

Title: Real Love Acts

Victory Through Faith

Text: I John 4:17-5:5

We are studying the little book of 1st John. Please take your Bibles and turn to I John chapter 4. We want to begin this morning with Vs 17. I John chapter 4 verse 17.....(RAED 4:17-5:5)

PRAYER

This is a wonderful section of scripture. It deals with the subject of GOD'S PRECIOUS ^{Wonderful} WONDERFUL LOVE FOR THE BELIEVER. It begins back at Vs 11 and continues through chapter 5 verse 5.

And as we begin, I want to review with you some of the truths that we have already learned. I think you need to understand this whole section as one...

(1B) In verses 7 and 8 John describes Love ^{Force} to us. And he says that love is from God. WHY? Because GOD IS LOVE.

(2B) Then secondly, in verses 9 and 10 love is demonstrated through the act of Jesus coming into the world so that we might live through Him who died for us....The cross becomes God's great love act for the world.

(3B) Then third, beginning with verse 12 and going through chapter 5:5, we are presented with a number of EXAMPLES which if understood, will bring ASSURANCE TO THE HEART OF THE BELIEVER.

(1C) Last Sunday evening we looked at the first example. And we learned in verses 12 through 16 that ASSURANCE COMES THROUGH THE EXAMPLE OF THE FATHER. Those are ^{Precious} wonderful verses. ^{and} I am sorry that some of you missed that message. You missed a real blessing from God.

(2C) Now, this morning I want to come to Verses 17 through 21 and the second example of assurance. Here we will learn that ASSURANCE ^{comes} IS SHOWN THROUGH THE EFFECTS THAT LOVE PRODUCES. ^{AGAPE LOVE - Comes From} And I have five effects that I want to share with you. In these verses we find five effects that love produces in my life and yours that brings me assurance ^{and convinces me} that I am really a Christian. ^{That AGAPE Love is operating in my life} O.K. WHAT ARE THEY?

(1D) Number one, I HAVE CONFIDENCE IN THE DAY OF JUDGEMENT.

Vs 17 says, "By this, love is perfected with us, that we may have confidence in the day of judgment." Confidence in the day of judgment.

You see, I will not fear the judgment of God. WHY? Because the Bible says in Romans 8:1 that "there is therefore no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."

But, you ask: "WON'T ALL BELIEVERS BE JUDGED ONE DAY?"....YES!.....That is true. All believers will be judged one day at the judgement seat of Christ. But, not to condemn us, or to punish us. But, to give us rewards... And if there is any judgment on that occasion, it is in the sense of losing rewards. Losing some of the rewards that we could have had.

But, I do not fear condemnation or judgment because there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Now, please remember. When you were born, you were born under condemnation. And if you have never received Jesus as your Lord and Saviour, you are still living under condemnation. Because the Bible says, "He who believes not is condemned already."

But, when you come to Christ....you confess your sins....you receive Jesus as your Lord and Savior.....that condemnation is removed and you have nothing to fear at the judgement seat of Christ. **THUS: AS A BELIEVER WE HAVE CONFIDENCE IN THE DAY OF JUDGEMENT.**

Oh, my friends, what a tremendous principle to live by. This love of God produces confidence in me. The more I love, and live by the principle of love, the more confidence I have. And that confidence removes any fear at the judgment of God. Isn't that wonderful.

(20) Well, what else? IT CAUSES A CHRIST LIKE-NESS IN THE WORLD.

Look at the last phrase of Vs 17.."Because as He is, so also are we in this world.".....CHRIST-LIKENESS....

Do you know what is the greatest way that you can demonstrate that you are CHRIST LIKE?....IT IS BY LOVING OTHERS....*As Christ Loved Me*

If there is one thing that describes JESUS, it is His love. When men spite upon him and mocked him and treated him badly, and dishonored him, **WHAT DID HE DO?...HE LOVED THEM.....**

And of course it really was demonstrated on the cross where Jesus said: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."...Oh, how Jesus loved.

And Jesus loved people no one else cared about. Take for example the women caught in adultery. According to the law she deserved to be stoned. Yet, Jesus loved her. And he forgave her of her sin and told her to go and sin no more.

The tax collector....OH! Wow!..Here was a person that was hated by the Jews. Do you remember the story of Zacchaeus? Jesus loved that man when all others hated him. You see, Jesus loved those that no one else cared about.

And I am sure that within the sound of my voice, there are those who wonder if anyone cares about them. Well, PRAISE GOD, JESUS DOES.

