1 John 5:1-5 | Sunday April 12, 2026

1 John 3:11 NAS95

> (11) For **this is the message** which you have heard **from the beginning**, that we **should** love one another;

1 John 4:21 NAS95

> (21) And **this commandment** we have **from Him**, that the one who loves God **should** love his **brother** also.

Throughout this entire section on love, John has been trying to show how loving God and loving our brothers and sisters in Christ are intimately connected. This was not just someone's opinion, but the message we heard from the beginning is a commandment from Jesus. This love for God and others is not primarily emotional but is practical and based in truth (3:18). God is love, so we **cannot claim to know Him** without showing His love (4:8). We also **cannot claim that we do not know what love is** because God revealed His love to us by sending Jesus to be the perfect payment for sins (4:9). As we come to know and love God, we are to reflect His self-sacrificial love. In case anyone tries to **claim that they do not know who their brother or sister is,** John addresses that at the beginning of chapter 5.

1 John 5:1-5 ESV

> (1) **Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God**, and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of Him.
> (2) By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey His commandments.
> (3) For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.
> (4) For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.
> (5) Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

There is one qualification to being a brother or sister in Christ, and that is to believe in Jesus. John never defines being a Christian any other way. We are not born again because of our **lifestyle, good works, or obedience to God**. These come later in our new life. We are born again by believing in Jesus as the Christ.

John 20:30-31 ESV

> (30) Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book;
> (31) but **these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.**

When we believe in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God, we have life. We are born again.

John 1:12-13 ESV

> (12) But to all who did receive Him, **who believed in His name**, **He gave the right to become children of God,**
> (13) who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but **of**

> **God.**

Nicodemus, a teacher of the law, did not understand what it meant to be born again. In Acts 15, the Apostles had to debate what was required to be born again. Throughout church history, so much has been added to this definition. For many years people thought they were saved because of the country they were born into and the religion they were baptized into as a baby. Today, many think they have to change something or clean themselves up to be born again. Yet, verse after verse makes it so clear that the core issue is Jesus. **We are to believe, have faith, and receive who He is as the Son of God and what He did as the Christ**. When someone believes in Jesus, they are born again and are a brother and sister in the family of Jesus. This offer to believe is for everyone.

1 Timothy 2:3-4 ESV

> (3) This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior,
> (4) **who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth**.

God loved all of humanity and made the offer of salvation, to be born again, available to everyone. God desires for all people to be saved. He loves all of us that much.

1 John 5:1 ESV

> (1) Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and **everyone who loves the Father** loves whoever has been born of Him.

It is so interesting to see that everyone who believes is not automatically the same as everyone who loves the Father. We are born again by our belief in Jesus. Then in our growth we are called to learn what it is to love the Father. Think about the illustration God gives about being born into His family. **What defines the core relationship between a child and parent?** Is it the protection or care the parent shows? Is it the times together and fellowship they have? Is it the love they show each other? Each of these should come out of a child and parent relationship, but they are not the core definition. Whoever is born from the parent is the biological child. **Their DNA proves the biological relationship.** The same is true in our salvation.

Once we are born into the family of God by believing, nothing can undo that. Our DNA as a child of God cannot be altered or changed. There are many things that are to be reflected in our life as a believer. Specifically loving God and loving our brothers and sisters in Christ, but having this love did not cause us to be born again. **Meaning if we are not loving, then our status as a child should not be called into question.** We do not save ourselves, and we do not keep ourselves saved. The phrase born of God **is in the passive voice**. It is something done to us. We had as much to do with our spiritual birth as we did our natural birth. Then we are to grow up as a member of the family of God and are called to love.

1 John 5:1 NET

> (1) Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been fathered by God, **and everyone who loves the Father loves the child fathered by Him.**

We are to have a love for the Father and a love for all of our other siblings of the Father. This means our love for our siblings **is not based on who they are or how they act but is based on who their Father is**. We are called to love our brother and sister in Christ **even if they are not acting like our brother or sister**. Matthew 18:15-17 and 1 Corinthians 5:9-13 describe the love we are called to have for our fellow believers when they are living in sin. Out of love, we may

even be called to break fellowship with them out of a hope that they repent. The love we are called to show each other is real, practical, and based on truth. **It is to be based on who our Father is and how He defines love**. Which raises the question, how can we know if we are truly loving our brothers and sisters in Christ?

1 John 5:2 ESV

> (2) By this we know that we **love the children of God**, **when we love God and obey His commandments.**

The most loving thing I can do for my fellow brother and sister in Christ is to love God and obey His commandments. This is not done in a self-focus. **We are not able to biblically love others unless we are growing in our relationship with Jesus and following His commandments.** The closer I grow in relationship to Him, the more loving I will be. Having an abiding walk with Jesus and growing close to Him is the best way I can love anyone else. Notice commandments is in the plural. This is describing the whole of the Word of God. It means walking in our new nature and obediently following Him. We walk in His love when we follow His commandments.

1 John 5:3 ESV

> (3) **For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments**. And His commandments are not burdensome.

