

So That You May Know

An Expository Study of the Epistle of **1 John 5:1-5**

Chapter 25- Overcoming the World

224 Overcoming the World- Part 8

WAOY Tuesday 07/29/08

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We're continuing our verse by verse "journey" through the Epistle of **1 John**, and today we're going to continue to look at what John meant when he said "Whoever is born of God overcomes the world". So let's read **1John 5:1- 5** again together:

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

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.

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?

Now over the last several broadcasts- we have been looking closely at just what John meant in verse 4, when he said:

For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world — our faith.

Beloved, we must understand very clearly that overcoming the world cannot ever be done unless and until we stop loving the world. Loving something will absolutely prevent you from overcoming it because why would you even try to overcome something that you love? And so in order for anyone to do what John says here in verse 4- and overcome the world- we must guard our hearts to make sure that we do not love the world.

And I would say that what you believe will help you or hurt you in this endeavor because what we believe determines how we live. You see, dear friends- it is probably the dumbest thing in the world to say that it doesn't matter what you believe. What you believe is absolutely critical to how you live your life. I hear very naïve statements all the time like "*Doctrine doesn't matter- all that matters is that we love Jesus*" or "*We need to stop being divided over Doctrine and get on with Kingdom matters.*"

And I want to respond to those statements because I hear them all the time. First of all- we must understand that every human on earth already *has* a belief system. Everyone already agrees with some things and disagrees with other things. Now it is true that some people are very passionate about what they believe while others are very nonchalant about what they believe- but whether passionate or not- everybody already believes things. And what you believe is your doctrine.

The word, "doctrine" means "teaching" and so what we are taught or what we teach about God or Jesus or Salvation or anything else is your doctrine. So it isn't like *some* people have a doctrine and others don't- no, *everybody* on earth already has a doctrine. Everybody already has a theology in place in their minds and hearts.

The problem is that some or most of what we believe does not come from Scripture. We believe and therefore we teach things all the time that come from our own human logic or our own personal experiences or what Momma taught us or things that we picked up during our lifetime or what some preacher told us in Church that may or may not be what God has revealed in Scripture.

And so the result is that much of what we believe is inconsistent and is contradictory with the Body of Revelation contained in the 66 Books of the Bible. And there is only one way that will allow us to confront those inconsistencies and those contradictions that we all have and that one single way is to go through the Bible in a deep, serious, line upon line; precept upon precept; verse by verse method and take the Words of Scripture all the way back to their Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic roots and put the Words of Scripture in their proper context and ask and answer three very important questions:

1. What did God the Holy Spirit actually say in that verse?

2. What did God the Holy Spirit mean by what He said?
3. How can I apply that Divine Truth to my life in the 21st Century

And as you do this- your false or man- made doctrine and your inconsistent beliefs and your contradictory theology will become very apparent to you and you will be able to see just where you are off base and at odds with Scripture and then you can then pray and repent and correct the problem. No other method will give you the ability to do this, dear friends.

And that is why I am going through **1John** like this. By slowing down and by realizing that the goal of Bible Study is not to get finished but it is to learn and to confront our own sins and to confront our own man-made beliefs and our own inconsistent doctrines so that we can come into alignment with the God Who wrote the Bible.

For example- we have been studying **1John** on the radio together now for over 15 months and we are in Chapter 5. It took me almost ten years to go through **Romans** in my Church. I am currently preaching through **Luke** on Sunday mornings and I've been in Luke now for over eight years.

Now I don't want to give you the impression that this is an endurance contest to see how long we can take to go through the Bible- not at all. But to not put a priority on going through the Bible *expositionally*- that is line upon line and precept upon precept- you will never see where you are off base and therefore your beliefs and your doctrine will continue to be inconsistent and contradictory to what the Bible actually says.

And there is no better example of this than this very issue that John is bringing up here about overcoming the world. Because of an incredible lack of Sound Biblical teaching- this issue of overcoming the world has morphed over the years to be everything and anything other than what John was actually talking about.

Jesus said that *loving* Him was the same thing as *obeying* Him and that we cannot separate obedience *to* Jesus with love *for* Jesus. So it is *impossible* for anyone to leave off Doctrine and just love Jesus and here's why. Which Jesus are you going to love? You see, dear friends, over the last 2,000 years the world has developed several Jesus'.

For example- there is the "Mormon and the Gnostic Jesus"- who is an exalted man who attained His high status through secret and hidden

information. Then there is the “Jehovah’s Witness Jesus”- Who was Michael the arch angel in the Old Testament but is certainly not Deity. There is the “Muslim Jesus”- who is a very wonderful prophet and teacher and who was virgin born and who ascended into Heaven- but who was not Divine and who did not pay for our sins and who cannot purchase Salvation for anyone.

