

Discussion Questions: Love to Change the World - 1 John 5:1-13

Drawn from the October 15, 2023 sermon by Dr. Jeff Chandler

Opener: Think of a Christian you respect, what sets them apart?

Four marks of a Christian (based on 1 John 5)

I. Believe that Jesus is the Christ

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.... 1 John 5:1

1. What do you think “born of God” means and how does it relate to fully trusting in Him as the Messiah (Christ)?

II. Love other Christians

...and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well. This is how we know that we love the children of God... 1 John 5:1-2

2. How can a person know if he or she loves God’s people?

3. What is the difference between loving our neighbor as we love ourselves, and loving as Jesus loved us?

4. What kind of selflessness and sacrifices does Jesus' new criteria (see John 13:34) require?

III. Obedience to God's Commands

This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome... 1
John 5:3

5. What is the correlation between our love for God and our obedience to Him?

6. John says that God's commands are not burdensome. This is similar to when Jesus said that his yoke is easy and burden is light (Matthew 11:30). It is also in contrast to the burdensome regulations of the scribes and Pharisees (Matthew 23:4). Jesus described the greatest commandments in Matthew 22:37-40, to love God and love others. Why are these commands not burdensome?

IV. Walk daily with Him

⁴for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. ⁵Who is it that overcomes the world? Only the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God. ⁶This is the one who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ. He did not come by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. ⁷For there are three that testify: ⁸the^[a] Spirit, the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement.

7. John promises that as we walk daily with the Lord we will overcome the world. How have you seen this to be the case?

8. What is the significance of the water, the blood, and the Spirit all testifying about Jesus being the Son of God?

God's Testimony

⁹ We accept human testimony, but God's testimony is greater because it is the testimony of God, which he has given about his Son. ¹⁰ Whoever believes in the Son of God accepts this testimony. Whoever does not believe God has made him out to be a liar, because they have not believed the testimony God has given about his Son. ¹¹ And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. ¹² Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life. ¹³ I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of Gods so that you may know that you have eternal life.

9. What testimony about Jesus is most convincing to you and why is knowing (verse 13) that we have eternal life in Jesus Christ so important?

Group Prayer Time: This final section provides an excellent description of what true belief looks like. John does not want us to wallow in self-doubt, but to know clearly the description of the children of God, so that we can be confident in our faith. Pray for one another that you would continue to be assured by God in this area. Also pray for any needs people are facing in the group.

For Personal Reflection on your own:

When did you come to believe that Jesus is the Son of God?

How might you use this passage to assure a person who was doubting if they were really a Christian?

We will not be covering the verses of 1 John 5:14-21 in this series. You may want to read it and work through the following questions this week.

1 John 5:14-15

- A. Would you pray more confidently if you knew it was God's will? What ways do you try to determine if this is the case?

1 John 5:16-19

- B. Verse 18 says God's children do not go on sinning or make a practice of sinning. How does this verse compare with 1 John 3:9? Would you make a distinction between occasional sin and habitual sin?

- C. It says in 1 Peter 5:8 that "your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour". In light of this danger, how are you encouraged by the assurance in verses 18-19?

1 John 5:20-21

- D. The true God is certain. What have you learned from this study of I John that has made your faith more sure and steadfast?

Next week, Oct 22, pastor Rick will be preaching on "God's Good Intentions" and there will be discussion questions available in "Downloads" on the SCC website.