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WHEN FAITH AND LOVE ARE JOINED

A STUDY OF 1 JOHN
NUMBER 32
1 JOHN 5.1-5

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1 JOHN 5:1-5 "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous. For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?"

Those of us who live in the Church Age are living in the intensified stage of the Angelic Conflict. There are many things unique to the Church Age, things that were unknown in Old Testament times.

1. In the Church Age every believer is in union with the Lord Jesus Christ. When we are converted, the Holy Spirit does five things for us, one of which is to enter us into union with Christ.
2. Let us remember that every believer is indwelt with Christ at the moment of salvation, and Christ dwells within the believer to give him fellowship, companionship and guidance.
3. Every believer is also indwelt by the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit dwells within the believer to furnish power for the execution of the Christian life.
4. Every believer becomes a priest at the moment of salvation and is thereby qualified to deal with God for himself in all spiritual matters. The universal priesthood of all believers is the basis for freedom and privacy. Since each believer does business with God for himself, this is a private matter between the believer and God.
5. Every believer has a complete Canon of Scripture and this is so the content of Scripture can be learned and used.
6. This also means that every believer has a supernatural way of life and can expect supernatural power from God which makes the spiritual life possible.
7. Every believer (regardless of I.Q.) has the potential to become a mature believer.
8. Every single believer is considered by God to be in full-time Christian service. There are no exemptions.

1 JOHN 5:1 "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him." This "whosoever" refers to any member of the human race and it also introduces for us the doctrine of unlimited atonement. This great doctrine is taught in many passages. Let us look at these verses.

2 CORINTHIANS 5:15 "And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again."

2 CORINTHIANS 5:19 "To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."

1 TIMOTHY 2:6 "Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time."

1 TIMOTHY 4:10 "For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe."

HEBREWS 2:9 "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man."

2 PETER 2:1 "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction."

1 JOHN 2:2 "And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

All of these passages teach us that every single sin of the whole human race was poured out on Christ on the cross. This "whosoever" tells us that every person who has ever or will ever live is included in the plan of God. That song "Jesus Included Me" is scripturally correct. No one has ever been excluded from the plan of God. There is salvation enough to go around and no one is left out.

"Believeth" is the present, active, participle of pisteuo. This is a non-meritorious transitive verb. The individual is the subject and Jesus Christ is the object. This present tense refers to any moment of time when one believes in Christ. The active voice means that each person must believe for himself. The participle means that it is this way for every member of the whole human race.

Next we have "that Jesus is the Christ." "Christ" is a Greek word and means the same as the Hebrew word messiah. These words mean the commissioned, the appointed one. In eternity past, Christ the Messiah was commissioned to be our Saviour. (Not Buddah, not Zoroaster, not Confucius, not Mohammed, not Mary Baker Patterson Eddy, or anyone else.) So to be saved, the only one we can believe on is Jesus Christ. Jesus is a Greek word and means Saviour. This is exactly what we have in Acts 4:12. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

So we read "Believeth that Jesus is the Christ." This "is" is the verb of eternal existence. He has always been the Christ and always will be. He became Jesus when he was born in Bethlehem, but he has always been the Christ.

The word "is born" is the perfect, passive, indicative of gennao and this perfect tense means one is born with the idea that this birth extends into eternity. The passive voice is the voice of grace. It means we receive this new birth as a grace gift from God. Once you believe, you are born into the family of God and you are there to stay. Therefore reaffirmation of faith is for ignorant Christians. Once you are born, you can't be unborn. Then we have "of God" and this means out from the source of God.

Now We Move Into Mental Attitude

Now we have "every one that loveth" so you see, this moves us on to a mental attitude which is the result of mature Christian living. Please remember this--believers do not just instinctively love God. It takes capacity in order to love God and many believers have not developed that capacity. AND IT TAKES LOVE FOR GOD IN ORDER TO BE ABLE TO LOVE OTHER PEOPLE. You can't have one without the other. If the believer has mental attitude love for God, this develops the capacity for loving other people. Doctrine in the mind is the soil in which this kind of love grows. The words "that begat" come from the aorist active, participle of gennao and this refers to an occurrence in eternity past when God foreknew what we would do in time, and he chose us and predestined us to eternal life. His choosing us and determining us didn't have anything to do with our decision, it just shows God in his perfect omniscience knew what we would do when we came along. The words "him that is begotten" is also a perfect active, participle and refers to all the born again people of all time. Therefore get this great truth in your mind--LEARN DOCTRINE SO YOU WILL COME TO KNOW HOW TO LOVE GOD, AND WHEN THIS HAPPENS THEN YOU BEGIN TO DEVELOP THE CAPACITY FOR LOVING OTHERS.

