

Love PERFECTED

WEEK 6
PERFECT LOVE = NO FEAR

1 John 4:13-21

1. To _____ Him is to _____ in _____ and _____. (v. 13-16)

2. God's _____ is _____ in us as we _____ in _____. (v. 17-18)

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3. _____ others _____ our love for _____ and is only _____
on _____ for _____ ... not _____. (v. 19-21)

DAY 1

Pray: 1 John 5:4 says, "And this is the victory that overcomes the world- our faith." Meditate on this passage. You overcome, that is you carry the victory off the battlefield, by your full persuasion in who Christ is! Thank the Lord for the faith that he has imparted to you that brings victory over the world. Ask the Lord to continue to birth faith within you as you study his word today.

Memorize: This week we will be memorizing 1 John 5:4. Write our memory verse on the lines below and read it aloud a few times.

Study: As John wraps up his letter, he moves to a discussion of the faith of the believer. Let's begin today by reading 1 John 5: 1-5.

1. John gives us some spiritual "equations of faith" in this passage. Let's see if we can connect some truths together.

a. What is the core belief that everything hinges on (verse 1a)? _____

b. What is the result of that belief? _____

c. To be "born of God" means that God has bestowed upon a person the nature and disposition of sons or daughters, imparting to them spiritual life. Thank the Lord now for making you His child and for giving you the privileges that belong to those in His family!

d. Why do you think that love for our brothers and sisters in Christ is a sign of faith in Christ? _____

The Jamison-Fausset-Brown Commentary says, "Why are we to love our brother? Because we have both been begotten of God in his image, and if we are to show our love to God, we must show it to his visible representative."

- e. What proof does John give us to help us know that we are really loving our fellow brothers and sisters (verse 2)? _____

- f. Let's summarize John's teachings. Fill in the blanks from verses 1-3.
When we believe in the _____, we are born of _____. As a child of God who loves the Father, our lives will be filled with love for his _____. True love for our fellow believers will be marked by love for the _____ and _____ to his commands.
2. John equates three things here: love for the Father, love for fellow believers, and obedience to the Father's commands. Take a moment to think now:
- a. In what ways is your life consistent with the spiritual equation John is presenting? _____

- b. Describe any inconsistencies that you see. _____

3. John states that God's commandments are not burdensome. This word means heavy, weighty, and oppressive. Do you find John's statement to be true in your life: are the Lord's commands freeing for you? Why or why not? _____

4. What truth does John reveal in verses 4 and 5? _____

5. Who first made the statement "overcome the world" and when was it made? (To find out read John 16:33.) _____
Think about the timing of Jesus' statement. He was getting ready to die on a cross at the hands of men, and yet he was saying, "I have overcome the world." From an earthly standpoint, it did not look like Jesus was overcoming the world, but that he was being overcome by it.
6. What do you think it means to "overcome the world"? _____

7. Let's bring some of the "equations of faith" together now. Fill in the blanks.

To overcome the _____ = to keep God's _____ = as we exercise faith in _____

Overcoming the world means that we are keeping God's commands in spite of what the world would throw at us. This is how we overcome!

8. McLaren's Expository explains the passage this way: "The world conquers me when it succeeds in hindering me from seeing, loving, holding communion with, and serving my Father God. I conquer the world when I lay my hand upon it and force it to help me get nearer to him, to get liker him, to think more often of him, to do his will more gladly and constantly." Prayerfully consider now: Are you overcoming the world by allowing it to push you closer to your Father or are you allowing it to overcome you and hinder your relationship with the Lord? Pray now and ask the Father to help you to conquer the world each moment of every day just as Jesus did, by obeying His commands.

DAY 2

Pray: 1 John 5:11 says, "And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life and this life is in his Son." Meditate now on this verse. The age-long life that begins now and lasts forever is *in* Christ. This means that as you are rooted in Christ, his life operates in you from the inside out. He is changing your *heart* which will affect all other aspects of your life! As you begin studying today, ask the Lord to continue to work in your heart as his Word penetrates and changes you from the inside out.

Memorize: Continue memorizing 1 John 5:4 by repeating the first phrase aloud, "For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world.". Emphasize different words as you repeat the phrase a few times.

Study: Today we will continue learning about faith as we study 1 John 5:6-11. Begin by reading the passage.

