

HE IS THE TRUE GOD AND ETERNAL LIFE

I. 1 John 5:1-21

A. They say March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb. First John comes in like a lion and goes out like a den of lions. Today we tackle the last 21 verses of this powerful epistle. I feel like we're sprinting downhill towards the finish line. I keep praying God will put power on His word and plant it deep down inside. Do it Lord!

B. 1 John 5:1-21 (ESV) and it's down the stretch we come...

1) **V1: 1** *Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, (Question like last week: Did your believing cause you to be born of God or did being born of God ignite your belief?) and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of Him. (Do you love your fellow adoptees?)*

2) **V2: 2** *By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey His commandments. (Horizontal meets vertical. Love and faith are inseparable from obedience. And vertical love is inseparable from horizontal love. Listen to Jesus make the connection between love and obedience: John 14:15 (ESV) **15** *If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. John 14:21 (ESV) **21** *Whoever has My commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him. So let's compare those verses with one from last week, 1 John 4:19 (ESV) says: "We love because He first loved us." God's love was first. Our love is in response to His love. Our love for Him is evidenced by obedience to His commands.)***

3) **V3: 3** *For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome. (His commandments are burdensome if you're trying to keep them to earn your *right standing* with God. They aren't burdensome if you're obeying them with thanksgiving, joy and love because righteousness (*right standing*) has been imputed to you by faith in Christ. The first four of the Ten Commandments are vertical and the following six are horizontal. Jesus summarized them in the Great Commandment: '*Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength and love your neighbor as yourself.*' Paul also makes the connection between obeying the commandments and love: Galatians 5:14 (ESV) **14** *For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Romans 13:8-10 (ESV) elaborates even more: **8** *Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. **9** *For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet," and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." **10** *Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. (Love is inseparable from obedience.)*****

4) **V4-5: 4** *For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. (World: The realm of darkness under Satan's influence, organized in systemic opposition to God.) And this is the victory that has overcome the world--our faith. **5** *Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? (What's the evidence that someone born of God is overcoming the world? What is the evidence of someone's faith achieving victory over the world? Is it visible?)**

5) **V6-8: 6** *This is He who came by water and blood--Jesus Christ; not by the water only but by the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the One who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. **7** *For there are three that testify: **8** *the Spirit and the water and the blood; and these three agree. (Most say water refers to Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist when Jesus went down into the water to fulfill all righteousness. Blood then refers to Jesus' atoning sacrifice on the cross. The Holy Spirit came upon Jesus like a dove and later was bestowed on Jesus' followers after His ascension. All three testify to this: God the Son became the Son of Man; He lived a sinless life; He went to the cross as a perfect sacrifice for our sins; He absorbed the wrath of God aimed at us; He died and was buried; He rose from the dead on the third day; He ascended; He rules and reigns and will return to raise those who've died in faith. This is God's testimony from John, the Apostles, & Prophets.)***

6) **V9-10: 9** *If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater, for this is the testimony of God that He has borne concerning His Son. **10** *Whoever believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself. Whoever does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has borne concerning His Son. (The consequences for rejecting the testimony--the Gospel--are absolutely horrifying. If Jesus has not already borne your punishment, you will bear it forever!)**

7) **V11-13: 11** *And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. **12** *Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life. **13** *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. (Listen to Jesus' words from John's gospel: John 3:16-18 (ESV) **16** *For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. **17** *For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order*****

that the world might be saved through Him. **18** Whoever believes in Him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. **John 3:35-36 (ESV)** **35** The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand. **36** Whoever believes in the Son has *eternal life*; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him. **John 5:24-25 (ESV)** **24** Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears My word and believes Him who sent Me has *eternal life*. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life. **25** Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. **(This is the testimony of Jesus!)**

8) V14-15: 14 And this is the confidence that we have toward Him, that if we ask anything according to His will He hears us. **15** And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of Him. **(The best way to pray according to God's will is to pray according to God's Word. And to pray according to God's Word means you really, really, really need to know God's Word.)**

9) V16-17: 16 If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not leading to death, he shall ask, and God will give him life--to those who commit sins that do not lead to death. There is sin that leads to death; I do not say that one should pray for that. **17** All wrongdoing is sin, but there is sin that does not lead to death. **(Sins that cannot be forgiven are sins that lead to death. What sins are not covered by Jesus' sacrifice? The sin of rejecting Him--His life, His death, His resurrection, His gift of salvation. If you reject God's mode of saving you altogether, what means of being saved remain for you? None! So pray for those you love to receive Christ and not refuse Him!)**

