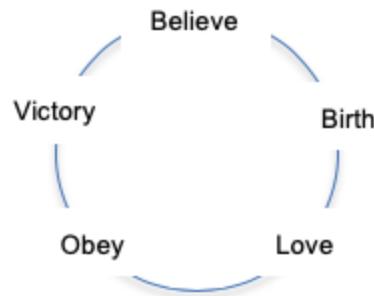


Connect Group Discussion Guide

SERMON DATE	SERMON SERIES	SERMON TITLE
12/19/2021	What Kind of Love	Victorious truths
Message on YouTube	TBP	

MESSAGE ABSTRACT:

In this last message of our series, *What Kind of Love: living the epic love story*, in 1 John, we examine chapter 5 and find an interesting portrait of victorious living. The first 4 verses form a sort of summary of what John is trying to tell us about living in Christ. It's depicted in this diagram and summarized below:



BELIEVE: Everyone who **believes** that Jesus is the Christ... (v1). It all starts here, with our belief in who Jesus is. The Christ. The Savior of the world. Believe and you will be saved (Romans 10:9)

BIRTH: Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ **is born of God**... (v1). The byproduct of belief in Jesus is new life. We are new creation, children of God. (John 1:12-13)

LOVE: Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ born of God, and everyone who **loves the father loves his child** as well. (v1). The byproduct of being a child of God is that we imitate our Parent. We do what He does. We love.

OBEY: This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands. This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not

burdensome. (v2-3). The love of God is keeping his commandments. We show our love of those we love by our desire to please them. Obedience done because of love is not burdensome, but burden lifting.

VICTORY: *For everyone born of God overcomes the world.* (v 4) The byproduct of all this is victory over the things that would keep us from loving God and others.

BELIEVE: *For everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.* (v 4). We've now come full circle. Our victory is in our faith--our belief--in Jesus. Everything flows through Him.

We also learned 9 important truths that we need to put through this victory cycle. Truths that we need to reaffirm daily as we grow to trust Him:

1. **I have eternal life (v 13).** Knowing you have eternal life is a critical growth skill. John doesn't want us to leave home without it. If, because of Christ, we can overcome death—what can possibly overcome us in our day-to-day journey?
2. **I have confidence (v 14).** The word in Greek for confidence means “freedom of speech.” Because of our relationship with God, we can speak openly with him. We can be confident in His love for us. He will never turn us away.
3. **He hears me (vv14-15).** He hears our prayer, when we ask according to his will. That's not some divine escape clause. It's an acknowledgement of the truth that God knows better than us, what's best for us, because no one loves us more than He.
4. **He answers me (v15).** Our problem is not that we don't have what we ask for. It's that we don't like what we have. The true test of our love of God is our satisfaction with the answers He gives us.
5. **I won't keep sinning (v18).** To keep on sinning is to say we live in a lifestyle of sin. That's not consistent with someone who believes and has received the Holy Spirit. The truth of our transformation is that we will grow more and more like Jesus.
6. **I am protected (v18).** We have a higher/greater power on our side. *Greater is He who is in you than He who is in the world* (1 John 4:4). The evil one might taunt us, but he can't touch us. We are victorious in Christ.
7. **I am from God (v19).** We are children of God. No matter what our earthly family situation was like, we have a new family now, with a Father who loves us perfectly.
8. **I have understanding (v20).** To know God in Old Testament times was impossible. So God sent His Son Jesus to leave His Spirit within us to grow in the knowledge of Him.

9. **I am in Him (v20).** We are to abide with Jesus. He is the vine, we are the branches. Our source of life is found in Jesus. Nothing else.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. In what way did God speak to you in the message this past weekend?
2. If the Apostle John were with us tonight, based on what you learned in 1 John, what do you think he would be talking to us about?
3. The mission of Riverwood is to reconcile others to God through the love of Christ. How does what we learned help us do that? And how do we cultivate that deeper in our own loves?
4. Which of the nine truths that we discussed on Sunday do you need to be reminded of and work on in your own life? What steps might you take to believe those truths better?
5. Share a victory you've seen God working in your life.