1. Look for frequently used words in the passage. Record them on the line. _____

2. What do you learn about God in this passage? _____

3. What do you learn about yourself in this passage? _____

4. Let's look a little closer at this scripture. Remember that John is speaking in opposition to the gnostic heresy that was leading many people astray. This heresy stated that Jesus was not fully human and therefore could not redeem us.
 - a. 8 times in this passage we come across the word testimony or a variant of it. The word testimony means to *witness, give evidence, give a good report, to prove or confirm*. According to verse 9, who does the testimony about Jesus come from and why should we believe it? _____

 - b. According to verse 9, John argues that if we actively believe the words of men, we should willingly receive the testimony of God. Is there any area of your life where you are not accepting the testimony of God? (Think specifically about God's Word. Are there any parts that you are not applying to your life?) _____

5. What are the three testimonies that God has given us concerning Jesus that are in "agreement"? (verse 8) _____

6. How do the Spirit, the water, and the blood testify to Jesus as the Christ? There are a variety of interpretations about this passage from various scholars. Some would say that the Spirit and the water refer to Christ's baptism, when the Spirit descended on Jesus and the voice from heaven confirmed him as God's Son (see John 3:13-17), and that the blood references his shed blood on the cross. Others would say they are symbolic of Old Covenant practices that Christ fulfilled. Both of these may be true. There is one other explanation that makes sense. Look at John 19:33-35.

a. What flowed from Christ's side when it was pierced (John 19:33-34)? _____

b. Why does John (the man who saw this) say he is testifying to this (John 19:35)? _____

Remember that John was speaking against the heresy that Jesus was not fully man. The evidence that Jesus' own water and blood flowed was a sure sign that he was fully human. The Spirit testifies through the prophets, the apostles, and the witness of our own hearts as well as through the powerful signs that Jesus performed that Jesus was fully God.

7. How is this testimony from God about Jesus' humanity and divinity important to your own life?

8. What does John declare about the person who does not believe God's testimony (verse 10)? _____

9. Is there any area in your life where you are allowing unbelief to rule your heart and are "making God a liar"? (Think about areas where you struggle to walk in freedom and how unbelief might play a role in your lack of freedom.) _____

10. What is the message of the testimony God has given (verse 11)? _____

11. It's time for a heart check: Do you believe the testimony that God has given about his Son? Write a prayer of response to the Lord now. Confess to the Lord any areas where you are not walking in faith in the Son. Ask the Lord to build your faith as you place your trust in Him and His testimony.

DAY 3

Pray: 1 John 5:13 says, "I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life." Think about the awesome promise that is contained here. You can know that you have eternal life! This "knowing" is a clarity of mind that comes as you entrust yourself to the character of Christ. Thank the Lord that you can clearly know where you stand before him and ask him to root you in this understanding as you study today.

Memorize: Continue memorizing 1 John 5:4. Repeat the second part of the verse now, "And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith." Emphasize different words as you repeat it a few times. Then add the first phrase you learned yesterday. Repeat the verse in its entirety now.

Study: Begin by reading 1 John 5:12-13. Use the passage to help you answer the questions.

1. Look for frequently used words in the passage. List them on the line. _____

2. What do you learn about God in this passage? _____

3. What do you learn about yourself in this passage? _____

4. John is very clear: (fill in the blanks from verse 12)
Whoever has the _____ has _____. Whoever does not have
the _____ does not have _____.
5. What is the only requirement for life? _____

6. The word for "have" here means to possess. What do you think it means to "possess the Son"? _____

7. The life that John refers to in this passage comes from the Greek word *zoe*. It means "physical and spiritual life that comes from and is sustained by God, and that is age-long and unending." Think back to all that you have learned in 1 John. What are some evidences of life in the Son that should be seen in the actions of the believer? _____

8. Think about your own life. Are the evidences that John gives us of life in the Son growing in you day by day? How? _____

9. What are some of the benefits of the life you have been given in the Son right now on this earth? (See 1 John 5:20, John 10:10, Matthew 11:28, or John 14:20 for some examples) _____

10. What are some of the benefits that will be yours in eternity? (See Revelation 21: 3-4 and 1 Corinthians 15: 42-43 for some examples) _____

11. According to verse 13, what is one of the reasons that John is writing? _____

12. It's clear from John's writings that we can know that we have eternal life! We can live without doubt that we have the Son and we can be confident of that life through all eternity. Are you ever tempted to doubt the life you have been given? If so, when and why? _____

13. End today with prayer. Thank the Lord for the life that you have in His Son! Thank Him that you can be confident of his salvation and your eternal future. _____

DAY 4

Pray: 1 John 5:14 says, "And this is the confidence we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears." Thank the Lord for this great promise from his word: any request that you make that aligns with God's desires he listens to and acts upon! Ask the Lord to give you a deeper understanding of how you can apply this truth to your life as you come before him now.

Memorize: Continue memorizing 1 John 5:4 by filling in the blanks below.

1 John ____:____: For _____ who has been _____
 _____ the _____. And this is _____ that has _____
 _____.

Study: Today we will be studying 1 John 5: 14-17. Read the passage and use it to answer the questions.

