

1st John Lesson 15 – Overcoming The World

1Jn 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.

In America Christians use the phrase Jesus Christ so much we almost come to the point of thinking Christ is Jesus' last name. No ... Jesus is the Christ ... which is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew word for ... Messiah ... which means ... The Anointed One. **Jesus is the Messiah, the Christ, the Savior of the world.** The religious leaders of the day did not believe that Jesus was the Messiah and He warned them if they continued in that state of unbelief they would "die in their sins."

Joh 8:19 Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, **Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also.**

[Remember: Jesus said in Mat 7:23 ... I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.]

Joh 8: 20-24 These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as he taught in the temple: and no man laid hands on him; for his hour was not yet come. (21) Then said Jesus again unto them, **I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come.**

[Remember: Jesus said to His disciples in John 14:6, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. If the religious leaders continue in their refusal to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, they will die in their sins ... they will never come to the Father ... because Jesus is the only way out of the species of Adam and into the species of the children of God.]

Back to the account in John chapter 8:

Joh 8:19-24 Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, **Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also.** (22) Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come. (23) And he said unto them, **Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world.** (24) **I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.**

Jesus is saying, *"We are of two different species. You are from beneath. I am from above. You are of this world. I am not of this world."* From previous lessons in 1st John we know that he has already taught, Jesus is the door by which you die to the species of Adam and get reborn through the last Adam, Jesus Christ, into the species of God ... you literally are born again as a child of God. Now you can say like Jesus, **"I am from above. I am not of this world. I am a child of God through faith in Jesus Christ."**

Part of the problem that is happening in the modern day church is the word **"believe"** in the English language today. We equate the word "believe" with simply "having knowledge of." For example, many ancient (and some modern) cultures believe there are many gods. You can pat yourself on the back and say, *"I believe there is only one God."* Well aren't you something? You have risen to the "believing" level of demons. What?

Jas 2:19 Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

The point the apostle James is making is the same one John keeps making in his epistle. To scripturally believe in God implies much more than simply having some knowledge about God. Demons have some knowledge of God. The demons had more knowledge than the Pharisees because they knew who Jesus was even before He was glorified,

Mar 1:23-25 And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, (24) Saying, Let *us* alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God. (25) And Jesus rebuked him, saying, **Hold thy peace, and come out of him.**

Demons believe ... 1) There is one God. 2) Jesus is the Messiah, the Holy One of God. John said ... **Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.** The demons "believe" that Jesus is the Christ, the Holy One of God. Does that make the demons born of God? Of course not. What is going on here? The problem is how our understanding of the word "believe" has diminished over time. Again, we equate "believe" with "to have knowledge of." But demons have some knowledge of God. Let us put the verse back in the context of what James was teaching in order to understand the scriptural definition of what it means to "believe."

Jas 2:14-26 What *doth it* profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? (15) If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, (16) And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what *doth it* profit? (17) Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead,

being alone. (18) Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. (19) Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. (20) But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? (21) Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? (22) Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? (23) And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. (24) Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. (25) Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent *them* out another way? (26) For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

The demons believe (have knowledge of) there is only one God. The demons believe (have knowledge of) that Jesus is the Messiah, the Holy One of God. But the demons do not DO the sayings of Jesus. The demons do not DO the commandments of God. They have faith without works. They have knowledge, but they do not believe like Abraham believed. When God spoke to Abraham, he always **acted on what God said**. Abraham was not a hearer only.

ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD! HOW DID HE BELIEVE? BY OBEYING THE COMMANDMENT OF GOD! GOD CALLS ABRAHAM HIS FRIEND BECAUSE ABRAHAM OBEYED THE COMMANDMENT. JESUS CALLS US HIS FRIENDS IF WE OBEY HIS COMMANDMENTS.

Joh 15:14 *Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.*

The Greek word translated believe is much different than our modern view of just "having knowledge." The Amplified does a better job of bringing out the original meaning that the people heard and understood in that day. Let us look at one of the most fundamental verse of Christianity concerning salvation from the AMPLIFIED BIBLE:

John 3:16 For God so greatly loved and dearly prized the world that He [even] gave up His only begotten (unique) Son, so that whoever believes in (trusts in, clings to, relies on) Him shall not perish (come to destruction, be lost) but have eternal (everlasting) life. AMPLIFIED BIBLE

Here is the difference between "demon believing" and "salvation believing." Demons believe that there is only one God and that Jesus is the Messiah. But they do not;

- 1) trust in
- 2) cling to
- 3) rely upon Jesus as the Messiah.

James is stating the obvious about what it means to believe. **If what you "believe" does not change your "action" ... it is not saving faith ... it is just knowledge. Faith without works is dead. Faith without works is just knowledge.** If you truly believe that Jesus is the Messiah, your personal Lord and Savior, you will:

1. Trust in Him and His words more than you trust your own eyes, your ears, your emotions, your reasonings.
2. You will cling to Him no matter the seductions sent your way by the world.
3. You will rely upon Him and His words more than you trust anything else, even your sense knowledge in the world.