And my friends, if you want to practice the meaning of being CHRIST-LIKE.. then get involved in HIS LOVE.....

(3D) There is a third effect that love produeces. And that is a calmness in your heart. A calmness in your heart.

Isn't it wonderful to meet people who have a calm spirit? It is great! This is something that we all need. And let me tell you....we are going to need it this week in many of our activities...

Look at Vs 18..."There is no fear in love; but perfect love....meaning mature love....casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected....or has not matured....^{|| why}in love."

Now, dear firends, if you are woriying....fearing....filled with anxious cares...let me tell you, ...You are not operating your life by AGAPE LOVE. You see, His love is not being perfected in you. MEANING: We are not maturing in His love.

Oh! we have the capacity to love that way because every believer has the Holy Spirit living with him. And the fruit of the Holy Spirit is LOVE. But, we are not letting that AGAPE LOVE mature us, if we are letting fear control us. You see, the result of Agape love is that it cast out fear. That is the result of this kind off love. It cast it out. It will not have anything to do with it....It results in calmness. PRAISE GOD!

You know, fear, worry, anxieties can destroy you. Have you see that T.V. advertisement that shows the busy businessman with a pile of paper work and it says, "SLOW DOWN OR YOU WILL HAVE A HEART ATTACK.?"

HAY! This is our world. We run here and we run there. We are so busy doing....doing.....doing....And sometimes we are doing nothing....

And we long to be calm...to be at peace....

Well, Christian, how are we going to accomplish it? How are we going to come to that place of no fear? HOW?

Here is God's answer....Get involved in the kind off love that we have been talking about here in I John 4. Because there is no fear in this love. This kind off love casts fear out. It doesn't want anything to do with it. LOVE PRODUCES ^{A CALMNESS} ~~ACROSSNESS~~ IN YOUR HEART.

(4D) There is a fourth effect that love produces..Don't miss this..AGAPE love produces the ability within us to really love ^{another} ~~any other~~ person.

Vs 19 says..."We love, because He first loved us." This is talking about the believers capacity to love. And John is saying that we can love because of what?.....BECAUSE HE FIRST LOVED US.

Because Jesus died for my sins, because the moment I accept Him and trust Him for what He has already done for me, at that moment I ~~get~~ receive the capacity to love. WHY? Because the Holy Spirit of God produces that love in my life.

(5D) Then finally, love gives to me a concern for my brothers and sisters.

Vs 20 .."If someone says, I love God, and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom He has not seen. And this commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also."

You see, that is the effect that AGAPE love will produce in your life and in mine. It will cause us to love one another.

(3C) Now, let's come to these first five verses of chapter 5. This is John's third example. And here we see that ASSURANCE COMES THROUGH THE EXPERIENCE

OF FAITH. The experience of faith. I want to share with you four things about this experience of faith. Four wonderful principles.

There is nothing more important to learn about Assurance than the principles of faith.

(1D) Number one....FAITH PRODUCES THE NEW BIRTH. How can I be born again?

Nicodemus asks Jesus: "How can I enter again into my mother's womb and be born again." Answer: FAITH PRODUCES THE NEW BIRTH.

In vs 1 John writes: "Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." WHOEVER WHAT?.....BELIEVES.....Which means "to trust".... "to rely upon"....."to completely rest upon."

Rest upon what?.....That Jesus is the promised Messiah....Therefore, I am born of God. FAITH...DEAR FRIENDS....PRODUCE THE NEW BIRTH.

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Notice ~~one~~ ~~of~~ the results of this Faith. "And whoever loves the Father loves the child born of Him." What is he talking about? He is talking about Christians. Christians loving one another. The book of I John was written to christians. ~~And if you are born~~

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Secondly, Faith not only produces the new birth, BUT FAITH prevents the burden of keeping His commandments. In Vs 3 we read: "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments." ^{The word "keep"} ~~Which~~ means to "guard" "to watch over!" "And His commandments are not burdensome.".....

~~Some~~ Some people says: "Well, I believe that we ought to keep the 10 commandments. " Other says, "No, we are not to keep the Law. We are under Grace not under law." And that is right.

Some folks says, "Well, if we are under Grace..then why should we keep the commandments of Christ?" "Why, should I discipline myself to do anything ~~if it is the grace of God?~~ if it is the grace of God?"

