

OUR FAITH THAT OVERCOMES!

(Scripture: 1 John 5:1-4)

Introduction:

One of the disciples of Jesus Christ, Apostle John, always intrigues me. He was a beloved disciple of Jesus! His life story is a fascinating study! If indeed the epistle of first John was written by Apostle John, we can see a dramatic change in his life. When Jesus was with Him, he was the one who was jockeying for power. He wanted his brother and him to sit on either side of Jesus in heaven. It was the same John who was also very short tempered. When a village did not receive Jesus, John was so upset, he wanted to call the fire from heaven to destroy them. But that same John had so much love for Jesus, and he was so close to Jesus, he could lie on the bosom of Jesus and converse comfortably. He was the only disciple who was standing beside Jesus' cross! You can see the spiritual maturity of John through this letter. We can see that he was so full of love, he could even whole heartedly write **love your enemies**. John was completely Christocentric! In other words, he was always Christ centered in his teaching. The whole epistle is full of love and built upon Christ centered teaching! We'll come across some of those teachings today.

1 John 5:1.

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

This verse clearly explains how we can identify a child of God!

We are all very familiar with the first statement that is being repeated often in this epistle: whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ (the Messiah who was born as fully human), and those who believe Jesus as the Son of God (fully divine), they are indeed born of God! Yes, all children of God will believe that Jesus is the Christ!

Second, we can identify the children of God when they love the Father, love the brethren also. They both must go together. Many of us, we show our love vertically toward God without any hesitation, but not horizontally toward our brothers! Both dimensions must be present in our lives in order to have a balanced life.

This verse shows also that love of the brother (whom we see) happens naturally if we love the Heavenly Father whom we cannot see! (We have come across this thought in 1 John 4:20). It is possible to love people, and not care about God, the Father at all! Many secular humanists live that way. But **Christian love mandates** that we love our Father so that we may love His children also. We are one family! Yes, church is indeed one big family. Just like in any family, there may be brothers and sisters rubbing each other the wrong way, and we as believers do the same to each other. **Yet**, as children of the same Father, we must love them. Let us not build our church based on race, color, or denominations. Let us build it by our love for God the Father, and for His children through

Jesus Christ our Lord. We may have different personalities. Still let us love them because they are the children of the same Heavenly Father! **Christian love is not easy.** It is never an easy thing to love people whom we do not like or people who hurt our feelings, or who laugh behind our back in a demeaning way. Yet, **we must love because that person is part of the family of God!**

I am going to make a bold statement. Every child of God must love his brethren. If he does not love, he is not a child of God. Why am I saying this? Every child of God, if he is indeed a child of God, has the nature of God within him. What is the nature of God? God is love, and His children must have that nature! It is a commandment, and we must choose to love every time, not when we feel like, or when we are in a good mood...we must choose to love every time. We know a child of God through his or her love for God and others.

Third way to identify a child of God! Anyone who is born of the Holy Spirit is indeed the child of God! No one can believe Jesus Christ as the Son of God without the presence of the Holy Spirit in his heart! Only through the presence of the Holy Spirit, he will be able to call upon the Lord, with a repentant heart! These are indeed the children of God!

Fourth, a child of God can be identified if he or she loves God by keeping His commandments. Jesus, in His own words, says this also: "If you love me, you will keep my commandments!"(John 14:23). This is what 1 John 5:2,3 says also.

1 John 5:2,3.

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.

Love and obedience to God's commandments leads to the love of His children!

☞ Love thy neighbor commandment **leads us toward love.**

☞ Do not hate your brother commandment **leads us to love** those who hate us.

☞ "Do not call your brother a fool" commandment forces us to **tolerate our brother.**

☞ Give it to those who ask commandment paves the way **for more love.**

In short, obeying God's commandments leads us to **the path of love**, if we obey!

If a person genuinely loves God, he will definitely obey God's Word. Out of love, he or she obeys God. If we really love God, we will try to please Him by obeying His commandment. We know that His commandment is just one: **Love one another!** But if it is more than one commandment, what are the other commandments we must follow? All the commandments can be summarized into the following: **love your God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength, and love thy neighbor as yourself!**

1 John 5:3 gives us a clue. His commandments are not burdensome! (grievous - KJV)

And his commandments are not grievous - in Greek, bareiai; heavy, that is, difficult to be carried as a burden. Mathew 11:30 "For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." It means that his laws are not unreasonable; the duties which he requires of us are not beyond our ability; his government is not oppressive. It is easy to obey God when the ♥ heart is right; and those who endeavor in sincerity to keep his commandments do not complain that they are hard to follow.

