



**BELIEVERS CHAPEL**

6420 Churchill Way | Dallas, Texas | 75230 | t 972.239.5371 | believerschapeldallas.org

The Sermons of Dan Duncan

1 John 5: 1-5

2011

"Victory"

TRANSCRIPT

Thank you Mark, and good morning. We are getting toward the end, as Mark said, of this study in 1 John. We're in the last chapter and we're going to begin chapter 5 this morning and look at verses 1 through 5. 1 John chapter 5, verses 1 through 5,

**5** Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and whoever loves the Father loves the *child* born of Him. <sup>2</sup>By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments. <sup>3</sup>For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome. <sup>4</sup>For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.

<sup>5</sup>Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

1 John 5: 1-5

May God bless this reading of His Word.

(Message) In one of his writings, Milton praises what he calls the “wayfaring Christian”, the Christian traveling through this world, the pilgrim who takes on the challenges of life. He can't praise the person who avoids adversity, who he said, "slinks

out of the race. The immortal garland, the eternal crown," he says, "is not won without dust and heat." If you've ever played sports in Texas you know how fitting that description is, "dust and heat".

But it's equally fitting for the Christian life; life lived in this world with all of its tests and trials. The apostles described it variously as a struggle, like a contest of boxing or wrestling in the dust of an arena. It's like a long race or a war in which we battle against heavy odds. We fight against the devil, we fight against the antichrists; it is intense. The struggle is not only intense, it's constant. It can be a grind, can't it? Sometimes the Christian life is just that, it is a grind. So sometimes the wayfaring Christian becomes a weary Christian.

John wrote his letter to people who were like that. They were discouraged, they were weighed down, they were in a battle. And so he writes to encourage them, and to confirm to them that they were Christians; that they were, in fact, born again. They're God's people. They needed that encouragement. He tells them that.

He wrote to reassure them that they were God's people, but also to reassure them that they would finish the race. He tells them that they will win the struggle. In fact, he tells them that they had already won. They had "overcome the world". (vs4). Christians, to quote the apostle Paul, "...are more than conquerors." (Rom 8:37).

And John gives the same assurance here at the beginning of chapter 5. In verse 1 he says, "Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God", (or, born *again*). In verse 5 he says, "Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?"

Victory over the world is assured to the believer. Now why is that? —Because we're so strong? Because we have such a vital faith and such great resolve? Does it reside within us in something that we are or something we do? Well look, John's very clear, 'We do things'. We're responsible to do things, to behave, and live a certain way. But what he also makes very clear is, our triumph, our abilities, all go back to the grace

of God. It's very clear that the source of our victory, the source of the faith that we have that lays hold on the victory, the faith that he calls "the victory," (vs4), is all found in God. He's the reason for it. So all the glory goes to God. That's required by the grammar of the text. It's required by the grammar of verse 1.

I don't like to get into grammar too much. It can be a little dry, but sometimes it's important. And I think it is here because we can miss the sense of what John says from reading the English text. My text reads, (and I think it's true for probably all of the texts that are being read this morning, whether it's the New American Standard Bible, the King James, or the New International Version), verse 1, "Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." Now on the face of it that seems to be simply saying that, 'believers are born again.' And that is John's point. Faith is a sign of the new birth.

But the way he states it is very significant. The statement, "is born of God," is not a present tense; it's actually a past tense. Precisely—it's a *perfect* tense, which means it's a past action with present results. So what it means is, that event, that birth, happened before the believing.

A stricter translation of this is, "Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God". Or, I'll embellish it a bit, "Whoever presently believes that Jesus is the Christ has previously been born of God." Before there was believing there was birth; the new birth. Faith isn't the cause of the new birth; faith is the result of the birth; it's the consequence of the new birth. That's indicated by the grammar and that's supported by the Scriptures.

I think John puts a special emphasis on this, not only in this book of 1 John, but in his Gospel. For example at the very beginning of the Gospel of John, the first chapter, John states that all who "receive" Christ, (that is, all who believed in Christ), were given "the right to be children of God." (vs12). But it wasn't their own doing. Now, certainly faith was, receiving was, they did that. But the reason they did that is found in the Lord God because John writes that they were born, "...not of blood, nor the will of the flesh, nor the will of man, but of God." (Jn 1:13). Puts it pretty strongly, doesn't it, "Not of the

will of man." Their faith was the product of God's will; He gave the birth to them; and they believed as a result.

