

1st John Chapter Five

Assurance and Christian Love (continued from chapter four)

(verses 1-3)

VERSE 1 Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God (Πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων

ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ Χριστὸς, ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ γεγέννηται, [*adj.nom.m.s. pas all; “Whoever” + pres.act.part.nom.m.s. pisteuo + conj hoti that + noun nom.m.s. Jesus + pres.act.ind.3s. eimi + d.a.w/noun nom.m.s. Christ + prep ek + d.a.w/noun gen.m.s. theos + pf.pass.ind.3s. gennao be born*], **and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him** [*καὶ πᾶς ὁ ἀγαπῶν τὸν γεννήσαντα ἀγαπᾷ [καὶ] τὸν γεγεννημένον ἐξ αὐτοῦ [conj kai + adj.nom.m.s. pas + d.a.w/pres.act.part.nom.m.s. agapao love + d.a.w/aor.act.part.acc.m.s. gennao + pres.act.ind.3s. agapao + conj kai also + d.a.w/pf.pass.part.acc.m.s. gennao + prep ek + pro.gen.m.s. autos him]*]).

VERSE 2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God

and observe His commandments (ἐν τούτῳ γινώσκομεν ὅτι ἀγαπῶμεν τὰ τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ, ὅταν τὸν θεὸν ἀγαπῶμεν καὶ τὰς ἐντολὰς αὐτοῦ ποιῶμεν [*prep en + pro.instr.nt.s. houtos this + pres.act.ind.3s. ginosko know + conj hoti + pres.act.ind.1p. agapao + d.a.w/noun acc.nt.p. teknon child + d.a.w/noun gen.m.s. theos + conj hotan when + d.a.w/noun acc.m.s. theos + pres.act.subj.1p. agapao + conj kai + d.a.w/noun acc.f.p. entole commandment + pro.gen.m.s. autos + pres.act.subj.1p. poieo do*]).

VERSE 3 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His

commandments are not burdensome (αὕτη γάρ ἐστιν ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ θεοῦ, ἵνα τὰς ἐντολὰς αὐτοῦ τηρῶμεν, καὶ αἱ ἐντολαὶ αὐτοῦ βαρεῖαι οὐκ εἰσὶν [*pro.nom.f.s. houtos + conj gar + pres.act.ind.3s. eimi + d.a.w/noun nom.f.s. agape + d.a.w/noun gen.m.s. theos + conj hina that + d.a.w/noun acc.f.p. entole + pro.gen.m.s. autos + pres.act.subj.1p. tereo keep + conj kai + d.a.w/noun nom.f.p. entole + pro.gen.m.s. autos + adj.nom.f.p. barus heavy; difficult; “burdensome” + neg ouk + pres.act.ind.3s. eimi*]).

ANALYSIS: VERSES 1-3

1. The theme of Christian love continues from 4:18ff.
2. A believer (e.g., child of God) is defined as the one who is born of God.
3. The way to achieve this is to believe that the historical Jesus is the Christ/Messiah (note 2:23 & 4:2).
4. The only requirement for the new birth resulting in the status child of God is faith in Jesus Christ (Jn. 1:12).
5. Evidence that one is born again is: (1) love for God; (2) love for believers; (3) keeping God’s commandments.
6. This is not to conclude that believers who do not do these things are not believers.
7. The Bible is replete with references to negative and corrupt believers (ex. prodigal son).
8. At the moment of salvation that believer for the first time truly loves God as well as the family of God.
9. Only the one born of God has the capacity to love just as God loves.
10. Perfect love (FHS) consists of specified actions and mental attitudes for other members of God’s family.
11. “By this we know” (v. 2) refers to Christian assurance/confidence.
12. In v. 2 John draws a conclusion from v. 1 that is not what we expect.
13. Normally, John says that we show our love for God by how we love (treat) one another.
14. Here John’s approach is that we demonstrate our love for God in how we love one another.
15. Love for other believers is contingent upon our love for God.
16. Our love for God is evidenced by keeping the divine imperatives (“His commandments”).
17. Jesus taught this in Jn. 14:21 (“He who has My commandments (GAP) and keeps them (application) is the one who loves Me, and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him.”; also 14:15; 15:10; 2Jn. 1:6).
18. Note by contrast 1 Jn. 2:4 “The one who says, ‘I have come to know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him;”
19. And Rev. 14:12 “Here is the perseverance/patience of the saints, who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus.”
20. In v. 3a John repeats the fact that love of God and keeping His commandments are inseparable.

