

Faith is the Victory

An Introduction

1 John 5:4-5

INTRODUCTION:

- A. In his first of three epistles, John writes of victory in overcoming the world.
1 John 5:4-5 - “For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world-- our faith. Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?”
- B. The “world” to which John refers are those things in the world that would separate us from God. He has identified them in **1 John 2:15-17** - “Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world-- the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life-- is not of the Father but is of the world.”
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| 1. The “lust of the flesh” (immorality, inordinate emotions) |] These can be summarized one word - SIN |
| 2. The “lust of the eyes” (materialism, greed, covetousness) | |
| 3. The “Pride of life” (vainglory, boasting, arrogance) | |
- C. There are other things in the world which can hinder our relationship with God.
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| 1. Anxiety | 5. Discouragement |
| 2. Boredom | 6. Fear |
| 3. Depression | 7. Grief |
| 4. Despair | 8. Loneliness |
- D. For whatever is in the world that might hinder our relationship with God:
1. There can be victory in overcoming the world.
 2. Such victory comes to those who believe that Jesus is the Son of God.
 3. Faith **IS** that victory!
- E. In this series of lessons, I would like to examine how faith in Jesus Christ enables one to overcome the world.
1. In this inaugural lesson, the introduction to the overall series, we will define faith, and especially faith in Jesus as the Son of God.
 2. In succeeding lessons, we will consider how faith in Jesus can provide victory over such things as the eight hindrances already mentioned, that can hinder our relationship with God.

F. According to John, victory in overcoming the world requires faith in Jesus. Therefore, it is important that we know exactly what faith is.

FAITH IN JESUS DEFINED

A. Faith in general.

1. As defined in Easton's Bible Dictionary:
 - a. Faith is in general the persuasion of the mind that a certain statement is true.
 - b. Its primary idea is trust.
2. It is a strong conviction or trust in something.
 - a. Modern translators have given this two part rendering to **Hebrews 11:1**
 1. "Now faith is being sure of what we hope for . . ."
 2. ". . . And certain of what we do not see."
3. Example: you have faith that your parents are indeed your parents.
 - a. Based upon your trust and conviction in the reliability of their word.
 - b. Such trust prompts you to act accordingly.

B. Faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God.

1. It is a strong conviction to trust in Jesus:
 - a. **Who Jesus is . . .**
 1. That He is what He claimed.
 2. That He truly is the Son of the living God.
 - b. **What Jesus did and is doing . . .**
 1. That He died on the cross for our sins.
 2. That His death is truly a sufficient propitiation or sacrifice for our sins.
 3. That He intercedes for us in Heaven.
 - c. **What Jesus said . . .**
 1. That He alone provides the way to eternal life.
 2. That He alone is the way to God, the Father.
 3. **John 14:6** - "Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."
2. Jesus professed this faith in Jesus. **John 6:68-69** - "But Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." **Note:** They had to "Come to **believe**" and they had to "Come to **Know**" that Jesus was the Christ. In essence: They had to work at it!
 - a. That Jesus has the words of eternal life.
 - b. That Jesus Christ is the very Son of God. **Matthew 16:15-16** - "He said to them, But who do you say that I am? Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

3. When a person has such faith in Jesus . . .
 - a. They look to Jesus for the solution to any problem they face.
 - b. They have trust and conviction that what He says is the right answer or solution.
 - c. They are willing to act with trust and conviction on His word. **Luke 6:46** - “But why do you call Me Lord, Lord, and do not do the things which I say?”
 1. Saying is one thing . . . doing is still another.
 2. Confess with you mouth . . . profess with your life.
 4. For those who have an active faith in Jesus, their lives are built on a solid foundation.
 - a. Like a wise man who builds on a rock. **Luke 6:47-49** - “Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock. But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great.”
 1. They hear . . . believe . . . and act upon that belief.
 2. Obedience is the action of faith . . . the response of faith to the Word and will of God.
 - b. They are able to weather the storms of life because their faith in Jesus has prompted them to prepare for whatever comes their way.
- C. This is the kind of faith that overcomes the world.
1. The problem is that while many have a degree of faith to “**hear**” (**listen**) to what Jesus said, most do not have sufficient faith to “**do**” (**obey**) what He says.
 2. If we desire to have this kind of faith in Jesus that will help us overcome the world, how is it developed?
 3. Friends, it is not as difficult as you might think.

FAITH IN JESUS DEVELOPED

A. Faith comes from Evidence.

1. Many people believe that faith is something blind, that you “just have to believe.”
 - a. It is true that faith is often a strong conviction in “things unseen.” **Hebrews 11:1** - “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”

- b. But there are solid reasons for believing in what you cannot see.
 - 1. Just as you believe in George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, though you have never seen them.
 - 2. Just as you believe in who your parents are, though you can't remember who was there at your birth.
- 2. Other people believe that faith is some gift from God for a select few.
 - a. It is true that in one sense faith is a “gift” from God. **Romans 12:3** - “. . . God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.”
 - b. But while faith owes its ultimate source to God, it is available to all.
- 3. Faith comes from evidence provided by God Himself.
 - a. God has provided us with many evidences so that we might believe in His Son.
 - 1. **John 5:36** - “But I have a greater witness than John's; for the works which the Father has given Me to finish-- the very works that I do-- bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me.”
 - 2. **John 10:37-38** - “If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me.”
 - 3. **John 14:10-11** - “Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves.”
 - b. And so His apostles recorded these signs that we might believe. **John 20:30-31** - “And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.”
 - 1. Believe in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God.
 - 2. Through such faith we can have victory over the world.
 - c. This leads us to the primary source of faith . . .

B. Faith comes from the Word of God.

- 1. Even as Paul so declared in **Romans 10:17** - “So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”
 - a. Faith (trust and conviction) is founded upon what the Word of God reveals.
 - b. This is especially true regarding faith in Jesus. Again, remember **John 20:30-31** - “And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.”

2. The Word of God produces faith in Jesus by the evidence it provides. For example:
 - a. The Messianic prophecies in the Old Testament.
 1. Over 300 in all.
 2. Some 56 of them fulfilled on the day of the Lord's crucifixion.
 - b. His signs and wonders recorded in the Gospel records of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.
 - c. The testimony of eyewitnesses in the Book of Acts as well as in the epistles.

NOTE: As one meditates upon the Word of God regarding Jesus, faith is developed.
3. Faith in Jesus that leads to victory must come from the Word of God!
 - a. The reason many people do not live victorious lives is a lack of faith.
 - b. They have a weak faith because they do not read and study the Bible, the Word of God.
 - c. Not only is their faith weak, but they often don't even know the teachings of Jesus that can help them to overcome the world.

CONCLUSION:

- A. I contend that faith in Jesus gives one the victory in overcoming the world . . .
 1. Whether it is overcoming sinful thinking that hinders our relationship with God.
 2. Or it is overcoming sinful thinking that hinders our relationship with God.
- B. Victorious faith in Jesus comes from the Word of God.
 1. Which is why I cannot overemphasize the importance of feeding upon it daily.
 - a. A lack of knowledge was instrumental in Israel's downfall. **Hosea 4:6** - "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me; because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children."
 - b. When people do not have access to His Word, they are very weak.

Amos 8:11 - "Behold, the days are coming," says the Lord GOD, "That I will send a famine on the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD.
 - c. Even Jesus resorted to the Word of God to overcome temptation.

Matthew 4:4, 7, 11

 1. Jesus knew the power of the Word of God in overcoming the world.
 2. Why deprive yourself of the means that God has given to produce faith that an overcome the world that is trying to overcome you?

C. God's Plan for Man's Salvation