Paul says the same thing in Ephesians, chapter 2, verse 1 through 5. I won't read the whole section but the beginning and the end are, "You were dead...but God made us alive." God made us alive, not we ourselves, not our faith. And really, that's the significance of the word, *born*.

John wasn't sloppy in his grammar or in his choice of words. The word, *born*, gives a meaningful picture and has some rather obvious implications, doesn't it? Now think about it. If ever we were passive in life, if ever we didn't do anything to cause the results, it was at conception and birth. No one gives birth to himself or herself. We're the result of our parent's activity. And that's true in the first birth, the natural birth. That's also true in the second birth, the spiritual birth. It's the result of God's activity. In fact, if God didn't act to give us life and spiritual birth, we never would have believed.

Isn't that the meaning of John chapter 6, in verse 44; "No one can come to Me." Notice that this is what Jesus is saying: No one can or has the ability to. "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him." (vs44). God takes the initiative in that. Isn't that the clear implication of Romans chapter 3, in verse 11? "There is none who understands, there is none who seeks for God." The new birth is necessary, otherwise no one would seek—Period!

So faith is the consequence of God's action, the consequence of His grace. It's our act, to be sure—don't misunderstand what I'm saying, we do believe, personally. We hear the Gospel. We think about it, we understand it, and we respond to it. We're responsible to do that. It is an act of our will. But ultimately, the *cause* of that is God's grace. Now that is a blessing. That shouldn't frustrate us or disturb us. It should cause us to rejoice. It's a blessing. Faith is the fruit of the new birth. And that means that faith is also the *proof* of the new birth. Those who are born again believe—therefore believers are born again.

All through this book, John has been giving evidence of the new birth and he's been encouraging his readers with that; to assure them that 'You are the children of God.' And those people who left, that sect, that heretical group, is not.

And the evidence that you are is threefold. And he's been developing these three evidences, these three signs, that prove that they are the children of God. The first is their *faith*. The second is their *love*. And the third is their *obedience*.

All three of those are combined here in these verses that we look at this morning, these five verses. And what John has just indicated about *faith* is true of the other two, of *love* and *obedience*. They are all the products of the new birth, and that's a great encouragement. And it's a great encouragement to me because it means that what we are expected to do, (and these are what we are responsible to do: to believe, to love, to obey), as God's people, we are responsible. But what is encouraging is, God supplies that. He enables us to understand. He enables us to believe and to love and to obey. This isn't something we're left to do on our own, in our own strength because we don't have strength in and of ourselves. So I do find it to be an encouragement.

God always takes the initiative in establishing a relationship with people and then continuing that relationship with *people*. He seeks us out and He saves us; He saves the lost. It's an expression of His great love for us. That's how Paul describes it in Ephesians 2, verse 4, he says, "But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us...made us alive." Why are you alive today? If you're a believer in Jesus Christ, you're alive. Why? Because God loved you, loved you from all eternity. That's the kind of God we serve. And that is an encouragement.

If God did that when we were dead and very unattractive, when we were rebels against Him, He will surely do as much now that we are alive, that we are His children. If He has brought us safely this far, He will surely bring us to the next place and He will bring us on to the victory that He has promised.

So, in the heat and dust of the Christian life, we are not alone. God's always with us, supplying us with strength, as He did at the beginning, so that by His grace we can and will live His life daily. We will believe God's Word, and we will love God's people.

Love is important to John; and with good reason. The new birth didn't bring us into kind of a loose association with people, like joining the Rotary Club. He brought us into His family. We are members of God's family. That is described in various ways of an interconnectedness: We are the stones of the temple built up together; we are the body of Christ; we're His family. We're God's family. Just as a child is physically born into a family, so God's children are spiritually born into a family, into His family with lots of brothers and sisters. And our natural response to them is love.

That's what John says next, "...whoever loves the Father loves the *child* born of Him." (vs1b). And generally that's true of the natural family. Children love each other, generally, not, (of course), always but generally that's the case. It's always the case, though, in the spiritual family. Christians love each other. Again, it's an evidence of the new birth. Again, it's an evidence of the new birth because it is a product of the new birth. God is love and His children share His character; they share His nature.