There is the modern “hippie Jesus”- who was a counter culture rebel who protested against the established system and went about spreading love and harmony to all mankind by bringing forth social justice. And then there is the “bubble gum pop psychology Jesus”- who exists for no other reason than to make people happy with themselves through miracles of good health; lots of money and children with straight teeth.

And then there is the “Jesus Who is revealed in Scripture”- Who was 100% God and 100% Man in the same Body at the same time without conflict or contradiction and Who went about preaching Good News of salvation from the bad News of God’s just wrath against all sin and who demanded that sinners repent and who demanded that people drop everything they are doing and follow Him; the Jesus Who demanded absolute loyalty and obedience and Who said that every other religion on earth was false and every other religious leader on earth was a liar and that He alone was the exclusive way to Heaven- angering and insulting just about every single person on this planet.

So we really won’t know which Jesus to love unless we know what the Scriptures reveal about Jesus will we? And we won’t be able to obey Jesus to prove our love for Him unless we know and understand and correctly interpret what Jesus taught- will we? And knowing those things is what is called, “Doctrine”. And that is why we need to know the Bible.

And precisely how do we go about doing “Kingdome Business” unless we understand Who God is and what Salvation is all about and how all this works out? Now some people teach that everybody already understands these things and so we don’t need to waste time studying the Bible about something so elementary as Salvation. Is that so?

Well if that is true and everybody already understands about Salvation then why are so many people out there working so hard trying to earn it? I mean, if what the Bible teaches about Salvation is so easily understood by everyone- why do so many people honestly believe that unless they go to Mass or unless they keep Communion or

unless they get baptized or unless they speak in tongues they can't be saved?

Why do so many people reject the concept that they need to be born again? If everybody understands Salvation why is there such controversy about whether Salvation is eternal or can be lost? Why do people believe in Purgatory if they understand what the Bible teaches about Salvation? And I could go on and on.

No, the truth is that after 2,000 years- the average person who sits on the average pew in the average Church today is more confused about the Bible now than people were when the Church first started- and that is a shame. Fewer people today know what they believe or why they believe it than at any time since the Upper Room. People understand basic concepts like Grace and Justification and damnation and Holiness less today with all our technology and all our tools and all our books and all our Churches and all our Christian Book stores and all our Christian radio and television- fewer people today understand what Grace is and what Grace does and how Grace works than they did when the average person was illiterate.

And this confusion and this controversy and this glaring lack of solid Biblical knowledge is not a mystical thing that has suddenly appeared out of nowhere- but is the logical result of people making the conscious decision many years ago that entertainment in the Church is better than edification and that Bible Study is not important anymore and that they are too busy to learn Divine Truth anyway and that Doctrine is no longer needed and that Theology is dry and dusty and boring and that all we really need is love.

The result is that God's people are less prepared for life now than they have ever been; marriages in the Church among believers are falling apart; rampant and blatant sin is not only tolerated but actually praised; there is little fear of God among those who sit on the pews; and ancient heresies that the Church confronted and systematically took apart hundreds of years ago are making a huge comeback and are being taught from our pulpits under the banner of being "new and improved; and a "great move of God's Spirit" and a "fresh revelation".

The love of this world is typified by attention to "self" which is entirely incompatible to loving God. Listen to what the world preaches: Self-help; selfish-ness; self-esteem; self-actualization; and self-fulfillment. Do you not hear in every word, Self, self, self? And the

pagan world has *always* been about the lifting up of Man to the exclusion of God because the lost world has always been and will always be at odds with God in their idolatry.

But sadly, this has become true in the Church as much of our preaching and teaching and many of the messages of our songs are for one end: the betterment of ourselves.

But this trend is counterproductive to all that we say that we believe - because the Love of the Father is all about the *abandonment* of “self” to the exaltation of Jesus Christ and doing all to the glory of God alone.

How can we ever think that we are being consistent with Scripture when we fill our minds and hearts with teachings that promote “self” and then say that we are following the Christ of Gethsemane- Who laid down everything- including his Own Will- yea, including His Own Life so that God’s Will could be done?

Brothers and sisters, we must understand that a “world lover” is, by definition an idolater; a spiritual adulterer; and is by definition *incapable* of loving and serving and following Jesus Christ.

So to read the Bible as Truth- we must come to the conclusion that love for the world- in the sense that John says it here- and for God at the same time is inconsistent- and is therefore **impossible!** So I ask you in fear and trembling- *“Do you love the world?”*

Well, I have to stop right here, but please join me on the next broadcast as we continue our journey through the Epistle of **1John**. May God help us all.

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.