

## Love And The Commandments

See 1 John 4:7-21

5:1 **Whoever** [continuously] **believes that Jesus is the Christ** [the Messiah, the anointed One] **is born of God; and whoever loves the Father loves the {child} [offspring] born [begotten] of Him.**

- “whoever” is lit. “everyone believing.” Used twice in this verse.
- 1. John contends everyone who “**believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.**” See Matt. 16:16; Jn. 3:36; 20:30-31.
  - a. 1JO 3:23 And this is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as He commanded us.
  - b. 1 John 2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:4, 18.
  - c. “The Christ” is here a title (the anointed One) and not a name. It is the equivalent of the Hebrew “Messiah.” See Jn. 1:41.

JOH 1:41 He found first his own brother Simon, and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which translated means Christ).

- 2. John also contends that the one who “loves the Father loves [the child, offspring] born of Him.”
  - a. We prove our love for the Father by our conduct towards our brothers and sisters in Christ.
  - b. Love for God entails love for His offspring. (1 Jn. 4:20, 21).

1JO 4:20 If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen.

1JO 4:21 And this commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also.

- c. John has emphasized this love throughout this epistle.
- d. We must have a strong love for our brothers and sisters in Christ. (1 Jn. 3:16).

5:2 **By this we know** [recognize and understand] **that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe** [keep, do, obey] **His commandments.**

- 1. The words “by this” refer to what follows “when we love God and observe His commandments.”
- 2. We cannot separate love for God and love for man.
  - a. When we love God and obey **His** commandments, we will also manifest love for “the children of God.”
  - b. The Christian loves because he obeys God’s command to love. See 1 Jn. 2:3; 3:22.

c. Christians love one another because we are a “family, a brotherhood.” (1 Tim. 3:15; 1 Pet. 2:17).

**5:3 For this is the [true] love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome [heavy, severe, oppressive, too difficult].**

1. We prove our love for God by keeping His commandments. (1 Jn. 2:3, 4).

**2. Love is the primary motivation for keeping God’s commandments.**

a. See Jn. 14:15, 21, 23, 15:10, 14.

b. **Fear is also a motivation.** (Rom. 11:22; Heb. 10:26-31). See Matt. 10:28; Lk. 12:5.

c. Wealth, power, prestige are not proper motivations.

d. Even the desire for heaven and fear of hell should not be the primary motivations for serving God.

e. The one who truly loves God will love and serve Him even if there were not a heaven or hell.

**3. Our love is prompted by God’s love.** (1 Jn. 4:19).

4. The word “burdensome” come from the Greek “bareiai.” It is the plural of “barus” [ba roos’] “heavy, burdensome, severe, weighty, important, fierce.”

MAT 23:4 "And they tie up **heavy** loads, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves are unwilling to move them with so much as a finger. “heavy” comes from “barus” meaning “serious, heavy, burdensome”

ACT 20:29 "I know that after my departure **savage** wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; “savage” is from “barus” meaning here “grievous, savage, serious, burdensome.”

ACT 25:7 And after he had arrived, the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem stood around him, bringing many and **serious** charges against him which they could not prove; “serious” is from “barus.”

**5. Love for God lightens His commands.**

a. God does not demand more than we can do. (Phil. 4:13; 1 Cor. 10:13; Jas. 4:7, 8).

b. Love makes the commandments easier.

1) A mother or father finds the load lighter when they work out of love.

2) A husband or wife finds the load lighter when they work and fulfill their duties out of love.

c. Love makes the Christian life much easier.

d. Love makes us anxious and eager to assist those of our brothers and sisters who struggle under the heavy burdens of life. (Gal. 6:2).

GAL 6:2 Bear one another's burdens, and thus fulfill the law of Christ.

6. The words “are not burdensome” agree with Deuteronomy 30:11-14 and Matthew 11:30.

DEU 30:11 "For this commandment which I command you today is not too difficult for you, nor is it out of reach.  
DEU 30:12 "It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will go up to heaven for us to get it for us and make us hear it, that we may observe it?'  
DEU 30:13 "Nor is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will cross the sea for us to get it for us and make us hear it, that we may observe it?'  
DEU 30:14 "But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may observe it.  
DEU 30:15 "See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, and death and adversity;

MAT 11:30 "For My yoke is easy, and My load is light." "easy" is from "chrestos" meaning "gentle, pleasant, useful, profitable, good, kind, gracious." "Light" is from "elaphros" meaning "light, not heavy." (Matt. 11:30; 2 Cor. 4:17).