And so no Christian can say that he loves God and hates his brother. That's a false claim. It's like a character referred to in *The Brothers Karamazov*, who said, "The more I love mankind in general, the less I love man in *particular*." Now that's understandable because it's "in *particular*" that love gets kind of messy. That's where we see human nature function—and it's not pleasant. And that's where we have to deal with real issues, and it's difficult.

'Loving mankind', in general, is easy: It's not very messy; it's all theory; it's all words; it's all in the abstract—and it's not at all practical. It doesn't get down where it's difficult and costly. So really, it's a very empty claim of love. And it's the same for anyone who claims to love God but doesn't love God's children. It's just empty words without action. It's not real.

John's dealt with this already. Back in chapter 4, in verse 20 he said that that person who says that he loves God but doesn't love God's children, "is a liar." That's very strong language. Those who are born again have the life of God in them. They love God. And they love His life in other people. They love God's life in God's children. They love God's children. That is a natural attraction. That is an inevitable response of having the life of God within us. We naturally do that. Not perfectly. I'm not saying that. But it's natural for us to love the children of God because we've got the love of God within us—the character of God.

Cain was unnatural. He hated his brother. There are no Cains in the family of God. Those who have been born of God, love God's people. That is the new and great commandment that Jesus gave to His disciples in the upper room before He was arrested, before He left this world. In John 13, verse 34 he said, "Love one another." Not love all generally, without getting your hands messy—but love one another in particular, individually, personally. 'Get down and wash their feet', that's the Lord's *command*.

And John reminds us in verse 2 of what this love is, what it looks like. The love that he's speaking of, the love of God, the love that is required of us, involves *keeping* God's commandments. Now the whole Law is summed up in two great commands; 'Love the LORD your God with all your heart...and love your neighbor as yourself.' (Mark 12:30) We know that we love God's children, John says, by two facts: We love God and we observe His commandments. And if we love God we'll observe His commandments.

And the person who truly loves God, (to make that even broader and more to the point), the person who truly loves God must have faith in God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. We can't say we love God and not love His Son—can't say we love God and we don't believe in the One whom He sent. So first of all, that begins with *faith* in Christ. And those who believe in Christ demonstrate their love for Him, and really, demonstrate their love for the Son, and the Father. and the Spirit, the Triune God, by keeping God's commandments—by *obeying* Him.

Just as we can't separate loving God from loving God's people, we can't separate love from obedience. Love is not without affection. I think I've made that point more than once as we've been going through 1 John, and I think it's something we need to stress. It's not without affection. There is emotion involved in love. Our emotions are stirred by those we love. But John makes it clear, that essentially, love is not so much a feeling, it's an action. It acts.

I think we have a good illustration of that in one of the best-known stories in the New Testament, the parable of the good Samaritan, where Jesus is giving an answer to "Who is my neighbor?" (Luke 10:29). And He not only gives an answer to 'Who is my neighbor', but 'What is love?' because He tells this story about a man who's ambushed on the road to Jericho. He's robbed, he's stripped, he's left for dead on the side of the road. Remember a priest comes down the road, sees him on the side there; and he didn't want to be bothered by this. He knew that this would be a great inconvenience for him. Maybe he was busy. He was on his way to an important meeting and so he crossed over to the other side so that he wouldn't have to help this stranger. A Levite comes and he does the same thing.

It's only the hated Samaritan that helped this hapless traveler. He treated the wounds, he bandaged them. He took the poor man to an inn and he paid for his care. That's love. If anyone would seem to be a lover of God, we would think that it would be the religious man—it would be that priest. But his religion was all formality without sympathy or care for God's creature. His soul was empty.

Love helps—and helps the unlikely person. It expresses itself by being obedient to God's commands. And John says that, "...His commands are not burdensome." (vs3b). Now that's kind of an interesting statement. I don't think that priest or that Levite felt that way; it was a great burden for them to do what they saw they needed to do and didn't do. And they didn't because it was so burdensome; so they didn't lift a finger to help that man in need; it was an inconvenience. And it was certainly an inconvenience for that Samaritan—and it was costly for that Samaritan. Love can be an inconvenience, and it can be a burden.

Obedience does require a lot from us. Love requires a lot from us. John's not suggesting that obedience to God is a light and easy thing; it's not. Love is not a light or easy thing. The reality is, it's impossible.

