

Know What's Real - Victory

Does anyone here this morning like to win?

Isn't winning fun? Doesn't it feel good? Isn't it satisfying?

I'm not talking about prideful, boastful winning. Just regular winning.

Now take winning and apply it to life. Anyone want to win at life? Have you found that to be difficult, especially in this country, as a believer in Christ?

Today we look at victory, a victory that is ours, we have rights to it, yet we often don't access it to the fullest.

1 John 5:1-5 (NKJV)

Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him. 2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. 3 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome. 4 For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world— our faith. 5 Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

As we dig into this, here's the keys to take note of. There's a process to victory. 1. Faith. 2. Obedience. 3. Victory.

1 John 5:1 (NKJV)

Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him

Whoever - Everyone

Jesus is the Christ - These two names summarize who Jesus is and what His mission was.

- Jesus comes from Joshua which means God is my savior
- Christ means anointed one or chosen one

God is my savior and Jesus is the One

See the problem in our lives is US.....and Jesus is the answer. Where many religions say to look inside yourself to find answers, Christianity says look out to Jesus!

When we look at a verse like this one “Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God”.....it’s simple yet not simple. All you have to do is believe.....but it’s what you believe that’s the key.....

Do you believe that there is a problem in this life and that problem is sin? Do you believe that you can’t overcome it on your own? If those are true, then you believe that you need a savior.

If you need a savior, do you believe that God is your savior and Jesus is that God? Do you believe that Jesus is the anointed One? That He’s the ONLY one? Do you believe that Jesus is the Christ?

If you do.....then you are born of God.....born again, not who you once were but a new creation in Christ Jesus. You are a child of God! You are beloved - esteemed, favorite, worthy of love.

When we experience that love, we love Him in return and we love those who He calls children of God...other believers....it’s the whole family aspect. God is Father, other believers are brothers and sisters.....that’s your family.....the church. We are loved, we love.

“Love is sometimes a feeling but always a commitment” ~ Mark Driscoll

Guys, this is a game changer....

1 John 5:2 (NKJV)

By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments

By what? Loving God and keeping His commandments. You know that you love the children of God when you love God and listen to HIM. Obedience.

See that faith from earlier, believing Jesus is the Christ, brings us into loving relationship with God, and love for Him leads to obeying Him and loving the church.

1 John 5:3 (NKJV)

For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.

This COULD get heavy for some....keep His commandments. Do what God says. Do what God says. Do what God says.

Here’s the problem. Christians often try to scare people (unbelievers and believers) into behaving. Do this or else.....You still haven’t overcome that? You still struggle with that? It didn’t take me that long, I just quit!.....All you have to do is obey God’s commandments.....Do you want to go to hell?.....

WE make His commandments heavy.....burdensome.....because we tie them to fear and shame

The primary motivation of Christianity is LOVE and not fear, and perfect love casts out fear.

We can look at this list of commandments as rules and try harder and try harder.....and they get burdensome.....because we fail....

There has only been ONE Man who has perfectly obeyed the commandments of God and He died on a cross to save you from your sin, to offer you forgiveness for of all your failures, and He rose from the grave to give you a new spiritual life that is rooted in love, not fear.

And He made this really phenomenal statement.

Matthew 11:28-30 (NKJV)

Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 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. 30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

Learn from Jesus. Do you recall a single time in the bible that Jesus seemed stressed about keeping the Father’s commandments? Are there any accounts of Him telling the disciples that it’s just too hard, or that it’s impossible, or it seems too strict?

Why?

His mission was rooted in love. He so loved the Father and so loved us, that it was not a burden but a privilege to love the Father, obey His commands, and love His children.

How did Jesus do it? The help of the Holy Spirit, and prayer.

Love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul, love your neighbor as yourself. If that seems burdensome.....You need to go back to God’s love for you. Pray, study the Word, ask for an understanding of being beloved.

Because when you understand that love you begin to see God differently....and when you see God differently you see His commandments differently.

If we see His commandments as a list of things we have to do they become burdensome. When we realize God’s love for us and we love Him in return, we want to please Him and the commandments go from a list of things we have to do to a list of things we get to do. It’s life changing....

I saw this post that Ashten shared a few days ago: *“Begin your day with an “I get to” mentality instead of an “I have to” thought process.... I GET to go to work. I GET to have a busy day. Whatever it may be. We often dress our opportunities as stress, but they are in fact blessings.”*

This holds true for obeying God. It's more about our mentality then it is about what God requires of us. Go back to Jesus coming to save you.....He didn't do it because He was required to. He didn't view it as a burden, but as a privilege. He got to come and die and save.

And we don't have to love.....but we get to.....we don't have to have a relationship with the God who created us and came to save us....but we get to.....we don't have to listen to what He says....but we get to.....and it's what's best for us, always.

Have faith in Jesus. Obey the Father. Then.....who's ready for the victory?

1 John 5:4 (NKJV)

For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world— our faith.

Isn't that a comforting verse? I mean....if I love Jesus then I'm born of God, and if I'm born of God then I overcome the world??? Praise Jesus! I'm a victor!

But sometimes it sure doesn't feel like it....actually there are a lot of aspects of my life where I don't feel victorious. But the Word says.....but I don't feel....but the Word says.....but I don't feel.....

Anyone else have this struggle? I'll tell you that we do need to believe the Word of God. We need to KNOW the Word of God. But there are times where just repeating a verse works and there are times where it doesn't.

Sometimes our issue is deeper than that. There are times we have to go back to WHY we should even believe that verse in the first place.....

What does John say is the victory that has overcome the world?

OUR FAITH

It brings this full circle. What is your faith?

Now we all may explain that a little differently, but it comes back to verse 1, Do you believe that Jesus is the Christ?

- If you believe that Jesus is the Christ, then you believe that God saves, and you believe that Jesus is the anointed One, the One who brings you that salvation

- And if you believe that Jesus has saved you, then you believe that you need saving.
- And if you believe that you need saving, then you believe that you couldn't save yourself, there is some issue that we know to be sin, that you can't overcome on your own.

NOW.....IF you are a sinner needing saved, and Jesus came to save you, and you believe that, then you are born of God.

- You are free from sin.
- This world has no hold on you.
- Everything you need to overcome, Jesus has already defeated.
- You have been made new
- You have the Spirit of the living God within you
- You have a Father, and a family
- Jesus is coming back to bring that family to the Father

THIS FAITH.....it's what overcomes because IT IS the victory.....

1 Corinthians 15:57 (NKJV)

But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

There's no mystery to victory. It's in Jesus. It's in our faith in Him. It's our hope in Him.

Romans 15:13 (NKJV)

Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

See the joy and peace is IN BELIEVING.....FAITH.....and we need that so we may abound in HOPE

You know what hope is....expectation of good.....expectation of God

It's because of our faith in Jesus, Savior of sinners, Deliverer of captives, Healer of hurt, Restorer of brokenness....it's our faith in Him that we have hope....expectation of good....leads to expectation of God.....leads to victory

1 John 5:5 (NKJV)

Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

Raise your hand if you believe that Jesus is the Son of God.

You know who overcomes the world? IT'S YOU.

Say "IT'S ME!"