

# So That You May Know

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

### Chapter 25- Overcoming the World

#### 225 Overcoming the World- Part 9

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WAOY Wednesday 07/30/08

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.**

And we have been going over just how important this issue is and just how we are to do this. And we have seen that we will never in a million years overcome something that we love and conversely, we will never love something that we are supposed to overcome. So John tells us that as believers we are to guard ourselves to make sure that we do not love that which is passing away- the lusts of the flesh; the lust of the eyes and the pride of life because all who love these things; all who

have affection toward these things; all who follow after these things do not have the Love of the Father in them.

So this makes what we believe and what we are reading and what we are listening to and what is feeding us and who we are following to be of the upmost importance because if we are reading a book for example that promotes the concept that material gain is godliness or if we are following a teacher who says that wealth is a sign of God's favor or if we ascribe to a belief that teaches that material possessions are a mark of spiritual development then we will be feeding on something that contradicts what John says here and we will be in fact loving the world and the result is that the Love of the Father is not in us and we will not be an overcomer.

How can we ever possibly 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?*"

Which love is the most basic in your life: The love of the world or the Love of the Father? Which love is the most fundamentally basic- not in what we have in Church on Sunday- but which love is the most basic in the way in which we live our daily lives: the love of world or the Love of the Father?

Some say that they can have both. Some say that that they can have all the benefits of the unregenerate world- and all that it has to offer *and* that they can also- at the same time- have the Love of the Father in their hearts.

Christians friends, let me say to those of you who think this way- you are self-deceived. Make no mistake about it- Christ will *force* every soul on earth to choose with whom to lay our affections- the world or the Father.

Billy Sunday, the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Evangelist, once said,

You might as well talk about a ‘heavenly devil’ as talk about a ‘worldly Christian.’”

And as the Psalmist said in **Psalms 97:10a**

**Hate evil, you who love the Lord...**

And God has clearly said in Scripture over and over that love for this present evil world is evil. Now the good news in all of this is that if you are a Christian, then you truly *do* love God- and Praise God for that! Have you considered what it means in your life that you have come to know the one true living God?; that you have come to know His forgiveness for all your sins; that you have come to experience something of the Father’s Love for you?

Then I encourage you to drink in what is being offered in a Church that is actually following after Jesus. Everything that is done in a Church that is following Jesus is specifically designed so that the Love of the Father will increase in your life while at the same time the love of the world will decrease. Get involved in one or more of the many Bible Studies that they offer; Go and pray with them as they gather to seek God’s Face; Engage yourself in their Bible Reading Plan; go out during the week and sow the seeds of the Gospel into the hearts of others; help them reach out to the local High Schools and Jails and Nursing Homes; go with them to the Hospitals and pray for the sick; help them grow in Grace and to learn how to hate sin and to love the Father and to not love this world.

Now as you read this passage, please do not make the mistake of thinking that John is calling us all to be monks in a monastery- he is not. The “world” that we are not to love here is the *system* of those creatures- men and demons- who oppose God- it is *not* the material Creation itself. *That* world- the world that God made- is very good. But to love the *other* world- the world system that opposes God- that teaches things contrary to Scripture brings us into submission to the lusts of that world which always leads us into sin.

Paul tells us in **1Corinthians** that we are to *use* the world- just don’t be *captured* by it. And if we do that, then we can learn the secret of true contentment that Paul said that he had in every situation.

Jesus prayed in **John 17** that although we are *in* the world that we would not be taken captive *by* it- that we are not to be in bondage to it. That as Christians, we are *not* to be known for our selfishness; nor our own self-fulfillment; nor for our indifference; but by active use of this world- for God's glory **alone**.

My dear friends, we are to love God first and foremost and to reflect that Love in our daily lives; in what we agree to do; in what we shun; in what we applaud; what we support; what we reject; in how we speak; how we conduct our finances; how we raise our children; and in all the areas of life.