But this goes back to the earlier point that John made about faith. Faith in Christ is impossible for the natural man. It takes the new birth. That makes faith not only possible but inevitable. When the new birth happens, there's going to be faith. That life of God is going to produce the right response.

And it's just as true of love and obedience. Those virtues are impossible naturally. They don't rise up in us naturally, apart from God. Even in the natural man, I would say, it's a work of God in his or her heart. But certainly these are impossible virtues for us to display and to have naturally. But Christians aren't natural.

The Christian life is a supernatural life. It's a life in which Christ is living in us through the Holy Spirit. That makes obedience possible and actual. God supplies what He requires—that's sovereign grace. That's why I say this is encouraging. It's encouraging about faith, it's encouraging about love and obedience. God supplies these things. "He gives what He commands", as Augustin put it.

That's what Jesus promised in Matthew 11, verse 28 through 30, where He invited people to come to Him; opens His arms wide to His audience, to all and invites them to "Come", to learn from Him because, He said, "My yoke is easy and my burden is light." The Lord doesn't lay on us all kinds of laws that regulate every detail of our lives; like the rules that the Pharisees had with all their traditions and all the minutia that they required of people. The Lord's requirements are light; His yoke isn't complicated.

So it's *light* in that sense but it's also *light* because it is His yoke. They're His commands and they are not burdensome because we love Him; and we want to please Him. Now isn't that the way it is in a family? A son or a daughter wants to please his or her mother or father—not always, and certainly not perfectly. But ideally and usually, when love exists in a family that's what motivates obedience and a desire to live for that person, that parent, because we love them. We don't want to disappoint them.

That's really the strongest and most commanding motive in life. That which motivates us most to live as we ought to is love. When we love God we naturally want to please Him. And we're glad to do what He instructs us to do. Now, of course, we don't love God as we ought. I know that. And we spend the rest of our lives growing in that. And we grow in that as we study His Word and learn about Him and all that He's done for us, and who He is. And as we do that and realize who we are and what a great debt we owe to Him, and as we think about that, that increases our love and our desire to serve Him faithfully.

And what He's instructed us to do, what He has commanded us to do, is love one another; which we do because we love Him. Love lightens the load. So, we bear one another's burdens and weaknesses because the LORD has told us to do that; and because we love the LORD and love one another.

And sometimes those burdens are heavy. J. Gresham Machen was a defender of the faith. He was a scholar and a teacher, a man of words and books, one of the great evangelical scholars of the first half of the 20th century. But he's also a man of action. He was described as "generous without calculation, almost to a fault". That's what his biographer wrote of him who was a very close friend of his. He was involved in these things and he saw Machen's life up close and wrote of how he helped a lot of people.

And one man in particular he helped. He was an old man that the minister at the First Church of Princeton introduced to Machen. This was a man who was a new convert and whose health was broken by alcohol. He couldn't find work but Machen bore his burden. He helped him financially. He found him a home in another city, away from his bad companions and he gave him lots of spiritual guidance. The man would lapse into his old ways but Machen didn't give up on him. He was patient and he encouraged him—and he continued to help him. In fact, he did that for 23 years until the man went home to be with the Lord.

The only thing that they had in common was Christ—but that was everything. Now that may be a bit extraordinary, an unusual example, but that is Christian love. It

sees a need and helps materially or spiritually. It is patient and kind, expecting nothing in return. It is selfless. That's a supernatural love.

That's the new birth. It is power that overcomes all obstacles, like self-centeredness, close fistness. It overcomes the world and it makes us victors. That's what John says in verse 4. "For whoever is born of God overcomes the world." You'll notice, "overcomes the world", not "will overcome the world." That's true too, but that's not what John says: "Overcomes the world", *presently*. That's the Christian life—we're overcoming.

Again, Christianity is supernatural. You cannot understand it or explain it in any other way. Our understanding of truth and our response to it in *faith, love, and obedience*, all of that is of God. It comes from Him.

And our response is the evidence that we are born of God. There will be a response—and it is our response. Again, don't misunderstand what I'm saying; we believe. Every believer in Jesus Christ has personally believed in Him. And that's what John emphasizes; our faith. It's our responsibility and it's our faith. He calls it "the victory": "And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith." (vs4b).