7. The words "are not burdensome" do not refer to the burdens of human regulations. (Matt. 23:4).

MAT 23:4 "And they tie up **heavy loads** [human laws and traditions], and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves are unwilling to move them with so much as a finger.

- a. Human burdens or loads can make the Christian life very hard.
  - b. Human burdens are not from God, and can cause one to stumble and even fall away from the faith.
8. We should delight in God's commandments because they come from a loving Father and are good for us.
- a. God only wants the best for us. (Psa. 84:11; Matt. 7:7-11).
  - b. His commandments are for our good, and their aim is to lead us to a better life here and to the abundant life in heaven.
  - c. God's commandments are never arbitrary or not make us miserable.
  - d. The commandments of the Mosaic law were good and holy and spiritual (Rom. 7:12,14), but they were not given for salvation. (Gal. 2:16).
  - e. As good as the law of Moses was, it was not given for salvation.
  - f. The blood of animals could not atone for sin. (Heb. 10:4, 5).

## **Faith And Victory**

5:4 **For whatever [whoever] is born of God overcomes [conquers] the world; and this is the victory that has overcome [conquers] the world-- our faith.**

- Lit. "because everything [neuter gender] having been begotten of God"
  - The neuter gender is here used with a masculine meaning of "whoever."
1. John gives the reason why the commandments of 5:3 "are not burdensome" Faith in the victorious Jesus gives one the power and strength to overcome the sinful desires that lead one away from God.
  2. The one "born of God" "overcomes the world."
    - a. Victory is "sweet" and it not limited to one winner.

- b. All can be victorious through “faith.”
- c. “Without faith it is impossible” to please God. (Heb. 11:6).

HEB 11:6 And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

- d. The one “born of God” does not abide in sin. (1 Jn. 3:6, 9), and does not let sin defeat him.
- e. He will not suffer the condemnation of the world. (Rom. 8:1).
  - 1) This promise of “no condemnation” is made to those “in Christ.”
  - 2) It is made to those who “walk in the light” and confess their sins to God. (1 Jn. 1:7, 9).
  - 3) It is made to those who keep themselves in the love of God. (Jude 21).
  - 4) It does not mean one cannot be lost if he refuses to love God and keep His commandments. (1 Cor. 10:12; 1 Cor. 9:27; Heb. 3:12; 6:4-6; 2 Pet. 1:5-11).
  - 5) This assurance was not made to those who turn their backs on Christ and reject Him and His commandments.

**Note:**

- 1. The neuter “whatever” refers to a person who has become a Christian.
  - a. See 1 John 5:1 and 18 where John used “whoever” or “whosoever.”

1JO 5:1 <b>Whoever</b> believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God; and whoever loves the Father loves the child born of Him.	1JO 5:18 We know that no one who is born of God sins; but He who was born of God keeps him and the evil one does not touch him. KJV has “whosoever is born of God.”
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- b. See John 3:6, 8 where there is a fluctuation between genders.

JOH 3:6 " <b>That which</b> is born of the flesh is flesh, and <b>that which</b> is born of the Spirit is spirit.  See 1 Cor. 2:11 - The “spirit” is the thinking part of man.	JOH 3:8 "The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; <b>so is everyone who is born of the Spirit.</b> "
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- 2. It is uncertain why the neuter gender is used.
- 3. It is used of Jesus in 1 John 1:1,2.

1JO 1:1 <b>What was</b> from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we beheld and our hands handled, concerning the Word of Life-- 1JO 1:2 and the life was manifested, and we have seen and bear witness and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us--
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- a. NASB has “what was.”

- b. NIV has “that which was.”
4. “Faith is the victory that overcomes the world.”
    - a. Faith is not mere mental assent, that is, merely believing God exists. (Jas. 2:19).
    - b. Saving, obedient faith is an obedient, trusting faith. (Rom. 1:5; 16:26; Heb. 5:9; Matt. 7:21).
    - c. It enables us to stop loving the world and it enables us to be victorious and live forever with Christ.

