

## Faith Is The Victory

1 John 5:1-5

### Introduction

- 1) For many years sports fans in America would tune in to ABC's "Wide World of Sports." Spanning the globe they brought into our homes sports of every imaginable variety. Yet regardless of the sport, whether it was baseball, football or basketball; track & field, golf or tennis; figure skating, hockey or horse racing; who can forget the tragic fall and accident of that ski jumper with those now famous words echoing in the background: "THE THRILL OF VICTORY AND THE AGONY OF DEFEAT!" In sports there will always be winners and losers, those who seize victory and those who taste defeat.
- 2) The apostle John was determined that his spiritual children would taste the thrill of victory and avoid the agony of defeat. Just as a great athlete needs strength and speed, skill and training, John knew great Christians need the new birth and love, obedience and faith. Indeed John is committed to the proposition that "faith is the victory."
- 3) We used to sing a hymn entitled *Faith is the Victory*. Ira Sankey (1840-1908) the music leader for D. L. Moody put the words of this song to music. Taking portions of different stanzas; and with a slight adjustment, there is a wonderful word of confidence and assurance that rises from this song:

"His banner over us is love, our sword the Word of God;  
We walk the road the saints above, with shouts of triumph trod;  
Against the foe in vales below, let all our strength be hurled;  
Faith is the victory we know, that overcomes the world."

- 4) God wants us to experience this victory that overcomes the world and in our text John lays down a 4-fold strategy that will enable us to chalk our spiritual life up in the "W" (Win) column.

### **I. Experience victory by believing in Jesus. 5:1**

- 3 times John will speak of believing or faith (5:1, 4, 5).
- Though the theme of love is continued from 4:7-21, with the word occurring 5 times in vs. 1-3, the emphasis now and in the following verses shifts to believe/faith.
- The focus of our faith is 2-fold in v. 1.

#### **1) Know who to believe.**

Believes – pre. tense (trust, rely upon).

Jesus – the man from Nazareth, the miracle worker, the great teacher. Believe in Jesus and only Jesus. Not Peter, James or John. Not Paul or Jude. Not Moon, Joseph Smith, Mohammed or Buddha. The sole object of believing is Jesus.

## 2) **Know what to believe.**

Is the Christ (*Christos*), Heb. *Messiah*. It means the anointed one sent by God.

It means believing He:

- Is the Word of Life (1:1).
  - Is our advocate and atonement (2:1-2).
  - Has come in the flesh (4:2).
  - Is the propitiation for our sins (4:10)
  - Is God's Son (4:14).
  - Is the Savior of the World (4:14).
- Peter said in Matt. 16:16, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God (cf. 1 John 5:1, 5).
- Belief in Jesus is mental, emotional, volitional and even ethical. Belief in Jesus involves the whole of a person. It is no mere intellectual ascent. It is trusting all that you are to all that He is.

### Illustration:

It is a lot like the marriage ceremony! You give/pledge all of you to your mate!

### Transition

Victory is ours by believing in Jesus.

## II. **Experience victory by loving others. 5:1-2**

- In the Bible, and especially in 1 John, faith and love are inseparable (cf. 3:23).
- However, both faith and love are vitally connected to spiritual birth, to our being "born again" (cf. John 3).
- John teaches us that the one who believes in Jesus is born (W.A.R.) of God. 9 times John uses the word "born" in 1 John, 3 times here in v. 1 and 4 times in 5:1-4.
- What does spiritual birth from believing in Jesus result in? Love, obedience, rest and victory. Not surprisingly John starts with love.

### 1) **Love the Father. 5:1**

- We love the one who begot us. *HCSB* says, "everyone who loves the parent," the *NIV* says "everyone who loves the father." The word refers to the heavenly Father.
- It is natural to love our Father, our parents. They brought us into the world, care for us, raise us. If it is natural to love our earthly parents, how much more should we love our heavenly Father.

### Illustration:

65-year-old man in Laurel, MS who was saved at 65. "It makes all the difference what you think your daddy thinks about you..."

2) **Love the Savior. 5:1**

- If you love the parent you will also love the child of the parent.
- If you love the Father you will also love the Son.  
The last part of v. 1 should not be restricted to Jesus, but neither should it exclude Him either. Loving our heavenly Father, we will love all of His children, and we will begin with Jesus. To love one and not love the other is a thought John could not even imagine.

3) **Love the brothers. 5:1-2**

- John's statement and word order is surprising.
- Love God's children...then love (cont.) and keep (cont.) His commandments. It does reverse 4:20 but complements it too.
- Love for others is rooted and grounded in our love of God.
- When we love God, we will keep His commandments, which also involves loving others (3:11, 4:7, 12, 21).
- Before you can love your brother or sister on earth, you must first love your Father in heaven.

Illustration

To love me is to love my sons. If you say you love me but hate Nathan, John, Paul, & Timothy then you really don't love me. To love God is to love His children. If you say you love God but hate His children, then you really don't love God.

