

Series: 1 John
Title: The Overcomers
Text: 1 John 5: 4-5
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John declared the certainty of God's love making his child love our brethren. He said it is the love of God—God's own love for his people which God puts in his people. It is the love that God produces in us in the new birth.

Also, John declared that the love of God makes us keep his commandments and makes his commandments to not be grievous. The love of God makes us believe on God's Son and by faith in Christ we love those born of God.

1 John 5: 1: Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. 2: By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. 3: For this is the love OF God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.

Next, we have our text.

1 John 5: 4: For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, *even* our faith. 5: Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?

Proposition: The only ones who overcome the world are those born of God, given faith by God, so that we believe and trust Christ to save us.

Subject: The Overcomers

THE WORLD

What does the Holy Spirit mean by "the world?" Here "the world" means all depraved sinners except those God makes overcome.

The Lord Jesus spoke of "*the world hating*" him and his people. Only depraved men and women hate Christ and his people. He is speaking of men and women.

John 15: 18: If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before *it hated* you. 19: If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

God calls the "the world": "the wicked", "the proud" and "the terrible." This is the world that our text says the believer has overcome.

Isaiah 13: 11: And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogance of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.

Now, let's see what condition we have overcome. This is the condition of the infidel. These are the conditions of all natural, unregenerate sinners. This was our condition as we are born into this world.

One, the world is under the deception of the devil.

Revelations 12: 9: And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world:

Every person that you and I know that does not believe on Christ in spirit and in truth is deceived by the devil.

Two, the world knows not God. The Lord Jesus said,

John 17:25: O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee:...

Three, by its own wisdom, the world cannot know God.

1 Corinthians 1: 21: For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God,...

Four, because these other things are so, the religion of the world is anything except Christ: outside of organized religion is philosophy and within organized religion is the exaltation of man (*vain deceit*), will-worship.

Colossians 2:8: Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, 9: For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. 10 And ye are complete in him... 20: Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, 21: (Touch not; taste not; handle not; 22: Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? 23: Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.

The world's depraved heart is described in 1 John 2.

1 John 2: 15: Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16: For all that *is* in the world, [this is the sum of all] the lust of the flesh, [living for the senses] and the lust of the eyes, [to be seen of men] and the pride of life, [self-exaltation] is not of the Father, but is of the world. 17: And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

This is the worldliness of the depraved heart. This is what is wrong with the whole world. All this "*is not of the Father, but is of the world*"

Philippians 3: 18: (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: 19: Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)

2 Timothy 3: 1: This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. 2: For men shall be lovers of their own selves,...lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; 5: Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: [Christ the Power of God] from such turn away....

God's child is in a constant warfare against all these temptations of the world. These are the methods the world uses. The world would have us practice their traditions and go after their lusts. The world would have you compromise with them. If those things will not work then the world would make us look out of fashion and bigoted. Or the world would make you think they agree with you. So those who overcome overcome

the devil, we overcome our own spiritual ignorance, we overcome the world's will-works religion and philosophy, and we overcome the lusts of the world and the lusts of our own depraved hearts.

BORN OF GOD

The only way any sinner overcomes the world is by being born of God—**1 John 4: For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world...**

No sinner has anything to do with the new birth—to be “born of God” is to be “born of God alone!” We are sinners with no ability to rebirth ourselves.

Titus 3: 3: For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, *and* hating one another. 4: But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, 5: Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; 6: Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; 7: That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Every sinner that God regenerates, comes into the world loving the world and hating God like every other sinner. God alone makes the difference.

Ephesians 2: 2: Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: 3: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath even as others. 4: But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5: Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

Look again at 1 John 2, the Holy Spirit declares that the reason we love not the world is by God the Father putting his love in us—*“If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him” (1 Jn 2:15)*. That means if we love not the world, the love of the Father is in us. When we are born of God, we are given a new spirit *“the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us” (Rom 5:5)*. And it is in this new spirit the Spirit of God teaches us the truth.