10) V18-19: 18 We know that everyone who has been born of God does not keep on sinning, but He who was born of God (**Christ**) protects him, and the evil one does not touch him. **(Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one. Humble yourselves before God, resist the devil, and he will flee from you! Keep us as the apples of Your eye and hide us in the shadow of Your wings.)** **19** We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. **(Jesus said at the Last Supper, "In this world you will have trouble but take heart I have overcome the world." (John 16:33) Satan and his minions are squatters and they're on the losing side! Their time is short!**

11) V20-21: 20 And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life. **(That's my Jesus!)** **21** Little children, keep yourselves from idols. **(Keep yourself from anyone or anything that would capture your heart to the point you elevate them or it above God!)**

C. So there was once a young redneck fisherman with a bent towards brawling. He met a Galilean Carpenter that was originally not from his neck of the woods. He had other-worldly wisdom, supernatural power, and a heart full of love. He asked this fisherman and some others to follow Him. They did and everything began to change. They witnessed unbelievable miracles and the love He showed them transformed their hearts. The redneck fisherman became *The Apostle of Love*. And the love which changed John can also change you and all those you love.

D. Romans 5:6-8 (ESV) was written by a former Jewish terrorist, transformed by this same love: 6 For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. **7** For one will scarcely die for a righteous person--though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die--**8** but God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

E. Ephesians 2:4-9 (ESV) from the same x-terrorist who ran straight into the forgiving arms of love: 4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which He loved us, **5** even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ--by grace (**undeserved love**) you have been saved-- **6** and raised us up with Him and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, **7** so that in the coming ages He might show the immeasurable riches of His grace (**undeserved love**) in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. **8** For by grace (**undeserved love**) you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, **9** not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

F. Therefore: Come awake! Come alive! Receive this same love, this same gift: Jesus--the true God and eternal life, given with love from God the Father, sent to save your souls, sent to grant you everlasting life! Be His! Become His *Agapeto!*

* Close with Prayer...

Scriptures, Videos, & Bonus Stuff

1 John 5:1-21 (ESV)

1 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of Him. **2** By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey His commandments. **3** For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome. **4** For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world--our faith. **5** Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? **6** This is He who came by water and blood--Jesus Christ; not by the water only but by the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the One who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. **7** For there are three that testify: **8** the Spirit and the water and the blood; and these three agree. **9** If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater, for this is the testimony of God that He has borne concerning His Son. **10** Whoever believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself. Whoever does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has borne concerning His Son. **11** And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. **12** Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life. **13** 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. **14** And this is the confidence that we have toward Him, that if we ask anything according to His will He hears us. **15** And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of Him. **16** If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not leading to death, he shall ask, and God will give him life--to those who commit sins that do not lead to death. There is sin that leads to death; I do not say that one should pray for that. **17** All wrongdoing is sin, but there is sin that does not lead to death. **18** We know that everyone who has been born of God does not keep on sinning, but He who was born of God protects him, and the evil one does not touch him. **19** We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. **20** And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life. **21** Little children, keep yourselves from idols.

John 14:15 (ESV)

15 If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.

John 14:21 (ESV)

21 Whoever has My commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.

Galatians 5:14 (ESV)

14 For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

Romans 13:8-10 (ESV)

8 Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. **9** For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet," and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." **10** Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

John 3:16-18 (ESV)

16 For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. **17** For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through Him. **18** Whoever believes in Him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.

John 3:35-36 (ESV)

35 The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand. **36** Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.

John 5:24-25 (ESV)

24 Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears My word and believes Him who sent Me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life. **25** Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live.

Romans 5:6-8 (ESV)

6 For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For one will scarcely die for a righteous person--though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die--8 but God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Ephesians 2:4-9 (ESV)

4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ--by grace you have been saved-- 6 and raised us up with Him and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 so that in the coming ages He might show the immeasurable riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Film Clips & Other Links

Millersport Covenant Church Sermon Podcasts (MP3s on iTunes)

<http://millersportcc.com/feed/podcast>

Bonus Stuff

Mark 12:28-34 (ESV)

28 And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that He answered them well, asked Him, "Which commandment is the most important of all?" 29 Jesus answered, "The most important is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. 30 And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' 31 The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." 32 And the scribe said to Him, "You are right, Teacher. You have truly said that He is one, and there is no other besides Him. 33 And to love Him with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself, is much more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices." 34 And when Jesus saw that he answered wisely, He said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." And after that no one dared to ask Him any more questions.

