

## Overcoming the World Through Eternal Life in the Son (1 John 5:4-12)

### How can I be assured of my salvation?

1. *He walks in the light as God is in the light, and is the light (1:5-7)*
2. *He sees his sin, confesses it, and repents of it (1:8-10)*
3. *He abides in Jesus and walks as He walked (2:1-6)*
4. *He loves the brethren in word and deed (2:7-11; 3:14-18)*
5. *He does not love the world (2:15-17)*
6. *He practices righteousness considering Christ's return (2:28-3:3)*
7. *He sins less, not sinless (3:4-7)*
8. *God's seed abides in him, not the devil's (3:8-10)*
9. *The world hates him because of God's righteousness in him (3:11-13)*
10. *His heart (conscience) does not condemn him (3:19-22)*
11. *The Spirit of Christ (Holy Spirit) dwells in him (3:23-24)*
12. *He listens to the truth in growing discernment (4:1-6)*
13. *He loves God and His saints because God's love is wrought through him (4:7-12)*
14. *He confesses that Jesus is the Son of God (4:13-16)*
15. *He has no present or future fear of punitive judgment from God (v.17-18)*
16. *He believes that Jesus is the Christ (5:1)*
17. *He loves God and obeys His commandments (5:2)*

### **18. He overcomes the world (5:4-9)**

- To overcome means to conquer, be victorious, or prevail in the face of obstacles.
- This "prevailing" connects with the commandments of God (not being burdensome, 5:3), and the onslaught of the fallen world system set against God and His kingdom.
- The world is the total of human life hostile to God. All that floating mass of thoughts, opinions, maxims, speculations, hopes, impulses, aims, aspirations, at any time current in the world, which may be impossible to seize and accurately define but constitutes the most genuine and effective power, being the moral, or immoral atmosphere dominating this era in which we live that is opposed to the revealed will of God (in conscience as image bearers, and His word).
  - Worldliness is a state of mind, heart, and will set against the Lordship of Christ and the sufficiency of Scripture.
  - Worldliness suppresses the truth in unrighteousness (Rom. 1:18-25).

What overcomes the assault against the rule and reign of Christ in the believer?

- **Faith:** This faith encompasses the whole umbrella of the Christian life, from regeneration, justification, adoption, sanctification, through future glorification. This faith is a gift from God (Eph. 2:8) which permanently unites the believer to Christ. It is a faith that also grows (2 Thess. 1:3).

Faith overcomes the world by:

- A. yoking itself to what is true to the Son of God
- B. obeying divine commands rooted in the character of God
- C. delighting in matters of the gospel and the kingdom of God
- D. awareness of the allurements of the world by refusing to yield to its influences
- E. bearing up in patience the cross that is laid upon him

Regeneration (new birth) precedes this faith. The child of God has overcome the world and will overcome it because Jesus has overcome it (Jn.16:33), and the Holy Spirit seals them (Eph. 1:13-14).

This faith that overcomes is reasonable and rooted in divine revelation which is historical, redemptive, and evident through the "testimony of three."

Testimony of three (v.6-8):

- John presents two (then three) witnesses "to the stand" in the typical fashion of Moses (Deut. 17:6; 19:15), Paul (2 Cor. 13:1-3; 1 Tim. 5:19), and Jesus (Matt. 18:15-16).
- These verses are the most perplexing in 1 John and one of the most enigmatic in the New Testament.

Jesus came by water and blood, not by water only, but by water and the blood (v.6). There are four historical interpretations of this:

- A. The water and blood are symbolic references to the sacrament of baptism and communion.
- B. John mentions blood and water to describe Jesus' humanity (Jn. 19:34-35).
- C. It refers to Old Testament rites of purification and blood sacrifice which Jesus performed during His earthly ministry.
- D. The baptism and the cross are both summaries of His earthly ministry, being historical and soteriological (salvific).

Water (baptism) is the commencement of Jesus' ministry (Matt. 3:13-17; Jn. 1:27; 3:30), while blood is the saving consummation of His ministry. John directs our attention to the eternity of the Son of God and His incarnation, thus combating the heresy of false gnostic teachers.

The Spirit, as the third witness (only living One) testified to Jesus' ministry and His apostles:

- He bore witness to Jesus being the Lamb of God (Jn. 1:29)
- He bore witness at Jesus' baptism (Matt. 3:16-17; Lk. 3:21-22; Jn. 1:32-34)
- He bore witness and empowered Jesus (Lk. 4:1, 14)
- He bore witness to Jesus in resurrecting Him from the dead (Rom. 1:4)
- He bore witness to Jesus' promise of sending another Helper (Jn. 14:16)

The Father also gave testimony at His baptism (Matt. 3:16-17; Mk. 1:10-11), the transfiguration (Matt. 17:5; Mk. 9:7; Lk. 9:35), and in the hearing of the multitude at Passion Week (Jn. 12:27-29). There was also nonverbal testimony of God in the resurrection (Eph. 1:20).

In John's Gospel, Jesus identified five witnesses: the Father himself (Jn. 5:31-32, 37), John the Baptist (Jn. 5:33-35), His works (Jn. 5:36), the Scriptures (Jn. 5:39-40) and Moses (Jn. 5:45-47). God has provided numerous witnesses that Jesus is the eternal incarnate Son of God. The world's deception cannot snuff out the witness of the Holy Spirit in the believer regarding the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. God's witness of Himself will prevail in the believer.

### **19. He has been given eternal life in the Son (5:10-11)**

- That same Spirit, Who gave testimony to Jesus' work missionally, dwells in those who believe *in* Jesus (v.10). He (Spirit) witnesses to the person and work of the Son of God and subsequently grants life.
- Eternal life is more than merely eternity, as all image-bearers will live eternally. The quality of life is inaugurated through the new birth (v.4) and is trinitarian. Eternal life is knowing the Father (John 17:3) through the Son (Acts 3:15; Col. 3:4) and by the Holy Spirit (Jn. 15:26; Rom. 5:5; Titus 3:5-7).
- Eternal life is the welcoming of the sinner into God's enjoyment of Himself through the presence and empowerment of the Holy Spirit (1 Jn. 2:20; 3:24; 4:6; 5:6). Jesus, as the resurrection and the life (Jn. 11:25-26; 14:6; 20:31) grants life, through faith.