1 Corinthians 2:12: Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

As the good news is preached, the Lord Jesus our Prophet gives us the word of God—the incorruptible seed—making us be born again. By the new birth, he separates us out from the world by the truth of the gospel. And our great Intercessor continually prays for us so that our faith fails not.

John 17: 9: I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine...14: I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 15: I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. 16: They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 17: Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

Christ is, himself, the Truth by whom we are sanctified. He kept himself separated from this world, that he might lay down his life and make us holy and righteous so that he is the Truth we preach. He is the Truth who made his people holy and righteous and by whom we are born of God and his righteousness and holiness is applied to us.

John 17: 19: And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. [this includes you and I who believe] 20: Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; (Joh 17:14-16)

So we cannot boast. The new birth is of God alone, by the Spirit of God, by the word of God, by Christ who is our Prophet, who himself is the Truth.

THE VICTORY

The victory is our faith through which we trust Christ to save us—**1 John 5: 4...and this is the victory that overcometh [nike] the world, even our faith. 5: Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?**

The victory is not faith in our faith. When I was in college, my friends' mother told me, "I told my son, I don't care what you believe just as long as you believe something because faith is the victory." Faith is not our savior. Faith in a stump will not save.

As soon as John spoke of our faith, he spoke of the object of our faith. Christ is our Savior. He alone saves his people—"*Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?*" What does it mean to believe that Jesus is the Son of God? It is to believe the record that God has given concerning his Son.

1 John 5: 11: And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.
12: He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

When you believe Jesus is the Son of God then you believe God's word that God's salvation is the Lord Jesus. We believe salvation is only in the Lord Jesus. God's sovereign electing grace is in Christ—amongst this sea of fallen humanity there are some that God chose in Christ before the world was made. The righteousness of God is in Christ—though we were enemies in our minds, the Son of God came and took flesh and represented his people as our Head and by his obedience we are made the righteousness of God in him—Christ gives us the victory by his righteousness because he has overcome the world and his people in him—he said, "*These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world*" (Jn 16: 33). The Spirit of God bears witness that salvation is in Christ alone—who of God is made unto us Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption so that we glory in him alone! (1 Cor 1: 30). Faith is the victory because God-given faith trusts Christ who gives us the victory through his blood and righteousness accomplished on the cross!

1 Corinthians 15:57: But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Galatians 6:14: But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.

Oh, sinner, believe on Christ now! May the Holy Spirit give you faith to believe on Christ now and you shall overcome the world! How I pray that God might plant that incorruptible seed in your heart this hour and give you spiritual life to believe on Christ, that you might overcome this world!

THE PROMISE OF GOD

God has made precious promises to them that overcome the world through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Concerning:

- *Eternal life*—Revelation 2: 7: He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God. (Re 2:7)
- *No condemnation*—Revelation 2: 11: He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death. (Re 2:11)
- *Christ himself and his name*—Revelation 2: 17: He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth *it*. (Re 2:17)
- *Power with Christ to judge the world*—Revelation 2: 26: And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: 27: And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father. 28: And I will give him the morning star [Christ]. (Re 2:26)
- *Christ will be our Righteousness and our Advocate in the day of judgment*—Revelation 3:5 He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.
- *Christ makes us His church and city*—Revelation 3:12 Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.
- *Glory with Christ*—Revelation 3:21: To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.
- *Eternal inheritance, joint-heirs with Christ as sons of God*—Revelations 21:7 He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

Brethren, guard your hearts! Do not let this world be a rival to Christ and his gospel because “*the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God*” (Ja 4:4).

Romans 12: 1: I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service. 2: And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

We are only pilgrims passing through this bad neighborhood on our way to a glorious end! As the apostle Paul said, “*Our conversation [citizenship] is in heaven; from when also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.*” (Co. 3: 20-21)

Amen!