Love is not an emotional experience or butterflies in the stomach. **True biblical love is a moral commitment;** it is practical and active. This means that we do not follow the commandments of God out of a duty or because we have to. That is such a low way of living. We are called to follow the commandments of the Word because we see they show God's love for us and our love for others. **Being obedient out of love is a very high level of living.**

Colossians 3:5-10 ESV

> (5) Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: **sexual immorality**, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.
> (6) On account of these the wrath of God is coming.
> (7) In these you too once walked, when you were living in them.
> (8) **But now you must put them all away**: anger, wrath, malice, **slander**, and obscene talk from your mouth.
> (9) Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices
> (10) and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.

Not being sexually immoral because you might get caught or punished is a weak motivation. When the right opportunity presents itself and no one will know, then our moral lines start to change. Instead, we are not to be sexually immoral because we understand that **in His great love, God has given us a tremendous gift** and shown us how and when we will be most **fulfilled in it and be able to glorify Him**. Likewise, we could not slander for fear someone will hear us, yet this can be hard because we already had the critiquing thoughts and are so tempted to share them. Instead, we are to not slander and disrespect someone because we see them as someone who is loved by and valuable to God. Notice we are not judging our love based on an emotional reaction but on obediently following God's commandments as we are **motivated by His love. When we see the commandments of scripture this way, they no longer are burdensome but a joy.**

Matthew 11:28-30 NAS95

> (28) "Come to Me, **all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.**
> (29) "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS.
> (30) **"For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."**

If I am doing something because I have to do it, then it is not easy, but if I am doing it because I want to, out of love, then it becomes easy. **The Christian life is not meant to be an overwhelming yoke or burden.** Walking with Jesus is to be a joy. He will rest us. The end of verses 3 and 4 explains where the power comes from so that walking in His commandments is not burdensome.

1 John 5:3-4 NET

> (3) For this is the love of God: that we keep His commandments. **And His commandments do not weigh us down,**
> **(4) because everyone who has been fathered by God conquers the world**. This is the conquering power that has conquered the world: our faith.

This translation shows the connection between verses 3 and 4 very well. The connecting word **is not "for," like at** the beginning of verse 3, but is the word **"because" or "since."** God's commandments are not **burdensome, heavy, or troublesome**, because anyone born of God **conquers or overcomes** the world. As a born-again child of God, we have the ability to walk in His commands. He enables us to have the strength to obey His commandments and for them to not be burdensome.

Deuteronomy 30:11-14 ESV

> (11) "For this commandment that I command you today **is not too hard for you, neither is it far off.**
> (12) It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will ascend to heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?'
> (13) Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?'
> (14) But the word is very near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart, **so that you can do it.**

Moses is instructing Israel as they prepare to enter the promised land. **The promised land is a picture of a spirit-filled, abiding walk with God**. It is meant to show us the closeness to God that we can have. **God did not give us impossible commands to follow.** He enables us to obey them through His strength. We have the power to walk in a spirit-filled life because He overcame the world.

1 John 5:4-5 NAS95

> (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 the one who overcomes the world, **but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?**

The emphasis is not on our power or strength to overcome but **on the power of the new birth in Jesus**. It is not that we are strong enough, but that we have been born of God. **Jesus is the one who secured the victory**. The word is nikē. He is victorious.

1 Corinthians 15:57 ESV

> (57) But thanks be to God, **who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ**.

The victory is found in Him. The word victory assumes that there was a conquest or battle. No one is strong enough to enter into this battle with sin and come out victorious other than Jesus.

Revelation 5:3-7 NAS95

> (3) And **no one in heaven** or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the book or to look into it.
> (4) **Then I began to weep** greatly because no one was **found worthy** to open the book or to look into it;
> (5) and one of the elders *said to me, "Stop weeping; behold**, the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome so as to open the book and its seven seals."**
> (6) And I saw between the throne (with the four living creatures) and the **elders a Lamb standing, as if slain,** having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth.
> (7) And He came and took the book out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne.

This book wraps up all things for humanity and creation, and no one is worthy to open it and enact what is in it. There are perfect angels present, and not one can do it. John weeps over this. **The Lion, who is the lamb that was slain, is the one who has overcome.** He is the one who is worthy. He is victorious. What is truly amazing is that then we are able to walk in His victory through faith.

Galatians 2:20 ESV

> (20) I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And **the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God**, who loved Me and gave Himself for me.

We are born again and become a child of God by having faith in Jesus. We are to continue to live by faith in Jesus. We have the strength to be obedient to His commands by faith in Him. **Our new life is in Jesus, and we have access to it and walk in its power by faith.**

Hebrews 11:1; 6 ESV

> (1) Now faith **is the assurance of things hoped for**, **the conviction of things not seen**.
> (6) **And without faith it is impossible to please Him**, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that He exists **and that He rewards those who seek Him.**

Faith is taking God at His Word. Faith is having an **ownership and title deed of the things we look forward to**, and **presenting evidence of the truth of what we cannot see right now**. Without faith we are utterly powerless to please God.
