them, does not receive us. ¹⁰ Therefore, if I come, I will call to mind his deeds which he does, prating against us with malicious words. And not content with that, he himself does not receive the brethren, and forbids those who wish to, putting *them* out of the church.

- In the early church, the apostles were recognized as God's spokesmen, God's leaders
- However, Diotrefes refused to recognize them and rebelled against the leadership
- He began speaking against John, whom Jesus called to be an apostle
- There are some small people who feel they can advance their cause by speaking evil against men of God who are being mightily used by God
- When you criticize a man God is using, you are putting yourself above them, to judge them
- The Lord said... touch not my anointed and do my prophets no harm (Psalm 105:15)
- Thus you have people coming to John talking about the love they experience with Gaius and the problems with Diotrefes
- He's taken over, he's an autocrat, he's a dictator, ruling over the people, lording over the people, not receiving fellow workers of the gospel, keeping them away from the people
- This is really a sign of weakness because you're afraid of losing control over the people and so Diotrefes would not only not receive these fellow workers, but forbid others
- Don't receive them into your home
- Now John said... there are false prophets going from house to house, don't receive them... rather put them to the test
- Do they acknowledge Jesus is the Son of God? Do they live lives that glorify God? Are they aligning themselves with God's Kingdom or are they ripping off the people?
- If they are stay away from them because you are supporting their evil deeds

3 John 11–12 (NKJV)

¹¹ Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. He who does good is of God, but he who does evil has not seen God. ¹² Demetrius has a *good* testimony from all, and from the truth itself. And we also bear witness, and you know that our testimony is true.

- There are people who talk the talk, but they don't walk the walk
- Diotrefes doesn't know the Lord, he isn't walking in the way of love, the ways of the Lord
- However, Demetrius has a good testimony... we've heard good things about him
- In all the writings of John, he is giving testimony of Jesus Christ... Jesus is the Son of God
- God is light, God is love, God is life, God is righteous and the people know that John is telling them the truth

3 John 13–14 (NKJV)

¹³ I had many things to write, but I do not wish to write to you with pen and ink; ¹⁴ but I hope to see you shortly, and we shall speak face to face. Peace to you. Our friends greet you. Greet the friends by name.

- So John ends his letter with... can't wait to see you face to face
- He writes the same to the elect lady... trusting to come there soon to speak face to face that our joy may be full
- We've been given the ministry of Presence... which means we need to be present in people's lives... face to face
- Knowing each other's name, knowing each other's lives and sharing God's love in practical ways with each other