

- Order of Service -

Call to Worship

Welcoming Prayer

- 74, Come thou long expected Jesus
- 82, Let all mortal flesh keep silence
- Congregational confession
- 72, O come, O come, Emmanuel
- Away in a manger

Announcements and Prayer requests

Greeting

Message in the Word -

John's call to Grow in Fellowship with God - #16

This is the victory that has overcome the world – our faith!

1 John 5:1-5

Sending prayer

We're resuming Bible study Wednesday and the topic is the date of the celebration of the nativity

Communion/Pot Luck next Sunday

You may notice we don't pass an offering plate

We invite you to participate in the ministry, and the offering box in the foyer is for your gifts and offerings for the Lord's work.

- 2 Corinthians 9:7-8, Galatians 6:6 -

Grace Bible Fellowship

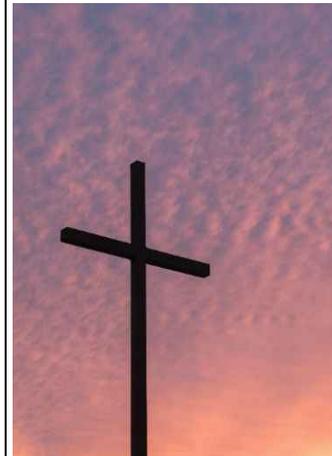
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**FAITH IS THE VICTORY!
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OH, GLORIOUS VICTORY
THAT OVERCOMES THE
WORLD.**

- Teaching -

Eric Peterman

John's call to Grow in Fellowship with God - #16

This is the victory that has overcome the world – our faith!

1 John 5:1-5

- November 26th, 2022 -

John's call to Grow in Fellowship with God - #16

This is the victory that has overcome the world – our faith!

1 John 5:1-5

Chapter 4, verses 20-21 leave those of us who lay claim to loving God with a command - "love your brother also!" Which in turn leaves us with a dangling question: Just who is my brother? Our text this morning goes on to answer that question.

5:1 "Whoever believes that... is born of God". Gives us a succinct answer as to what the core of justifying, saving faith is: To genuinely believe that Jesus is the promised Messiah, the Christ, the Anointed One sent to be the substitute sacrifice for sins. Of course coming to a settled and convinced faith about that entails quite a bit more detail, but there is saving faith in a nutshell. **See also John 20:31.**

But John here is doing even more than that. He's deliberately pointing out that the one *born of God*, the one *born again* (John 3:3-8) is born of the Father, and so is a child of the Father, and not just a child of natural descent according to Adam and his offspring. There is a distinction between natural and supernatural birth! **See 3:9 and 4:7**

And whoever grows at all, even the tiniest bit in their faith after justification has an ever increasing awareness that their born-again status does not ultimately come from themselves, but comes from the Father above who caused or brought about the process issuing in their new birth. "I have a Father! A supernatural one! Wow!" This is at once exciting, thrilling! And it is humbling! *God loved me and caused me to be born again.* And in that realization there are several inklings that occur to us. One of which is: *I am part of a larger family, born from the same Father, spiritually, and that family has siblings! Lots of them! I have eternal brothers and sisters!*

So these two principles: First, I'm not the ultimate cause of my being born again (that's rather impossible). Therefore I am humbled by being exalted by the love of God given undeservedly to me in the new birth. I am uniquely loved in that new Father/child relationship (4:19). Second, I have siblings, brothers and sisters, who are also newly born from God our Father, in love. Since we are both new creations, born in the sphere of the Father's love, through Christ's love, and kept via the Spirit of love, there is a natural/supernatural attraction *toward*, identity *with*, a brotherly love *for*, and true family duty and obligation *to* my siblings.

This is John's answer to the question of 4:20-21, "Who is my brother?"

V2, Great! Now, *how* do I love them all? There's one's that look act and talk a lot like me. Do I love them? What about the ones that seem very different from me?

Even though we may have little in common with some Christians we can still love them because we share the same Parent and are members of the same family.

How can we love another Christian when we do not particularly like the person? *The key is the meaning of love. Loving our brother or sister means doing what is best for them* (Gr. *agape*). It does not necessarily mean feeling affection for them, though feelings of affection frequently follow a commitment to do what is best for another person. God does not require us to *feel* equally affectionate toward all of our brethren, but **He does require us to do what is best for them.** Which begs the question: *What is best for them? Answer: "...when we love God and obey His commandments."*

v3a, Corollary: It is *impossible* to love my fellow believers, my siblings, by or through disobeying God's commandments, even if I think that will be good for them. **Disobedience is not loving, and loving is not a cover for disobedience to God.**

3b, God's commands to his God-born children are not burdensome. Why is that? Is it due to weaker, easier commands for them? Are they more chill and light duty? No. It is due to...

4, *For whatever is born of God overcomes the world.* Notice the "whatever" not "whoever" here. **What does it mean?** There is a vivifying, power-giving fountain of living waters welling up within as a free gift, a headwaters, a source, a principle, that comes from the Being of God indwelling the born-of-God ones. See John 7:37-39. This is why the commands are not burdensome. Because it is ultimately not us that is doing the living or the lifting! It is the Almighty God!

5, What does it mean to overcome the world? The one who believes the Jesus is the Son of God has popped out of and thus overcomes the world. See 2:15-17 for what the "world" is.

Important: Not loving the world, the debauched values and the slavery to the sin nature expressed in the culture, is not to be conflated into not loving our neighbors! We are not to throw the baby out with the bathwater! And what is the best way to love our neighbors? See 4:14! ***It is to love them with the gospel!***