1. What do you learn about God in this passage? _____

2. What do you learn about yourself in this passage? _____

3. The word confidence used here means "freedom, openness (especially in speech), boldness, bold resolve." What can we have confidence about (verse 14)? _____

4. How can you know you are asking according to (in submission to) God's will? _____

5. We know that God's will always involves his kingdom coming on this earth and His receiving all the glory! Think of a situation you are praying for now. How would your prayer be different if this was your sole intent? _____

6. What is the promise in verse 15? _____

To hear means "to listen". This listening involves God moving on behalf of our request. If we know that God is listening, we know that he has answered "even before the event, for faith anticipates the blessing" (Matthew Henry Commentary).

a. When you pray, are you anticipating the answer of the Lord? Why or why not? _____

b. Sometimes God's answers to our prayers don't look the way we expect. Maybe God's best involves our waiting on Him. Maybe the way He gets the most glory comes as we suffer well for Him instead of the removal of a hard situation. Describe a time when you knew that God heard your request in prayer, but He answered in a way that you weren't expecting.

7. Verse 16 indicates to us that we are not only to pray about our own needs, but also the needs of our brothers, or fellow believers. What does verse 16 tell us? _____

8. What do you think John means by "a sin not leading to death"? _____

9. Many scholars have varying opinions about this passage. Let's think about what we know about sin from scripture. Read each verse and record what we learn about sin.

a. Romans 6:23: _____

b. 1 John 1:9: _____

I. What can we conclude from these verses?

All sin leads to _____. If we repent of our sin, God will _____.

Many commentators agree that the "sin not leading to death" is any sin of which someone repents. Any sin that is truly repented of, God will forgive. We can always pray with certainty that our fellow believers will live a repentant life.

II. So what's the sin that leads to death? Read the verse below and record what you learn about sin.

i. Matthew 12:31-32: _____

The word blasphemy means "slander, detraction, speech injurious to another's good name, to call good evil". The "unforgivable sin" involves attributing the work of the spirit to the evil one and it indicates that a person is so hardened that there is no room for repentance and therefore no room for forgiveness.

10. Now how would you define "a sin not leading to death"? _____

11. We've seen that we can pray expectantly knowing that God is listening when we pray according to his will. We've also seen a charge to pray for the repentance of our fellow believers. Think now about your own prayer life. What evidences are there in your life of the characteristics of prayer found in this passage? _____

12. End today by praying for the situation you thought of in question 6B. Pray for Jesus to reign as Lord of your life in the midst of the situation and for him to be glorified in the circumstance. Pray with bold confidence that the Lord hears you as you ask according to his will.

DAY 5

Pray: 1 John 5:20 says, "And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true." Meditate on this scripture now. Thank the Lord that through the Son we have understanding, or the ability to reach a balanced decision. Thank the Lord that he brings clarity of mind that allows you to walk in the light. Ask Him to bring continued revelation to you today as you study his word.

Memorize: Say our memory verse out loud now. Then write it on the lines below.

1 John __: __: _____

Study: Today we will be studying 1 John 5:18-21, the conclusion to John's letter. John points his readers to the fact that there is truth that they can know by giving three statements that each begin with "we know (we understand)". Begin today by reading the powerful conclusion to this book and answer the questions.

1. What do you learn about God in this passage? _____

2. What do you learn about yourself in this passage? _____

3. Look at verse 18. What is the identifiable characteristic that John tells us will be evident in a person who is born of God? _____

 - a. Notice the verb tense here. The person born of God "does not keep on sinning". This means that they are not in the habit of continually sinning. Are you finding more and more freedom from the control of sin? What evidence can you give of this? _____

 - b. Instead of being ruled by sin, John says that Jesus will protect, or guard and watch over, this person. What will Jesus be protecting the believer from? _____

 - c. The phrase "the evil one does not touch him" means that whatever the enemy may do, he cannot influence or alter the essence of the believer or change who he is: a child of God! How should this truth affect how you live? _____

4. Look at verse 19. What does this verse say is a difference between the believer and the world? _____

5. John's second statement of understanding is emphasizing the great spiritual battle that we are in. To be "from God" means to be born of God and to exist because of him as a part of his kingdom, as opposed to the world which is subject to the enemy. Ephesians 6:12 reminds us, "For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places."

a. When are you tempted to fight in the physical realm rather than the spiritual realm?

b. How could you better engage in the daily spiritual battle that you face? (See Ephesians 6:10-18 for help) _____

6. According to verse 20, why has the Son given us understanding? _____

"To know him who is true" is to personally experience the full revelation of God found in Jesus Christ.

7. What 2 characteristics does John give us about Jesus as he concludes his letter and why are they important? _____

8. Because Jesus is the true God, John ends by telling his readers to keep themselves from false gods, or idols. Where are you tempted to let false gods or idols take preeminence in your life? (Think about any areas of self-will and unsubmitiveness in your heart. These may be indications of areas of idolatry.) _____

9. End today with prayer. Thank the Lord for the full revelation of his faithfulness found in Jesus! Confess to Him any way that you have not believed in the fullness of who He is. Ask the Lord to continue to guide you to Truth as you walk with Him. _____
