

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

JANUARY 10TH-11TH, 2026 // FIRST JOHN

WEIGHT (1 JOHN 5:1-5) BORN OF GOD

Simply put, if one "believes that Jesus is the Christ [Savior]" and "loves the Father," they are a child of God. A true child of God "also loves the one born of Him [other Christians]."

- John also tells us that **we can only truly love others if we "love God and obey His commands."**

DO WE TRULY LOVE GOD?

V. 3 says, "For this is what love for God is: to keep His commands." In John 14:15, Jesus says, "If you love Me, you will keep My commands."

- **One cannot claim Christianity and live in disobedience to the Bible.** This doesn't mean we're perfect. It means we **strive to live in holiness and repent when we don't.**

RIGHTeous LIVING LIGHTENS THE WEIGHT

It's easy to sin in the short-term, but sin has a long-term price that becomes a greater burden than the effort it takes to live by God's Word.

- **Do we use wisdom and have enough love for God to put forth the effort to live in holiness and avoid the burden and consequences of sin (Matthew 11)?**

LOVING GOD SHOULDN'T BE A BURDEN

If we truly love Jesus, **prayer, study, and obedience shouldn't feel like burdens.** Also, if we even remotely understand the cross, **we should feel a deep sense of gratitude and servitude to God!**

- Do we claim Christ for our benefit or because we appreciate our Savior?

FAITH IN JESUS WINS

V. 4 says, "This is the **victory** that has conquered the world: our faith." This works both in the immediate and in the future.

- **A relationship with Jesus allows us to overcome evil, lies, oppression, and fear in this life.** And after this life, **we inherit eternal life with Him in Heaven.**

LIVING (1 JOHN 5:6-12) "BY WATER AND BLOOD"

Some believe this is about Jesus' side being pierced on the cross, but more than likely it's a reference to His baptism and crucifixion.

- Because there was much false teaching, John was clarifying that the person who was baptized in the Jordan was the same person who hung on the cross.

"AND THE SPIRIT IS THE ONE WHO TESTIFIES"

Jesus' baptism demonstrated obedience to the Father, the crucifixion demonstrated sacrifice for others, and the Spirit "testifies" on behalf of what Jesus has done.

- **The Spirit is the truth, and His testimony is the Bible.** The OT points towards Jesus, and the NT tells us how we live in Him.

"GOD'S TESTIMONY IS GREATER"

God proclaims to us through His Word that Jesus is the path for eternal life, and whoever "does not have the Son... does not have life."

- **The direction the Bible's teachings take us is far superior to the ever-changing direction of culture and society.** Simply put, **His ways work!**

PRAYER (1 JOHN 5:13-15) THE PURPOSE IN THIS LETTER

V. 13 tells us that John wrote this letter so the readers would "believe in [His] name" and "know that [they] have eternal life."

- If we trust in Jesus and communicate with Him (pray), we can have confidence that **"if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us."**

HOW DO WE KNOW THE WILL OF GOD?

When we **read the Word, pray, meditate on Him** (abide), and **live in obedience**, we mature in our faith and understanding of God, His nature, and His character.

- **In spiritual maturation, we know God better, ask for things that He desires for us, and receive God's blessings.**

WE CHANGE, NOT HIM

Prayer should not be an attempt to change God's mind or make Him see it our way. Prayer is meant to conform our understanding and intentions to be more like His.

- **God is perfect and has a perfect will for our lives. Prayer is us striving to get into that channel.**

MOVING FORWARD (1 JOHN 5:16-21) VERSES 16-17 ARE A LITTLE TRICKY

There are several interpretations of this passage. Sin that "leads to death" could be:

- **1) Apostasy**—if one accepts Christ and then renounces Him, **2) blaspheming the Spirit** by being too hard-hearted to hear truth, or **3) such egregious action that God kills you** (the flood, Onan, Acts 5).

THE MAIN POINT IS TO ADDRESS SIN!

Though we may not fully understand verses 16-17, the main point is to **identify sin according to Scripture, teach the truth, and pray for those living in sin.**

- **It is easy to ignore sin and repentance, but it is also the most destructive thing we can do!**

A SIMPLE CONCLUSION (VS. 18-20)

John summarizes this letter by reminding us that **true Christians are children of God who do not continue in sinful lifestyles** and know Jesus has given us the path and **"understanding" (info) that lead to salvation and a meaningful existence.**

"GUARD YOURSELVES FROM IDOLS"

We have two enemies: Satan and our flesh. The second commandment tells us to make no idols. We must be wise, recognize we can be selfish, and avoid things that can potentially become more important to us than Jesus.

- **Where do our time, money, and energy go?** That is where our heart is (Matthew 6:21).

HEAVY NOW OR LATER?

- It is often easier to give in to sin, but the long-term consequences are much more burdensome than the effort of following the teachings of the Bible.
- When we are tempted, we must remember that **our effort to be holy now is far easier than the consequences of sin later.**

LIVING BY THE WORD IS GREATER

- Not only is the burden light, but living out the Bible gives lasting peace, hope, love, and purpose that outweigh the fleeting pleasures in this world. **When we apply the principles of the Bible, they work!**
- Jesus makes life better now, and we have the promise of a perfect afterlife.

PRAYER

- A relationship with Jesus begins with faith, but **faith matures through learning more about God through the Word and communicating with Him through prayer.**
- As we grow, we think more like Jesus and seek His will. In this, we "know that He hears" us, and we receive what we ask for.

BEING CAUTIOUS OF IDOLATRY

- We must be careful to make sure that we value God and His Kingdom above everything else (Matthew 6:33).
- It is healthy to **periodically take an inventory of where our time, talent, money, and energy go.** This will indicate where our heart truly is.

A TRUE CHRISTIAN...

- Understands there is no truth or pathway to salvation other than Jesus.
- Places no "idol" above God.
- Puts effort into their faith through study, prayer, and meditating on Jesus.
- Obeys the Bible, repents when they fall short, and makes no excuses for sin.
- Actively communicates with Jesus and seeks His will.
- Loves other people through serving them physically, mentally, and spiritually.
- Lives out the principles and teachings of the Word because they are grateful for Christ and know His ways work!