You cannot truly believe (scripturally believe) that Jesus is the Messiah **unless you keep His commandments.** Keep everything in the context of John's entire epistle. Remember the earlier lessons in this series.

- 1. If you do not keep His commandments, you do not know Him.**
 - a. You can have "knowledge" of Him like the demons do.
 - b. But you cannot "know" Him as being in the same family unless you keep His commandments.
- 2. If you do not keep His commandments, you do not love Him.**
 - a. You can "say" you love Him, but John says if you "say" you love Him but do not keep His commandments, you are a liar (like the demons) and the truth is not in you.

With all of that in mind, now let us look again at,

1Jn 5:1 Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.

Whosoever believes in, trusts in, clings to, relies upon Jesus is the Christ by keeping His commandments ... that is the person who is born of God. In the context of the letter, that is what John is saying. Here is what it truly means to "believe that Jesus is the Christ",

1. To believe that Jesus is the Son of God, the Christ, the Savior of the world.
2. To believe that Jesus died to save you from sin.
3. To believe that He has given you the "light of life" to empower you to walk above darkness the same way He did.
4. To believe it by walking in the light of life by denying ungodliness and worldly lusts. [Titus 2:11-12]

Anything less than that is just mental knowledge, not saving faith. If you believe Jesus is your Savior, you will trust Him, cling to Him, and rely upon Him **by doing what He says to do.** Jesus said this was the only path of safety. [Luke 6:46-49] If you want Him to "know you" on that day as being one of His brethren, you must now walk as one of His brethren by "hearing and doing" the Word of God. [**Remember: As He is, so are you in this world.**]

Luk 8:21 And he answered and said unto them, My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God, and do it.

1Jn 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.

Simple: We are all family now. I say again, I love my blood relatives, but in truth ... you are more my family than they are. I cannot possibly love our Father without loving you. That does not mean everything will always be honey smooth between us. We are all being pruned, having dead branches removed, having fruit bearing branches pruned to bear more fruit, maturing and growing up into Christ. There will be misunderstandings along the way. Let's call them "family squabbles" but ... we are still family and it is my honor to co-labor with you as we all serve the same Lord for our Father's will to be done on this earth. John is still teaching what he heard Jesus say more than fifty years earlier.

Joh 15:12 This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

1Jn 5:2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments.

Joh 15:9-14 As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. (10) If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. (11) These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and *that* your joy might be full. (12) This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. (13) Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. (14) Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

JESUS IS SAYING, "I HAVE BEEN THE EXAMPLE FOR YOU. I HAVE KEPT MY FATHER'S COMMANDMENTS SO YOU CAN SEE WHAT LOVE TOWARD THE FATHER LOOKS LIKE. IF YOU LOVE ME, KEEP MY COMMANDMENTS SO THE WORLD CAN CONTINUE TO SEE WHAT LOVE TOWARD GOD LOOKS LIKE. LOVE THE WORLD THE SAME WAY I HAVE LOVED YOU. I HAVE

LOVED YOU BY KEEPING MY FATHER'S COMMANDMENTS. LOVE EACH OTHER BY KEEPING MY COMMANDMENTS. I HAVE LAID DOWN MY LIFE FOR YOU, MY FRIENDS. YOU ARE MY FRIENDS IF YOU DO WHATSOEVER I COMMAND YOU.

It might help to see the opposite of love for the brethren. Do you remember the man who had his father's wife?

1Co 5:1 It is reported commonly *that there is* fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife.

This sin was so wicked that the apostle Paul says even the heathen would not allow it. Yet this man claimed to be a Christian and kept attending the church services as though he was in good standing with God. By his actions he was loudly proclaiming that God's grace covers fornication ... even to the depths of that most heinous level of fornication. This was first century radical grace already infiltrating the church.

First off, is this man keeping the commandments of Jesus? No. From John's epistle, what does that tell us? **He does not know Jesus and he does not love Jesus.** But it also tells us something else ... **he does not love the brethren.** He does not love the children of God. Paul, on the other hand, was not only concerned for the man's salvation, but Paul was also concerned about the brethren being influenced by the man's open rebellion:

1Co 5:6 Your glorying *is* not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?

Paul is saying, if you allow this false doctrine of lascivious grace to remain unchecked, it will begin to spread through the church like a cancer. **Paul loves God and he loves those begotten of God.** He loves the sheep and He will not allow this wolf to come in and carry off any of the sheep into sin and eventually to hell itself.

