

## **A Compelling Conclusion (Part 2 of # 18)**

1 John 5: 13-21

As we continue to consider the closing words of John in his first epistle, we are mindful of the many difficulties and obstacles the early church faced. John has dealt with false doctrine, the spirit of antichrist, personal sin, and the great need to love one another as well as the Lord. He knew living a life pleasing to the Lord, while possessing an attitude of love, would be quite difficult within the confines of their society. The only way to overcome and enjoy a triumphant Christian life was to rest in the strength and provision of Christ. [1 John 4:4 – Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.](#) [1 John 5:4 – For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.](#)

Times have changed, but the difficulties we face share many similarities with those of John's day. The same holds true for the modern church. If we are to overcome and live pleasing unto the Lord, being productive in the journey, we too must abide in Christ. He is the source of our salvation and the source of our strength. We can overcome in Him.

In our last study, we began to examine the [aspects of life](#) John discusses while considering: [A Compelling Conclusion](#). We looked at:

### **I. The Certainty in Life (13-15)**

### **II. The Conviction in Life (16-17)**

Finally we discover:

**III. The Confidence in Life (18-21)** – Here John offers a final exhortation as a reminder of the many benefits we enjoy while being in Christ. There is great confidence in Him. He speaks of:

**A. Our Character (18)** – [We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not.](#) There is no doubt John is speaking to the church, to those who are born again in Christ. He deals with the great need for upright character in our lives. Many would look at this verse and claim John reveals the possibility of sinless perfection. He refers to those who are born of God not engaging in sin. The key is considering what he has said within the entire context. We keep ourselves from the world, and in doing so, the

enemy loses his ability to tempt and mislead us. This is speaking of the desire and habit of continual sin. Those who are in Christ are not perfect, in that they never sin, but they no longer enjoy sin or purposely seek an opportunity to sin.

- As we consider this exhortation, we must also recognize the great need for sanctification. Those who are begotten of God are to *keep themselves* (refraining from the lusts and desires of the flesh.) This is an element of Christian character that is little discussed in our day. We are bought with a price, and no longer our own. We belong to the Lord and are obligated to live in a way that pleases Him. James reminds us we are to remain unspotted from the world.
- Also John mentions those who keep themselves from the desires of the flesh, avoiding sin at all costs, are *not touched by the wicked one*. That is not to say we will never be tempted or face trials and adversity brought about by the devil, but he will not have dominion over our lives. His attempts to lure us away will be ineffective as we walk in close communion with the Lord.

**B. Our Comprehension** (19) – *And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness*. This relates directly to our character and how we live our lives before the world, but it also reveals the need for continual awareness. We live among a world that does not share our faith. The majority today are not living in order to please the Lord. They are living to satisfy the flesh. The world is consumed with wickedness. You don't have to look far, even within our little town, to spot the detrimental impact of sin.

- As long as men are on the earth and Satan is on the prowl, sin and wickedness will remain, but we do not have to be ignorant of it or taken by surprise. We must be vigilant in our watch, walking close with the Lord, and constant in prayer. *1 Peter 5:8-10 – Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:* <sup>[9]</sup> *Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.* <sup>[10]</sup> *But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.*

**C. Our Champion** (20a) – *And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true*. John reminds us of the gracious coming of Christ our Lord to provide for our salvation. While in sin we were enslaved to the lusts of the flesh; we were condemned before God, and faced the eternal consequence of our sin. Christ came and provided the means of reconciliation to God and forgiveness of sin.

- That alone is enough to rejoice in, but the Lord's benefits are many. After coming to Christ in salvation, He enlightens our minds and understanding. We no longer live void of truth and

wisdom in this life. We are not alone in the journey, forced to deal with the assaults of the enemy within mere human ability. He provides strength and guidance through the Holy Spirit. We begin to look at life from a spiritual perspective, rather than from a physical or social point of view. Life is difficult, but we have a source of strength and provision in the Lord.

- Also we discover the gracious benefit of being able to know him that is true, none other than the Lord Himself. As we walk with the Lord, growing in grace and wisdom, we learn more of Him. I can't describe the joy I felt the moment I was saved, but my understanding of it all was quite limited at that time. There is much I still cannot comprehend, but my understanding of the doctrines of grace and the Lord I serve are much deeper than before. I enjoy a closer relationship with Christ today than I did the moment I was saved. The more I learn of Him, the more I love Him, and the deeper our relationship becomes!

**D. Our Conversion (20b)** – *and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.* As John closes his letter, he wants to remind the believer yet again of their relationship with the Lord. All the saved are in Christ and enjoy the abundance He provides. We can rest in the assurance of eternal life in heaven with God the Father and His Son, our Savior and Lord, Jesus Christ.

- I am still amazed and the grace of God bestowed on sinners such as we are. I know I was undeserving of any of His mercies and yet He loved me enough to provide the way of salvation. It isn't available only to me, but it was freely given and I rejoice in that. I am secure in Christ the Lord regardless of what I face or endure in this life. I may go by the rapture or through death, but either way I will spend the endless age with the Lord. What a gracious, loving Lord we serve. All the saved will have the privilege of offering worship to Him while we enjoy His eternal presence in heaven! *John 14:1-3 – Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.* <sup>[2]</sup> *In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.* <sup>[3]</sup> *And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.*

**E. Our Challenge (21)** – *Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.* Context must always be considered when reading and applying Scripture. We know there were many false doctrines being promoted in John's day, as well as many idolatrous religions. The people would have been exposed to such idolatry and John knew there was the possibility of corruption. The key he seeks to emphasize is spiritual purity. They were not to allow anything to have superiority over Christ in their lives. Society may have embraced such idols, but they were expected to refrain from idol worship and the sin that accompanies such activity.

- Our society isn't filled with idols made of wood or stone like those of John's day or even like other parts of our world, but we too must guard against idolatry. Anything we allow to come between us and the Lord is viewed as an idol. If we place more emphasis on other people, activities, or even ideals, we have created an idol that is being worshipped. I know we don't like to think in those terms, but it is true nonetheless. We must guard our hearts against anything that seeks the place reserved for the Lord.

**Conclusion:** I have really enjoyed our time moving through the first epistle of John. It has been an enlightening journey. We have found great encouragement and many exhortations to live our lives pleasing to the Lord. We are in the midst of difficult days and they will continue to get worse. If we are to overcome, we must be walking with the Lord. Our lives must be lived in light of His holy standard, keeping sin confessed, and engaging in continual prayer.

Love has been a major theme and I hope we all sense the need for love in our day. We will never reach the lost, encourage one another, or serve the Lord apart from love. I suppose our church does as good a job with that as anyone else, but we are not to measure our lives by the standards of the world or in comparison to others. Is our love what it should be when measured by the Word of God? No doubt there is plenty of room for improvement.

This epistle was written to challenge and strengthen the believer. John spoke much concerning a personal relationship with Christ, even providing marks by which we can know we are saved. Do you know Christ as your Savior? Are you confident of your salvation? If not you can be. Christ came to save and He wants all to be confident of their salvation. Seek Him as He leads!