Even in our covenanting to disciplining ourselves in matters of unrepentant sin- whether that unrepentant sin is the worldliness of non- attendance; or of the worldliness of lying; or of the worldliness of adultery or the worldliness of greed or pride or arrogance or self-sufficiency because all of these wicked sins are the direct result of us loving this present evil world rather than loving God.

So let us all resign ourselves to this fact: Love for; ultimate regard for God will not co-exist with love for the world that is opposed to Him.

And so, we can see that in order to overcome the world- we have to realize that not all love comes from God. We must know that there are some "loves" in this life which come from the very world itself and which are in hostile opposition to God.

But if love for the world doesn't come from God- then where does this love come from? Our fleshly cravings; the carnal desires that fill our eyes to covet; and the desire to brag about what we possess- all of these things are of the world that oppose and which fight against God- and the Bible says that *none* of these things are of the Father. And you would think that since this is true that the Church which is supposed to be the guardian of all that is pure and holy would be teaching the people of God to abandon false and wicked teachings that promote the very lusts that God said were evil instead of promoting them.

But inexplicably, in direct violation of this verse- we live in a time when instead of covetousness being called the wicked sin that it is- it is actually being *promoted* by many famous ministries as being spiritual; as being desired; as being *of* the Father and something that we as Christian should aspire to. I recently saw where a worldwide ministry has begun a series of televised interviews with Donald Trump- because

according to the woman who leads this ministry- Donald Trump- the sinfully bombastic and adulterous Donald Trump- is now being held up as the example that we Christians are to follow because he is wealthy. How could we get so of base?

We must remember, beloved, that Scripture is crystal clear about this. And no matter how we might dress it up to make it look good- no matter how many ministries embrace it- no matter how many teachers may promote it- God said that covetousness and love for money in any shape or form- is sin. And if we are to ever how to overcome this world- this is a must. We must know that money is a tool that can be very useful and productive but if we stray over into loving it and coveting it- we are not blessed but we have in fact descended into idolatry.

And I know that people always say that they can handle it and that even though almost every waking moment is spent on pursuing money and an ever increasing amount of our prayers are spent asking for more money- that somehow we all are immune from being deceived and tricked and captured by this subtle and deadly love of money. But the truth is that we are not immune at all and this is a real serious issue dear friends and we need to honestly look at this and we need to honestly look at what really pleases us and what really brings us joy and what really brings us contentment and what really offers us security and what really motivates us to see if we have not already been overtaken by the world.

The Christians of the first century faced many of the same temptations that we do in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Their society was not impoverished. Rome was flush with prosperity- more so than any other empire on earth at that time. And like today- many of that day thought that because they were Christians- that gave them the liberty to live any way that they wanted to. But that wasn't true then and it is not true today. We were not purchased with the horrendous murder of Jesus Christ so that we could then be free to them selfishly pursue our own dreams and ambitions , dear friends. But we were bought with a price so that paid for bond slaves we could serve God with every fiber of our beings so that God can fulfill His Dreams.

Now when you honestly ponder your loves- you may notice that love is never neutral. Even the most harmless petty love- if left unhindered and supreme and un- submitted to God will ruin you. So be

careful. Exercise your Christian liberty- Yes! But be aware that not all love comes from God.

Leo Tolstoy wrote about this very issue when he wrote in his timeless novel, *War and Peace* about a peasant in Russia named, Boheem, who was asked, “*How much land does a man really need?*”

So in Tolstoy’s novel, this peasant buys more and more land until he became a great land barren that earned the fear and respect of all those around him and right at the apex of all his great accomplishments Boheem suddenly died and was buried in a plot of ground that was three foot wide by six foot long by six foot deep, and Tolstoy said,

“that was all the land that he really needed”.

Beloved, we must know that it is a *false* religion that idolizes the world and the things that are in the world- and not Biblical Christianity. And we must also know that this false religion is in direct competition with God for your love and your affections and your devotion and your service. So guard your hearts, dear friends and do not love the world but rather overcome the world through the faith of Jesus Christ.

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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