

## **I John 4:20 – 5:17 Learning To Live Obediently**

### **1. What loving our brothers means – 4:20-5:3a**

Love - The Greek language has three words for love:

1. *Eros*, from which we get the word erotic
2. *Philos*, which speaks of warm, affectionate, or friendly love
3. *Agape*, which speaks of God's love revealed in actions  
The noun form of this word (agape) has only been found once in secular literature.

Action, not emotion, is the critical issue in Christian love. Since obedience to His commandments reveals our love for God, to not love our brother, which is a commandment, makes us a liar.

Whoever believes – John's definition of a Christian brother is simple and direct. They are not defined by lifestyle, good works, or obedience to God but by faith in Christ. Our reason for loving our brother has nothing to do with his performance. We love the child because we love the Father of the child.

When we keep God's commandments:

1. We know that we love God
2. We know that we love the children of God

### **2. What empowers our love – 5:3b-15**

Matthew 11:30 "For My yoke is easy, and My load is light."

'Whatever' is born of God – Notice that John does not say 'Whoever'. There is something 'world-conquering' in the very experience of being born of God.

The key to the Christian life is faith!

*"...the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."*

Galatians 2:20

*"For we walk by faith, not by sight."* 2 Corinthians 5:7

Verses 6-8 – Verification by witnesses

By water and blood – Water is a reference to Christ's baptism, while blood is a reference to his death on the cross. These two events were focal points to His coming to earth to carry out His Messianic work. See John 1:29-34 & Matthew 3:13-17

The Spirit is the truth – The very character of the Holy Spirit is truth! The Spirit's anointing was the formal inauguration of Jesus as the Messianic Savior – 'the Christ.' See Acts 10:38

Verses 9-12 – The witness of God

If we regard the witness of men as valid (and we do, when properly verified), then how much more should we believe the witness of God. God's witness:

1. We have eternal life in His Son
2. If we have the Son we have eternal life

Verse 13 – Assurance of eternal life

These things – The things written in verses 6 through 12. All true assurance of salvation and eternal life must rest on the testimony of God.

Verses 14-15 – Knowing we have eternal life gives us confidence in prayer

### **3. What faith and love can do for our brothers – 5:16-17**

A sin not leading to death – The literal translation is 'a sin to death' and we probably need to supply the word 'directly' or 'immediately' so that these are sins that do not lead directly or immediately to death.

A sin leading to death – These sins appear to be related directly to serious breaches of the Christian assembly. The Bible gives us two specific examples:

1. Ananias and Sapphira - Acts 5:1-11
2. Those eating the Lord's Supper with unconfessed sin - 1 Corinthians 11:27-32