But again, faith ultimately is a gift. It doesn't mean that God believes for us. But what it does mean is that God removes the "*heart of stone*", to use the images of Ezekiel, ( 11:19 & 36:26), and replaces it with a "*heart of flesh*". He takes that aspect of our being out that's dead and lifeless; and puts in life, His life within us—so that it is natural. It is inevitable that we respond in faith, that we understand, and that we live.

So we believe because of Him and we believe in a very specific way. Saving faith has correct content. It's not just believing anything, it's believing something very specific. In verse 1 it is, "...that Jesus is the Christ..." That's what we believe. That's an evidence of the new birth. Those people who had left, 'they went out from us because they were not really of us'—they didn't believe that. They didn't believe "that Jesus was the Christ." They had an errant view of who Jesus Christ was.

Those who are born again believe, first, that "Jesus is the Christ". (vs2). And then in verse 5 we're told that He is "the Son of God." Those who are born again believe something very specific about Jesus Christ. They believe that He is the Savior who is a man, a genuine man; but more than a man, who is God and Man. That's saving faith. That's the object of it.

God's Son came and died for us; and we trust in that. And at the moment we do, at the moment a person puts his or her faith in Christ, in that Christ, in the God-Man, in the One who shed His blood for sinners; the moment a person puts his or her faith in Him, he or she is delivered from this world. From citizenship here and given citizenship in heaven—with a new loyalty, a new love, and a new mind. And that's instantaneous! An irreversible break with the world and the past occurs at that moment.

John Stott wrote, "The spell of the old life has been broken. The fascination of the world has lost its appeal. We immediately become strangers in the land, pilgrims passing through this world. Which, when I speak of the world, isn't so much a place as a system; as a way of thinking. It is antithetical to God. The world is hostile to Him."

We can look at the world in a lot of different ways when we think of it as a *system*: The world is heresy and error; the world is a wrong perspective on life; it is a shortsighted view of life with false hopes; it is the influence that draws us away from the LORD.

Or as Bishop Westcott defined the world, "the powers which make obedience difficult." It's everything in this world in which we live that is opposed to God and to what we believe, and wants to draw us away from Him. We've overcome that. We're not part of that anymore.

Now that doesn't mean that we don't struggle in this world, that the struggle is over, that the struggle is easy. It's not. We're in the world, and while we've overcome the world, the world's continually trying to overcome us. It means that we're no longer part of the world. We are different from it; and we're equipped to live differently as well. And because we are, we have the power to resist the world's pressures and the world's

allurements. The struggle goes on, but we have a new nature. We're new creatures in Christ and we have the Holy Spirit working within us.

We have real power. And the way we use it, to have daily victory, is the way we gained the first victory; by faith. We believe daily. This is the victory that has "overcome the world", our faith. We entered the Christian life through faith. We continue in the Christian life by faith; and a faith that's focused specifically, it's focused specifically on the Scriptures.

Now that's not optional. The Bible is where we see Christ. The Bible is where we meet Christ, where we learn of Him, and where we learn from Him. It's where the Holy Spirit teaches us. That's how He guides us. It's through the Word of God. When we follow God's Word, we work in His strength. Because as we live by faith, we find that we have the strength to do what we must do. As we walk by faith, we find that we have the ability to do it.

Now, I know that sounds, maybe, like an easy formula that promises to carry us through this world and all of its trials on wings of victory. And in a sense it is. Yes, it's a formula and that's what it promises to do; but in saying that I don't mean to suggest that it's easy—because it isn't. The pressure of the world is always there. We are surrounded by it. We live in it. And the pressure that it puts on us to conform to its standards and its principles, and adopt its desires, is there constantly—and it's there relentlessly. We don't escape it; it doesn't stop.

So Christians get worn down. The wayfaring Christian becomes the weary Christian, and at times, a confused Christian—and needs encouragement, needs direction, constantly.

Well it needs what John gives us in this letter. What he says here is, 'We are victorious.' Whoever is born of God, whoever has believed in Jesus Christ, has overcome the world. Our citizenship has been transferred from here, from this world, to heaven. Nothing can change that—that's irrevocable. We are secure in Christ. That's an encouragement; we "are more than conquerors." (Rom 8:37).

Now that doesn't produce idleness; it shouldn't. We shouldn't think, "Well, if I'm more than a conqueror, and my citizenship's in heaven, and it can't be reversed, I'm just going to relax and not worry and live whatever way I want."