Theological Notes on 1 John 5:6-8

6 This is He who came by water and blood--Jesus Christ; not by the water only but by the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the One who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. 7 For there are three that testify: 8 the Spirit and the water and the blood; and these three agree. - 1 John 5:5-8 (ESV)

Theological Note on 1 John 5:6-8

ESV Study Bible

5:6 Water most likely refers to Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist. **Blood** signifies Christ's atoning sacrifice on the cross. **The Spirit is the One who testifies.** The structure of the verse emphasizes that it is the characteristic work of the Holy Spirit to bear witness to the fact that Jesus **came** (see v. 6a). It is the inward work of the Spirit in the heart of the believers to convict of sin and to open their eyes to see the truth of who Christ is and to understand the meaning of His atoning death for their sins (cf. 5:10). Likewise, the indwelling presence of the Spirit is given to teach believers the truth of God's Word and to abide in them (2:27; 4:13).

5:7-8 three that testify. The gospel is not based on merely human testimony. John indicates that there are in fact "three that testify," namely, the witness of the **Spirit** (cf. note on v. 6), the **water** baptism of Jesus (including the "*Spirit descending like a dove*" and the voice of the Father from heaven; Mark 1:10-11; cf. John 1:32-34), and the **blood** (which "*cleanses us from all unrighteousness*"; 1 John 1:7). These three agree, thereby providing persuasive confirmation for believing in Jesus as the "*Son of God*" (5:10). The OT taught that every charge should be confirmed by "two or three witnesses" (Deut. 17:6; 19:15), a principal continued in the NT (Matt. 18:16; 2 Cor. 13:1).

- Theological note on 1 John 5:6-8, *The ESV Study Bible*, Crossway, p. 2436.

Theological Note on 1 John 5:6

The NKJV Study Bible

5:6 Water and blood have been interpreted in at least four ways: (1) as Jesus' baptism and death, (2) as His incarnation, (3) as the water and blood that flowed from His side on the Cross, and (4) as the baptism of the believer and the Lord's Supper. Most scholars favor the first interpretation. John is correcting the false teacher Cerinthus, who claimed that the Spirit came on Jesus at His baptism but left Him before His death (see 4:2, 3).

- Theological note on 1 John 5:6, *The NKJV Study Bible*, Thomas Nelson, p. 21012.

Theological Note on 1 John 5:6-8

The Life Application Study Bible

5:6-8 At this time, there was a false teaching in circulation that said Jesus was "the Christ" only between His baptism and His death--that is, He was merely human until He was baptized, at which time "the Christ" then descended upon Him but later left Him before His death on the cross. But if Jesus died only as a man, He could not have taken upon Himself the sins of the world, and Christianity would be an empty religion. Only an act of God could take away the punishment that we deserve for our sin.

- Theological note on 1 John 5:6-8, *The Life Application Study Bible*, Tyndale, p. 2818.

Theological Note on 1 John 5:6

The NIV Study Bible

5:6 Water symbolizes Jesus' baptism, and **blood** symbolizes His death. These are mentioned because Jesus' ministry began at His baptism and ended at His death. John is reacting to the Gnostic heretics of his day (see introduction: Gnosticism) who said that Jesus was born only a man and remained so until His baptism. At that time, they maintained the Messiah (the Son of God) descended on the human Jesus, but left Him before His suffering on the cross--so that it was only the man Jesus who died. Throughout this letter John has been insisting that Jesus Christ is God as well as man (1:1-4; 4:2; 5:5). He now asserts that it was this God-man Jesus Christ who came into our world, was baptized and died. Jesus was the Son of God not only at His baptism but also at His death (v. 6b). This truth is extremely important, because if Jesus died only as a man, His sacrificial atonement (2:2; 4:10) would not have been sufficient to take away the guilt of human sin. **The Spirit who testifies.** The Holy Spirit testifies that Jesus is the Son of God in two ways: (1) The Spirit descended on Jesus at His baptism (John 1:32-34), and (2) He continues to confirm in the hearts of believers the apostolic testimony that Jesus' baptism and death verify that He is the Messiah, the Son of God (see 2:27; 1 Cor. 12:3 and notes).

- Theological note on 1 John 5:6, *The NIV Study Bible*, Zondervan, p.p. 1952-1953.

Antinomianism

The Reformation Study Bible, R.C. Sproul, General Editor

Antinomianism literally means "*anti-lawism*." It denies or downplays the significance of God's law in the life of the believer. It is the opposite of its twin heresy, legalism.