### **Victory Through Christ**

1CO 15:57 but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Born of God** - These words occur many times in 1 John.

1JO 2:29 If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone also who practices righteousness is **born of Him**.

1JO 3:9 No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is **born of God**.

1JO 4:7 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is **born of God** and knows God.

1JO 5:1 Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is **born of God**; and whoever loves the Father loves the child born of Him.

1JO 5:4 For whatever is **born of God** overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world-- our faith.

1JO 5:18 We know that no one who is **born of God** sins; but He who was **born of God** keeps him and the evil one does not touch him.

5. **Hebrews 11** sets forth in a vivid and powerful way the great accomplishments of faith.

- a. Faith is a powerful word.
- b. It leads men to trust God and do what He says.

**5:5 And who is the one who [continuously] overcomes [conquers] the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?**

1. John clearly states the one “who believes that Jesus is the Son of God” “is the one who overcomes the world.” See 1 John 5:1.
2. Faith must be in the right Person and faith must believe the right thing about Jesus. (Jn. 8:20; 20:30, 31).
  - a. It is not enough to believe that Jesus lived or that He was a great man or teacher.
  - b. It is not even enough to believe that Jesus was a prophet.

- c. One must believe “that Jesus is the Son of God.”
- d. Believing in Jesus means we must trust and obey Him. (Lk. 6:46; Heb. 5:9).

## **Testimony And Life**

**5:6 This is the one who came by [with] water and blood, Jesus Christ [the Messiah]; not with [by] the water only, but with [by] the water and with [by] the blood.**

- **Note:** The word “spirit” is added by some manuscripts after “water,” but it is not in the oldest manuscripts.
1. The “one” is identified as “Jesus Christ.”
  2. He came “by water and blood.”
    - a. Some think this refers to His death on the cross, but the order there is “blood and water.” (Jn. 19:34).

JOH 19:34 but one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately **there came out blood and water.**

- b. **It more likely refers to the baptism and death of Jesus Christ.**
- c. Both the baptism and the death of Jesus are evidence of His humanity and Deity.
  - (1) The man Jesus, not a spirit, was baptized by John in the Jordan river. (Matt. 3:13-17).
  - (2) It was not a “spirit” that was immediately tempted in the wilderness following His baptism. (Matt. 4:1-11).
  - (3) It was not a spirit that was nailed to the cross and shed blood.
  - (4) It was Jesus Christ, the Son of God. (Jn. 3:16; Rom. 5:8).

## **Faith In Christ’s Humanity Rests Upon Three Witnesses**

**5:7 And it is the [Holy] Spirit who bears witness [testifies], because the [Holy] Spirit is the truth [His witness is true].**

- **This verse is 5:6b in KJV.**
1. The Spirit gave witness of Christ’s humanity and His shed blood through the gospels of God and other inspired writings.
  2. The Spirit gave witness through the inspired oral teachings of the apostles and others. Little by little these teachings were put into writing in what we know as the New Testament.
  3. The Spirit gave witness of the Deity and humanity of Jesus through miracles. (Jn. 20:30, 31; Heb. 2:4).

### **Note:**

1. The KJV has “And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.” (1 Jn. 5:8).

2. This verse is omitted by all ancient versions and manuscripts and by the church fathers.
3. It was placed in 5<sup>th</sup> century Latin texts of the Bible and later worked its way into later Greek manuscripts.
4. It appears the first time in a cursive manuscript translated in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century.

**Additional note:** Verse 7 of KJV is omitted by best Greek manuscripts.

<p><b>King James</b>  1Jn 5:6 This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. See verse 7 NASB  And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.  <b>1Jn 5:7 For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.</b>  <b>1Jn 5:8 And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.</b> Verses in bold not in the best Greek manuscripts</p>	<p><b>NASB</b>  1JO 5:6 This is the one who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ; not with the water only, but with the water and with the blood.  1JO 5:7 And it is the Spirit who bears witness, because the Spirit is the truth.  1JO 5:8 For there are three that bear witness, the Spirit and the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement.   NASB agrees with best Greek manuscripts.</p>
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### Three Witnesses

**5:8 For there are three that bear witness, the Spirit and the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement.** [with regard to the incarnation of Jesus].

