

August 22, 2021 – Study Guide 12

## A CONQUERING FAITH

Bible Background – 1 JOHN 4-5

Printed Text – 1 JOHN 4:2-3,13-17; 5:4-5

<sup>2</sup>This is how we know if they have the Spirit of God: If a person claiming to be a prophet acknowledges that Jesus Christ came in a real body, that person has the Spirit of God.

<sup>3</sup>But if someone claims to be a prophet and does not acknowledge the truth about Jesus, that person is not from God. Such a person has the spirit of the Antichrist, which you heard is coming into the world and indeed is already here.

<sup>13</sup>And God has given us his Spirit as proof that we live in him and he in us.

<sup>14</sup>Furthermore, we have seen with our own eyes and now testify that the Father sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.

<sup>15</sup>All who declare that Jesus is the Son of God have God living in them, and they live in God.

### Lesson Introduction

God is love. Therefore, as believers, those who exist in His love are called to respond to others with Christ-like love. The writer of 1 John describes the love of God and challenges all Christians to exhibit that same selfless love to those we encounter. In this lesson we will examine the expressions of God's love in our lives and reflect that love in our relationship with others. We will see how our "love-walk" is evident of our relationship with God and the assurance of victory over the evils of this world's systems.

**Background:** The letters of John are three brief epistles. This does not mean our study of them should be brief, though, for they deal with insightful and significant questions about the fundamental nature of Christian spiritual experience. The Johannine letters also provide fascinating insight into the condition of the church at the end of the first century. Heresy played a critical and deceptive role in the church. The genuine nature of a committed and obedient relationship to God through Christ is strongly and affectionately depicted and commanded. Throughout his Gospel and epistles, John uses very simple language to relate complex theological ideas. The unity of the Trinity, the

<sup>16</sup>We know how much God loves us, and we have put our trust in his love. God is love, and all who live in love live in God, and God lives in them.

<sup>17</sup>And as we live in God, our love grows more perfect. So, we will not be afraid on the day of judgment, but we can face him with confidence because we live like Jesus here in this world.

<sup>5:4</sup>For every child of God defeats this evil world, and we achieve this victory through our faith.

<sup>5</sup>And who can win this battle against the world? Only those who believe that Jesus is the Son of God.

-----New Living Translation

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inward and outward lives of the Christian, the presence of the Antichrist and the coming of the end times are all couched in simple, repeated terms: love, light, truth, liar. In this week's passage, John describes how love is evidence of our relationship to God (I John 4:14-21). The present assurance is so obvious that even the fear of Judgment Day is eliminated (vv. 17-18), knowing that we have already overcome the world (5:4).

-----*Precepts for Living*, the UMI Annual Commentary 2020-2021, p. 595

### Confident Confessions

**1 John 4:2-3, 13-14:** It is most important that believers make sure to be knowledgeable of God's Word in order to recognize false teaching and doctrines. The Apostle John provides a straight forward statement as an indicator. Those who have the Spirit of God will confess that Jesus came in the flesh. This statement addresses a particular heresy, during that time, that denied that Jesus came in a physical, earthly body. This human philosophy contradicts eye witness accounts and the very mechanism of salvation. John likened the teaching of these false doctrines to the spirit of antichrist. Here, the word "antichrist" (Gk. *antichristos*) is best translated as "against Christ" and not to be confused with the Beast of John's apocalyptic vision recorded in the book of Revelations. However, the writer makes it clear that the spirit of opposition to Christ and true scriptural doctrine is in the world even now. But the Spirit of God gives the believer the power to be victorious over the deceptions of false teachers. How can we be assured of the presence of God in the life of a believer? The Holy Spirit is proof of God's presence in our lives and gives power to love and to confess Jesus Christ as Lord.

◆*Describe a time you heard of someone being misled by a false teacher. How did the experience impact those the teacher misled?*

### Confident Judgment and Victory

**1 John 15-17; 5:4-5:** The proof that God dwells within us and that we are in Him, centers around two overarching themes—faith and love. First, there must be confession of faith that Jesus is indeed the Son of God. This involves the acknowledgement of the human-divine nature of Christ and personal acceptance of Him. This profession of faith proves that God remains and lives in us and we in Him. That intimate relationship with Christ empowers us with life-giving power to produce much fruit (John 15:5). For as we continue to meditate on God's Word, our prayer life will line up with the will of God resulting in more effective prayer, giving us boldness and privilege to ask the Father anything (John 15:7).

This intimate relationship with God allows Him to perfect us and to make us more like Him. God is love and He completes and matures us so that we can love others as He loves. Jesus loves flawlessly. We are not yet there, but that type of perfect, unconditional love is our goal. As long as we keep Jesus before us and allow Holy Spirit to guide us, we are continually moving toward the goal. Knowing that God indwells us and that He loves us so much, gives us confidence and diminishes our apprehension of Judgment Day. This confidence allows us to see the needs of others to be saved and gives us the freedom to do the work God has called us to do.

The Christian life is one of victory from start to finish, not of defeat or discouragement. The Christian walk is not easy, but as Jesus overcame the world so do we overcome through faith in Him. Jesus' victory becomes the believer's victory through our belief in the person and work of Christ, acceptance of Christ as Lord and Savior by faith. Born again believers live confidently by faith, having complete trust in God from victory to victory.

◆ *How do we ensure our confidence does not become arrogance that turns away rather than attracts others to Christ? How do we “battle against” and “overcome” the world while showing the love of God?*

### **Conclusion**

The lessons from society lead us to think that conditional love keeps us safe and healthy, protecting us from rejection and hurtful consequences. That is NOT real love. God loves unconditionally and completely to the reality of death on the cross for those who despised Him. God's love is everlasting, and nothing can separate us from His love. He has promised to love us, and He has promised eternal life to those who trust and believe Him. This assurance should lead us to the confidence that causes us to love others in the same unconditional way.

### **Source:**

Banks, M. (Ed.). (2020). Love For One Another. *Precepts for Living*, 23(Summer Quarter), 591-600. The Urban Ministries, Inc. Annual Commentary 2020-2021.

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**Lesson for Next Week – August 29, 2021 – Study Guide 13**

## **HOPE ETERNAL**

Bible Background ♦ 2 CORINTHIANS 4:16-5:10

Printed Text ♦ 2 CORINTHIANS 4:16-5:10

Devotional Reading ♦ ROMANS 7:14-26

### **Daily Bible Readings**

#### **MONDAY**

From Death to Life in Christ

(1 Corinthians 15:16-23)

#### **TUESDAY**

Strengthening the Inner Being

(Ephesians 3:14-21)

#### **WEDNESDAY**

Every Deed, Good or Evil, Judges

(Ecclesiastes 12:9-14)

#### **THURSDAY**

God's Judgment of Human Behavior Impartial

(Romans 2:4-11)

#### **FRIDAY**

Paul, Confident in the Ministry

(2 Corinthians 4:1-6)

#### **SATURDAY**

Entering the Presence of Jesus

(2 Corinthians 4:7-15)

#### **SUNDAY**

Live the Faith with Confidence

(2 Corinthians 4:16-5:10)