That won't be the result, not in a child of God. This becomes a motivation to action, an encouragement to serve in light of all that God's done for us and is doing for us and the ability that He gives. We're victorious. Move forward in that victory, God is with us. He gave us life in the beginning and He gives us life daily. He is faithful, and He's almighty. That's Who we have on our side. That's Who's working within us and for us. So we're to look to Him.

Certainly, that is the implication of saying, 'Faith is from God.' Faith is a gift; Love is from God; Obedience is from God. They're all a gift, therefore we should look to the source constantly. He supplies. That's the assurance that John gives from the grammar and the words he chose so carefully. The LORD is the source of strength, of faith, of love, of perseverance.

But the life that He gives doesn't grow in isolation—it doesn't grow apart from God's Word and God's people. We are dependent upon the LORD. We must be in His Word constantly—and we need to be with His people; we need each other. That's the way God's made us. He's put us in a family. He's put us together with others because we need one another.

I read a book recently in which the author recalled a sermon that she heard by a Presbyterian minister who said, "Imagine if the U. S. decided that we were going to send just one soldier to Iraq." Now this sermon was given some years ago. But he said, "One soldier, even with the best equipment in the world, how could one little soldier survive?"

And, of course, he couldn't. And the point that he was making is really the point that I'm making here, that we're not intended to be one individual soldier out there by ourselves, fighting the war. Because we're in a war; we're in an intense war, a spiritual battle, we are to be together in that warfare—helping each other along the way through

'dust and heat'. And we do that as the author of Hebrews told us to do by, "strengthening the hands that are weak and the knees that are feeble." (Heb 12:12).

We need each other. We need to come alongside our brothers and sisters. We need to listen to them. Sometimes that's really all we can do, just listen, give an ear; a sympathetic ear—but listen to them. We pray for them, we give them direction as best we can. But you know what? Sometimes we can't give the best direction, the best answers. I find that in my own experience.

Sometimes I'm asked some difficult questions, and I really don't know the answer. But the answer is in the Word of God, and what we do is we would direct people to God's Word, to the Scriptures, because there are the answers. Listen to me. You've heard this before, but we always need to be hearing this, "The Scriptures are sufficient." The Bible has the answers. It is God's revelation. It is inerrant. It nourishes our souls.

And as we feed upon it, we may be confused but we will find the answers and the way through God's Word. It gives us direction. It gives us illumination. It causes faith. That's what Paul wrote in Romans 10:17, "Faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ." You want strong faith? Read the Word of God. That's where you get it. You won't get it apart from that.

So if your faith is weak, well maybe you're not in the Word. If you lack wisdom and you're confused about things, maybe it's because you're not in the Word, you're not studying the Scriptures. If you've become spiritually cold and bored with it all, and you're sort of drifting; if you're lacking assurance of salvation, maybe it's because you're not in the Word of God, living in obedience to it, living by faith.

Well, if you're a believer in Jesus Christ, you have overcome the world. That's an encouragement. You are a conqueror and more. But you won't enjoy those victories daily, apart from living in God's Word. So, ask God to kindle afresh in your heart, a desire to be in His Word and to live for Him. We all need to do that. Not one of us is in a position where, 'We're okay, we're moving along just fine.' Once we think that we're in

trouble. We all need to be seeking God's grace to kindle afresh in our hearts a desire to study His Word, and to live for Him.

And, of course, if you're here without Christ, if you haven't believed in Him, then you are in need of that, of trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ. Ask God for the faith to do that. See your need, and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. He's the Savior. The moment you do, you're a new creature with a new relationship to the world and to the Lord Himself: with a glorious future and a glorious present. May God help you to do that—and help all of us to rest in Him. Let's pray.

Father, we do thank You for the great truths that You've set forth here in these few verses. We can know who we are: We can know that we're *born again* by the fact that we believe in Your Son; and that we know Him to be the Son of God, the Savior of the world. We've trusted in Him—and You produce that within us. You produce love in us. You produce obedience in us. We're responsible to do these things; but they come as a result of Your grace and we give You praise and thanks for that. And yet we pray, LORD, produce more of it in us that we might live lives that honor You in all that we do. We pray these things in Christ's name. Amen.

*(End of Audio)*