III. **Experience victory by obeying God. 5:2-3**

- Trust and obey, love and obey: for John these partners are never to be separated.
  - Believing God I obey God.
  - Loving God I obey God, and with good reason.
- 1) **God's commandments are a blessing. 5:2**
  - Obeying God tells Him I love Him.
  - Obeying God continually tells Him I really love Him.
  - "Keep" is literally "do" in v. 2.  
I do (it is active) His commandments.
  - Obeying God's commandments sets us free, it does not enslave.
  - His commandments are a blessing because they free me to live not as I want, but as I ought, as I should.
- 2) **God's commandments are not a burden. 5:3**
  - John basically reaffirms what he said at the end of v. 2, but then he adds to it.
  - Love for God is only real when we keep (cont.) His commandments. Keep – observe, attend to carefully. Love is not so much emotional as it is moral, not what you feel but what you do.

- Not burdensome – a noun meaning heavy, crushing, oppressive. They are not a burden, but a blessing.

**Matthew 11:28-30**, “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

#### IV. Experience victory by overcoming the world. 5:4-5

- God wants us to be overcomers (3x) and have victory in our Christian life. Four times He speaks of our being an “overcomer” (*nikaō*). The word translated “victory” is also a form of the word *nikaō*. The word means to conquer, gain victory, to overcome. To each of the 7 churches of the Revelation John ends with a challenge for them to be overcomers, conquerors, victors. How do we overcome? Verse 5 tells us and it brings us full circle and returns us, in a sense, to v. 1.

##### 1) You must be born of God. 5:4

- Born – 8<sup>th</sup> time in 1 John he addresses the new birth, spiritual birth ⇒ love God, love God’s children, obey Him, and conquer the world.
- World – evil forces of this age that oppose God, a world at war with God.
- Verse 4: “For everyone born of God conquers the world. This is the conquering that has conquered the world, even our faith.
- In Christ, and his cross and resurrection, we defeat Satan, sin and the evil system of this world with its idols, lies, greed, murder, racism, immorality, exploitation and oppression, we defeat the heretics who oppose Christ, and we defeat all those who oppose all that is good.

#### A fighting Illini

*This new Miss America is different. Some of her predecessors, like her, have been outspoken Christians. But eloquent and energetic Erika Harold, 22, who as Miss Illinois was crowned Miss America 2003 is pro-life, pro-abstinence. She is headed for Harvard Law School next fall, and her goal is eventually to run for public office. Miss Harold is known for her campaigns promoting teen sexual abstinence. She vigorously challenged as a failure the “safe-sex” views floated by the educational establishment. Miss Harold, her three siblings, and her parents are members of 700-attendeo Urbana Assembly of God, where her parents are lay leaders. Pastor Gary Grogan describes her as an exemplary Christian who “perseveres” in the face of adversity and disappointment.*

Edward E. Plowman  
*World* (Oct. 5, 2002, p. 41)

Well we found out just how well this daughter of God perseveres almost immediately!

### **Miss America wins battle, free to promote abstinence**

WASHINGTON (BP) – Oct. 10, 2002 – Miss America is free to talk about sexual abstinence after all.

Erika Harold, crowned in September as Miss America 2003, told reporters Oct. 9 she had been informed that morning by Miss America chief executive George Bauer there would be no restrictions on her discussion of chastity as part of her youth violence prevention platform.

The announcement by Harold at a suburban Chicago news conference came on the same day efforts by pageant officials to stifle her abstinence message were reported in The Washington Times. Bauer and others had ordered her not to talk publicly about sexual abstinence.

“In don’t think the pageant organizers really understood how much I am identified with the abstinence message,” Harold said at the Oct. 9 news conference. “If I don’t speak about it now as Miss America, I will be disappointing the thousands of young people throughout Illinois who need assurance that waiting until marriage for sex is the right thing to do.”

Pageant officials pressured Harold to silence her advocacy of sexual abstinence though she had promoted chastity for the last four years and had made it her platform in the Miss Illinois contest. She has delivered a sexual abstinence message to more than 14,000 students in Illinois, according to Project Reality, an abstinence-centered education program in Illinois. Her platform for the Miss Illinois pageant was Teenage Sexual Abstinence: “Respect Yourself, Protect Yourself.”

In response to pageant officials’ orders, Harold told reporters in Washington Oct. 8 she would “not be bullied.”

**2) You must believe in Jesus. 5:5**

- Verse 5 is quite similar to v. 1. Verse 1 says Jesus is the Christ. Verse 5 says Jesus is the Son of God. John starts with believing in Jesus and he ends with believing in Jesus.
- Who is he... makes the question an individual one.
- Son of God means Jesus has the nature of God, He came from God, He is God. It is here and here alone, that victory can be won.

**Conclusion**

- Please help me Lord Jesus to realize, that you are my all in all. That I am more than a conqueror, in things both great and small. No need I have but you have met, upon the cruel tree, my precious dying and risen Lord, You gave me the victory!
- In Jesus, faith is the victory.