21. The royal imperatives (commandments) specify how we are to conduct ourselves toward fellow members of the royal family under a variety of circumstances.
22. John goes to assert in v. 3b that these commandments are not beyond our ability to keep or even that they are an excessive burden.
23. The duties imposed on us are light when there is a willingness to please God even under duress.
24. Those who find the CWL a burden are unwilling to prioritize their lives around the truth and stop pursuing the things of the cosmos.
25. There is a commandment to not love the cosmos (1Jn. 2:15; Rom. 12:2; 1 Pet. 1:14).
26. God's way is "light" (Matt. 11:29-30).
27. Those who live their lives under God's commandments will attest to this fact.
28. God's grace is there for us in our severest trials.

The Ultimate Victory (vv. 4-5)

VERSE 4 For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world -- our faith (ὅτι πᾶν τὸ γεγεννημένον ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ νικᾷ τὸν κόσμον· καὶ αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ νίκη ἣ νικήσασα τὸν κόσμον, ἡ πίστις ἡμῶν [*conj hoti + adj.nom.m.s. pas + d.a.w/perf.pass.part.nom.nt.s. gennaō + prep ek + d.a.w/gen.m.s. theos + pres.act.ind.3s. nikao overcome + d.a.w/noun acc.m.s. kosmos + conj kai + pro.nom.f.s. houtos this + pres.act.ind.3s. eimi + d.a.w/noun nom.f.s. nike victory; only here + d.a.w/aor.act.part.nom.f.s. nikao + d.a.w/noun acc.m.s. kosmos + d.a.w/noun nom.f.s. pistis faith + pro.gen.p. ego*]).

VERSE 5 Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God (τίς [δέ] ἐστὶν ὁ νικῶν τὸν κόσμον εἰ μὴ ὁ πιστεύων ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ [*pro.interrog.nom.m.s. tis + conj de + pres.act.ind.3s. eimi + d.a.w/pres.act.part.nom.m.s. nikao + d.a.w/noun acc.m.s. kosmos + conj ei + neg me + d.a.w/pres.act.part.nom.m.s. pisteuo + conj hoti + noun nom.m.s. Jesus + noun nom.m.s. Christ + pres.act.ind.3s. eimi + d.a.w/noun nom.m.s. huios son + d.a.w/noun gen.m.s. theos*])?

ANALYSIS: VERSES 4-5

1. The language of overcoming has been previously introduced in 1st John (2:13 & 14; 4:4).
2. In those three verses it is presented as overcoming ‘the evil one’ and overcoming ‘them.’
3. Here in these two verses it is presented as overcoming the cosmos.
4. The cosmos in 1st John is featured a variety of ways.
5. Jesus Christ is the propitiation for the sins not only of believers but the entire world (1Jn. 2:2).
6. In 1 Jn. 2:15 believers are told not to love “the things of the cosmos” because if they do God’s love is not in them.
7. In 1 Jn. 2:16 the cosmic system is characterized as a realm of lust and pride.
8. And in 2:17 believers are informed that the cosmic system with its lusts is passing away.
9. In 3:1 we are told that the cosmos does not know us since it did not know Jesus.
10. In 3:13 we are told not to be amazed over the fact that the cosmos hates us.
11. In 4:1 we are told that the cosmos is infested with false prophets.
12. In 4:3 we are told that the spirit of coming antichrist is currently operating in the cosmos.
13. in 4:4 we are told that we have overcome the opposition and the proof is that the One who indwells us is greater than “he who is in the world.”
14. In 4:5 the cosmos listens to its own kind.
15. In 4:9 & 14 God’s love is manifested since He sent His Son into the cosmos.
16. In 4:17 we are in the world as Christ is in the world.
17. And in 5:19 we learn that the whole world is under the dominion of the evil one.
18. After asserting that the one born of God overcomes the dominion of the cosmos, John informs believers what it is that makes this a reality—saving faith.
19. In verse 5a he repeats the assertion using a rhetorical question and in 5b he presents the object of our Ph 1 faith.
20. See Jn. 2:18 & 20:31.
21. Son of God is used in 1st John at 3:8; 4:15; 5:5, 10, 12, 13, 20.
22. An example of confessing that Jesus is the Son of God note Jn. 1:49 (also 11:27).