1 JOHN 5:2 "By this we know that we love the children of God when we love God, and keep his commandments. By this" means "by means of this principle of doctrine." Then we have the words "we know" and this is a present, active, indicative of genosko. It means we come to know and we keep on understanding this. Next we have "and keep his commandments" but the Greek New Testament says, "And do his commandments" and the word is poieo. Later we will have "keep his commandments" and that word is tereo. Doing his commandments means that it takes doctrine in the mind so you will know how to do his commandments. You can't do this on your own, this is the work of God in you.

1 JOHN 5:3 "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous." This verse says, "This keeps on being the love of God." Now we go to the phrase "and keep his commandments" and the word is tereo. You guard and keep his commandments and this makes it possible for you to do his commandments. Consistent learning of doctrine produces the doing of the commandments. Let us remember this--God's commandments are not too heavy for us. Your capacity for happiness depends on being consistent in taking in Bible doctrine. AND DON'T TRY TO SUBSTITUTE YOUR EXPERIENCE FOR THAT WHICH BIBLE DOCTRINE WILL PRODUCE IN YOU. If you rely on experience, then your old sin nature will get you off on a detour, but Bible doctrine will keep you on course, will keep you from going off on some wild detour. You can't live the Christian life on sincerity, determination, or sheer human effort. This has to come from the work of God in you, and the raw material God uses in producing the results comes from doctrine.

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." This "has been born" is the perfect, passive, participle of gennao and this includes every born again person of all time. Then we have the word "overcometh" and this is a present, active, indicative of nikao and it means that every believer of all time wins in the Angelic Conflict. It doesn't mean that every believer is a victorious Christian, but it means that once you are born again, you are an overcomer so far as Satan ever being able to take you to hell. The word "world" here is from kosmos and this refers to Satan's kingdom. This victory is our "faith" and this is from the word pistis and this means doctrine resident in the soul. This includes two concepts here. It includes inhale faith and exhale faith, you inhale the truth and store it in your human spirit and then you can exhale faith toward God. You learn it and then you can use it. This is exactly the same thing James is talking about in James 1:18-25 when he says, "Be not a hearer of the Word only, but a doer of the Word." A doer of the Word is the one who exhales faith toward God from his human spirit. Therefore, there are two sides to this faith, the learning side and the exhale side, the side where we apply it to life. This is a good time to stop here and take in seven points on the faith rest technique.

THE DOCTRINE OF FAITH-REST

1. Mechanics.

We find this taught in many passages and we will look at two of them.

HEBREWS 3:6 "But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end."

HEBREWS 4:16 "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

Faith on the inside reaches out and takes hold on the promises of God.

2. Faith-Rest, A Basic Means Of Spirituality.

Faith-rest is the way the Old Testament saints lived and accomplished great things. They did not have the advantage of having the holy Spirit living within them like we do today. Some few of them were given the assistance of the Holy Spirit, but in the Church Age every believer has the Holy Spirit within. Faith-rest was the basic means of spirituality in Old Testament times.

3. The Indwelling Holy Spirit Unique To Church Age Believers.

This is shown in John 7:39, John 16:14, 1 Cor. 6:19, and 20, Gal. 5:16, Eph. 5:18.

JOHN 7:39 "(But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)"

4. Faith-Rest Produces A Relaxed Mental Attitude.

ISAIAH 26:3-4 "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord JEHOVAH is everlasting strength:"

5. Faith-Rest Is The Dynamics Of Prayer.
MATTHEW 21:22 "And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive."
6. Faith-Rest Is Always A Part Of Spiritual Victory.
This is exactly what is being brought out in these verses we are now studying.
7. Faith-Rest Is Found In Every Dispensation.
Faith-rest goes along with the filling of The Holy Spirit.
Faith-rest is not to be discontinued just because we have the baptism of the Holy Spirit.
2 CORINTHIANS 5:7 "(For we walk by faith, not by sight:)"

1 JOHN 5:5 "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" This victory is not referring to a victory at some future date in heaven, but is rather referring to the victory we have here and now in this life. Indeed every believer will be an "overcomer" in heaven, but this is referring to our overcoming condition here in this life while we live in the earth. Every believer is a winner. We will see in the next verse three forces that witness to this truth, and this will be our next study.