Antinomians acquire their distaste for the law in a number of ways. Some believe that they no longer are obligated to keep the moral law of God because Jesus has freed them from it. They insist that grace not only frees us from the curse of God's law but delivers us from any obligation to obey God's law. Grace then becomes a license for disobedience.

Martin Luther, in expressing the doctrine of justification by faith alone, was charged with antinomianism. Yet he affirmed with James that "*faith without works is dead*." Luther contested with his student Johann Agricola on this issue. Agricola denied that the law had any purpose in the life of the believer. He even denied that the law served to prepare the sinner for grace. Luther responded to Agricola with his work *Against the Antinomians* in 1539. Agricola later recanted his antinomian teachings, but the issue remained.

Subsequent Lutheran theologians affirmed Luther's view of the law. In the Formula of Concord (1577), the last of the classical Lutheran statements of faith, they outlined three uses for the law: (1) to reveal sin; (2) to establish general decency in the society at large; and (3) to provide a rule of life for those regenerated through faith in Christ.

Antinomianism's primary error is confusing justification with sanctification. We are justified by faith alone apart from works. However, all believers grow in faith by keeping God's holy commands—not to gain God's favor but out of loving gratitude for the grace already bestowed on them through the work of Christ.

It is a serious error to assume that the Old Testament was a covenant of law and the New Testament, a covenant of grace. The Old Testament is a monumental testimony to God's amazing grace toward His people. Likewise, the New Testament is literally filled with commandments. We are not saved by the law, but we demonstrate our love for Christ by obeying His commandments. *"If you love Me,"* Jesus said, *"keep My commandments"* (John 14:15).

We frequently hear the statement, *"Christianity isn't a lot of do's and don'ts; it is not a list of rules."* There's some truth in this deduction, inasmuch as Christianity is far more than a mere list of rules. It is, at its center, a personal relationship with Christ Himself. Yet Christianity is also not less than rules. The New Testament clearly includes some do's and don'ts. Christianity is not a religion that sanctions the idea that everyone has the right to do what is right in his own eyes. On the contrary, Christianity never gives anyone the *"right"* to do what is wrong.

- Theological Essay, *"Antinomianism,"* *The Reformation Study Bible*, R.C. Sproul, General Editor, Reformation Trust Publishing, p. 2272.

What is Cerinthianism?

By Matt Slick

<https://carm.org/what-is-cerinthianism>

Cerinthianism is a heresy taught by Cerinthus (died approximately A.D. 100) that deals with the person of Jesus. It stated that "the Christ" came upon Jesus at his baptism and left him just prior to his crucifixion. Essentially, Cerinthus taught that the Christ and Jesus are separate beings. He taught that Jesus was born naturally without the Virgin birth. Cerinthus was educated in the wisdom of Egyptian issues from Ephesus. So, he would've had a mixture of Christian theology and paganism.

We do not have the original writings of Cerinthus, but he is addressed by Irenaeus:

"Cerinthus, again, a man who was educated in the wisdom of the Egyptians, taught that the world was not made by the primary God, but by a certain Power far separated from him, and at a distance from that Principality who is supreme over the universe, and ignorant of him who is above all. He represented Jesus as having not been born of a virgin, but as being the son of Joseph and Mary according to the ordinary course of human generation, while he nevertheless was more righteous, prudent, and wise than other men. Moreover, after his baptism, Christ descended upon him in the form of a dove from the Supreme Ruler, and that then he proclaimed the unknown Father, and performed miracles. But at last Christ departed from Jesus, and that then Jesus suffered and rose again, while Christ remained impassible, inasmuch as he was a spiritual being. 2. Those who are called Ebionites agree that the world was made by God; but their opinions with respect to the Lord are similar to those of Cerinthus and Carpocrates. They use the Gospel according to Matthew only, and repudiate the Apostle Paul, maintaining that he was an apostate from the law. As to the prophetic writings, they endeavour to expound them in a somewhat singular manner: they practise circumcision, persevere in the observance of those customs which are enjoined by the law, and are so Judaic in their style of life, that they even adore Jerusalem as if it were the house of God." (Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, book 1, Chapter 26 paragraph 1)

Cerinthus was of the Gnostic influence which taught that the divine God was too pure and perfect to be involved the material world. Therefore, the world was created by a lesser god--a power far removed from the supreme divine being.

Cerinthianism is a false teaching. The correct teaching concerning Jesus is called *the hypostatic union*.

- Matt Slick is the President and Founder of the *Christian Apologetics and Research Ministry*.