Well, anyone who knows the Grace of God and the principle of Faith, knows that it is no longer a burden, anymore. I enjoy following the commandments of Christ. WHY? Because I know they are for ~~my~~ my personal happiness. I know if I violate them, which I have the right to do, if I want to do it, ^{But} if I violate them, I suffer, myself.

I don't want to suffer. I don't want to be unhappy. I want to follow and do what Christ said. Because I know, that what ever he said will result in my happiness, ~~and the effect of touching other peoples' lives with Christ.~~ So I follow what he ~~says~~ says. You ask, "Is that a burden, is that a duty, ~~no~~ NO, --- No, it is not at all. Because, I am perfectly RIGHTEOUS IN CHRIST. It doesn't effect my standing with him. So, his commandments are no longer a burden. Because I have been saved by FAITH.

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There is a third ~~thing~~ ~~that~~ faith ~~does~~. IT PROVIDES THE BLESSING OF VICTORY. Look at Vs 4: "For whatever is born of God overcomes the world, as a habit of life, One who is truly born of God will overcome the world.

~~you have not done it~~

You say, "I can't do that. You don't know what I face in my world."

Well, just a minute. The Bible says you have already done it. Listen carefully. End of Vs 4: and this ^{is} the victory that has overcome the world -- what is it? -- Our Faith.

FAITH PROVIDES THE BLESSING OF VICTORY. So, I have already overcome the world. It has already happened.

So, why don't I have victory? Well, if I don't. The problem is my faith.

In fact, in Romans 6 it tells me to count myself, daily, to be dead unto sin, but alive unto god. You say, "That sounds wrong, because I know that sin is alive in me." How, can you say, preacher, that sin is dead? I am a Christian but I still sin."

I didn't say that sin is dead. ~~It is~~ The Bible says to count yourself to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God. Well, what does that mean? It means Faith. It is just Faith.

How do you know that you are a Christian? Well - Faith. ...How do you know Jesus arose from the dead?....FAITH.... How do you know that Jesus is coming again?.....Faith....How do you know there is a heaven?... Faith....How do you know there is even sin?....Faith and experience.... Listen, my christian friends, the principle of the christian life is FAITH.

You have a world of faith --- I have a world of faith. You go to work this week and you will face associates, people around you, and you are going to wonder as a christian if you can make it. *IF YOU CAN LEAVE THE CHRISTIAN LIFE*

But, I am happy to tell you that the Bible teaches that ~~it is~~ FAITH HAS already provide the blessing of Victory. YOU HAVE ALREADY OVERCOME THE WORLD THROUGH FAITH. Christ conquered the world a long time ago. Thus, it has no power or control over the believer.

And when it does - the whole problem is Faith. WE ARE NOT WALKING BY FAITH ** WE ARE WALKING AND LIVING BY SIGHT, YOU SEE. Trying to solve our own problems by the ways of the world, instead of by the principle of faith. We need to believe God. "Casting all of my cares upon him, for he careth for me.

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(4) And Faith, also, proclaims the belief that Jesus is the Son of God.
 Look at ~~verse 5~~ verse 5: "And who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God."

This is simple saying that ~~God~~ God became man. Do you believe that?... Do you believe that Jesus is ~~the Son of God~~ ^{The Son of God} ~~Became man~~.

~~The~~ Ethiopic Unice said, ~~and~~ ~~that~~ "I believe that Jesus is the Son of God." And he was saved.... And halvation occures the moment you accept Jesus. But you ask: "Isn't there something I must do?" YES, THERE IS. There is only one thing you can do. You must believe that Jesus is the Son of God. TRUE FAITH BELIEVETH THAT JESUS IS THE SON OF GOD.

The Bible teaches that Jesus is the saviour of the world. And he is, whether you believe it or not. But, oh, how we need to make it personal. He is the saviour of the world. God has already told us that. He ~~was~~ ^{has} the power to forgive any persons sin. But, only, when I receive Him. And at the moment I accept Christ and believe Him, at that moment I am born of God. And instaneous act based upon a personal decision ~~to~~ ^{Receive} Christ. No works -- no merit system -no achievement on my part - only Faith. "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast."

~~Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved.~~ ^{And who is the one}
^{that overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is}
Shall we close in prayer ^{The Son of God.}

Our Father, we pray, that you would inplant deeply upon our minds your word. Oh, how we need assurance ~~in~~ a day when men cause doubt. And we pray that we might understand the great example of the Father who abides in us and is produceing his love in us. ~~The who/loves/you~~