Jesus said he showed us the love of God by keeping His Father's commandments. Why? So we, as children of God, would have His example to safely follow. This man in Corinth is showing us the opposite of loving God and God's children. How? By breaking the commandments and by saying ... God's grace covers it. **This man does not love God and he does not love the children of God. He does not care about obeying Christ at all, and he doesn't care how many of the sheep he infects with his false doctrine. He doesn't love God and he doesn't love the children of God.**

The apostle John has said plainly in his epistle that those who live in habitual sin, a lifestyle of sin, are not the children of God.

[If you are a preacher who teaches this man who had his father's wife was a child of God just having trouble with his flesh, with love and meekness, I am asking you to please study it again because eternal souls are at stake. Please study lesson 9 in this series – The Children of God & The Children of The Devil.]

Paul concludes his discourse about the man who had his father's wife with this statement:

1Co 5:13 But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.

[wicked - Greek 4190 – poneros – bad, evil, grievous, harm, lewd, malicious, wicked, wickedness.] **You will never find in scripture that word [poneros] used in connection with a born again person.**

Back to 1st John:

1Jn 5:3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.

The apostle John keeps stating this same truth again and again in his epistle. When he writes "For this IS ..." he is actually giving the very definition of what loving God is. **For this IS the love of God ... that we keep His commandments. Nothing else is the love of God.** Again and again, He that "says" he knows God and "says" he loves God but does not "keep" His commandments is a liar. He may be a deceived liar, but he is a liar just the same.

... and his commandments are not grievous. Grievous G926 barus – weighty, burdensome, grave, grievous.

Of course, the first words of Jesus that floated up from my spirit to my mind were:

Mat 11:28-30 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. (29) Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. (30) For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light.

A person with a legalistic mindset will hear these lessons and think, "Easy? Light? Learning all of those commandments and obeying all those commandments? How can

you say that is easy and light?"

But pastor Dave always says, "*It is not hard to love when that is who you are.*" That is the message of 1st John. It is not a matter of legalism and learning rules and "touch this" but "don't touch that," feast days, new moons and ... all of that Old Covenant stuff. **The message of Christ, and the message of 1st John is ... Walk as the child of God that you truly are. Repent and believe the gospel. Know and believe the love the Father has shown you by making you His child, by giving you the standing of sonship, by placing in you the same life that is in Christ, and Who also gave you His Holy Spirit to guide you into all truth. Stop trying to be religious and just be the son of God He has already made you to be! Relax. Take a deep breath. You've got this. You are a child of God. You are a child of light. Walk as a child of light.**

Notice how the phrase "**born of God**" connects to the next verse:

1Jn 5:4-5 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?

John is an excellent teacher. Every truth is built on truth He previously laid down earlier in the letter. [**Remember lesson 4 – Love Not the World.**]

Jesus said,

Joh 15:18-19 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*.

Remember from earlier lessons in John's epistle: The whole world lies in the power of the wicked one. The world hates you the same way Cain hated Abel. You are light exposing the darkness. Men love darkness and hate the light, because their deeds are evil.

Joh 9:5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

Jesus was the "only" light of the world while He abode here as a man.

Joh 16:28 I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.

But now, He is leaving the world to be again with the Father. He, in his own physical

body, will not be here to be the light to the world any longer. He is leaving the world, but we are to remain in the world. Now we are His body on earth and we must be light and salt to the world.

Mat 5:13-16 **Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. (14) Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. (15) Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. (16) Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.**

Some will love you and be saved, but He is warning them many in the world will hate you ... if the world hated Me ... it will hate you. If the world persecuted Me ... it will persecute you.

Joh 16:33 **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.**

1Jn 5:4-5 **For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, *even* our faith.**

We are born of God. Jesus overcame the world ... and we overcome the world. Neither persecution, temptation to sin, the promise of the kingdoms of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, or the lust of other things ... nothing the world threw at Jesus and nothing the world offered Jesus ... could cause Him to disobey God and bow His knee to Satan. John is saying there is nothing the world can throw at us, or offer to us, that will cause us to bow the knee either. Jesus overcame the world and we overcome the world! How do we do it? By Faith. Faith in what?

1Jn 5:5 **Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?**

Remember what it means to "believe." We believe that Jesus is the Son of God, the Christ, the Messiah, the Savior of the world. We acted on that faith when we repented of sin and believed the gospel. We are born of God with the same "light of life" within us that He has within Him. We have "known and believed" the love the Father has bestowed upon us by making us sons of God and joint heirs with Christ. We have the glory of sonship and we are obedient sons just like the firstborn from the dead. We overcome the

world the same way He overcame the world, **by BEING the sons of God** we truly are. We are the children of light. The world is darkness and we have no fellowship with it. We walk in the light as he is in the light. We walk as He walked.

AS HE IS, SO ARE WE, IN THIS WORLD!

JESUS OVERCAME THE WORLD AND WE OVERCOME THE WORLD!