1. They all [the Holy Spirit, the water of baptism, and the blood shed on the cross] testify that Jesus was manifested in the flesh. (Jn. 1:14; 1 Jn. 4:2).
2. The human Jesus was the Son of God. (Matt. 1:18-25; Lk. 1:26-35).

**Note:** The Spirit also bore witness that Jesus is the Son of God. (Jn. 1:32, 34; Matt. 3:17).

**5:9 If [since] we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is [infinitely] greater; for the witness of God is this, that He has borne witness concerning His Son.**

1. The “if” does not express doubt.
  - a. It is used in the sense of “since.” “Since we receive the witness of men” is the import.
  - b. “Since we receive the witness of men.” we should even be far more ready to listen to the witness of God.
  - c. God’s witness is true and infallible. It is never wrong.
2. God “has borne witness” that Jesus is His Son, and that Jesus became flesh.

**5:10 The one who believes [keeps on believing] in the Son of God has the witness in himself; the one who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed in the witness that God has borne concerning His Son.**

1. Refusal to believe that Jesus is “the Son of God” calls God “a liar” since God calls Jesus His Son. (Matt. 3:17; 17:5).
2. God bore witness to Jesus as His Son by the miracles of Jesus. (Jn. 20:30, 31).
3. God bore witness to Jesus as His Son by the resurrection (Rom. 1:4), and by the many miraculous things that occurred at the cross. (Matt. 27:51-54).

MAT 27:51 And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom, and the earth shook; and the rocks were split,  
 MAT 27:52 and the tombs were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised;  
 MAT 27:53 and coming out of the tombs after His resurrection they entered the holy city and appeared to many.  
 MAT 27:54 Now the centurion, and those who were with him keeping guard over Jesus, when they saw the earthquake and the things that were happening, became very frightened and said, "Truly this was the Son of God!"

4. God bore witness to Jesus as His Son by the ascension and exaltation of Jesus. (Acts 1:8-11; 2:33; Heb. 1:3).
5. The Holy Spirit abides in the Christian and is a present and infallible witness of both the humanity and the Deity of Christ.

**Note - 1 John 5:10:**

1. “In himself” comes from the Greek “en heauto.” [en heh ow to’] NIV renders this “has this testimony in his heart.”
2. Some Greek manuscripts have these words, and others have “him” (auto).
3. Marshall, in his transliteration of the Greek, translates “has the witness in him.” See “him” ASV.
4. Scholars are divided about the exact Greek text and the exact import of these words.
5. Verse 9 speaks of “the witness of God.” The main point is that the Christian has “the witness of God.”
  - a. The witness comes from God’s revelation concerning His Son.
  - b. It comes from the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. (1 Jn. 3:24; Acts 5:32).

**5:11 And the witness [testimony] is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this [eternal] life is in His Son.**

1. “Eternal life” is a gift from God. (Rom. 6:23).
  - a. It cannot be earned. (Rom. 11:6; Eph. 2:5-10).
  - b. The words “has given us eternal life” show in some sense we have eternal life now.
  - c. See Notes on 1 John 5:12.
2. This gift of “life” “is in His Son.”
  - a. Those who reject Christ forfeit eternal life with God. (Jn. 14:6; 6:47; 8:24; 3:36).
  - b. They will spend forever in damnation. (Matt. 25:41, 46).



c. It is so foolish and so tragic for men to reject Jesus who is the only way to heaven.

**5:12 He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.**

- “Life” stands for the abundant life (Jn. 10:10), and for “eternal life.”
  1. “The life” [eternal life] belongs to those who accept, trust and obey Christ.
  2. “The life” or “eternal life” is something the Christian enjoys now with certain prospect. (Jn. 3:36; 5:24; 6:47; 17:3).
  3. It is something the Christian will enjoy fully in the next life. (Matt. 25:46; Tit. 1:2; Mk. 10:29, 30; 1 Jn. 2:25; Rom. 8:24).

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