His **commandments are not grievous** for two reasons:

☞ 1. Because He gives us strength to bear them; (Philippians 4:13) I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me!

☞ 2. Because love makes them light. (Hospitality ministry in church).

Burden of work becomes very light when we love what we are doing rather than looking at it as a duty!

Matthew 11:28.

My yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

We will be able to keep all His hard commandments by the power of the Holy Spirit! Only by the presence of the Holy Spirit, the commandments become easy. Who could keep the commandment of loving our enemies? Only through the power of the Holy Spirit! It is not possible by human strength, but all things are possible by God!

1 John 5:4,5

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?

True belief in Jesus Christ brings His Holy Spirit in our heart, and we overcome because of the work of the Holy Spirit! Our faith that latches onto our incarnated Lord Jesus Christ, (who died for our sins, and rose again for our justification), and our faith that abides in the Spirit of Christ **will move the mountains of problems, and will eventually see the victory!** Nothing can separate us from the love of God. Neither death nor life, nor corona virus, or anything!

Paul says in 1 Cor. 15:57, 'Thanks be to God, which gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ'. We will overcome everything because of Our Lord Jesus Christ who already overcame everything! He has conquered sin, death, and hades!

The one who believes that Jesus as Christ, and the Son of God is the one who overcomes! How does he know Jesus as Son of God, and Christ? Through the presence of the Holy Spirit! Yes, the anointing that is in you will lead you into all truth. The Holy

Spirit as Witness will clearly acknowledge that Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father without Him!

☞ The Spirit is the one that makes us love everyone, including our enemies.

☞ The Spirit is the one that makes us stoop down to wash anyone's feet and serve them with gladness.

☞ The Spirit is the one that rebukes our proud look and teaches us to esteem others better than ourselves!

☞ The Spirit is the one that gives us that peace that surpasses all our understanding.

☞ Yes, the Spirit is the one that gives us various spiritual gifts from above, so that we may use them to edify the church!

☞ Yes, the Spirit is the one that guarantees us the eternal life, if we abide in Him.

Dear brothers and sisters, If God be for us who can be against us? We will overcome everything because of Him!

Here John says that everything that hath been begotten of God conquers the world. And our faith is the one that conquered the world. Who is he that conquers the world but he that has faith that Jesus is the Son of God?" He becomes the conqueror of this world as well as the world beyond death!

To believe that Jesus is the Christ is to believe that He who was born and was crucified is the Anointed one, the Messiah, and the Savior of the world.

Yes, by faith in Christ, we can overcome everything, including this Coronavirus. It does not mean that we must slack off in following the proper protocol of social distancing, washing of our hands, and not touching our face! We will overcome this virus also. God is teaching us the lesson that we are nothing, and He is everything. He can blow away our economy and 401k instantaneously. Our mighty horses, chariots, and our whole army can be blown away in no time through this kind of virus. He can make all nations crumble and make them fall on their knees before Him in no time.

Let us see clearly today, God is everything in our life, and every perfect gift comes from Him and Him alone. We need to humble ourselves, acknowledge the very fact that we can overcome everything only through Jesus Christ, our Lord, the Son of the living God, and without Him, we can do nothing!

☞ Yes, we can overcome our trials and tribulations through faith in Christ.

☞ Yes, we can overcome our fear and despair through Christ.

☞ Yes. we can overcome our sins, death, judgement, and hades!

We have already overcome Satan because Christ has crushed his head. But still be careful, he could trip you down in a surprising manner. Be vigilant!

Let me summarize

☞ It's our faith in incarnated Christ that overcomes the world.

☞ It's our faith in Jesus as the ONLY begotten Son of God that overcomes the world, and He has already overcome the world for our sake.

☞ It is the power of the love of God that helps us overcome the world and makes us love His children.

☞ It is His commandments that keep us straight and help us overcome this world.

☞ It is the Spirit of Christ that helps us overcome this world.

There is indeed victory in Jesus! We can overcome anything in life through our Lord Jesus Christ. Our Lord Jesus was looked at as a loser in this world, He was branded as a mental patient, mocked, whipped as a criminal, and was crucified naked. To many, He died as a loser. But God raised Him up from the grave and made Him sit at His right side as the Lord of Lords and King of Kings! Jesus Christ, the Son of God did overcome sin, death, and hades, and He did deliver us from the bondage of sin and redeemed us! Hallelujah!

Are you indeed the child of God?
Are you really born of the Spirit?
Do you love everyone, or do you pick and choose?
Are you living in fear or in perfect love?
Is there victory in your life? Is there?

Examine yourself!

Daniel Israel
pastor@acts242church.org
3.29.20