

**Text: 1 John 4:13-5:5**

Section 1

*13By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. 14We have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world. 15Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. 16We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. (1 John 4:13-16)*

Besides our love for one another, we have the inner testimony of the indwelling Holy Spirit that we are God's Children. What a wonderful thing it is to be led, taught, encouraged, and comforted by the Spirit of God Himself!

**14For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. 15For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" 16The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, 17and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him. (Romans 8:14-17)**

John says *We have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.* Each of us has a testimony regarding God's working in our own lives, but the Apostles had even more—they had actually seen the risen Christ. In fact, LOTS of people had seen Him, and this was and is powerful evidence regarding the truth of Christianity.

**16For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty. (2 Peter 1:16)**

**1Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, 2by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. 3For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, 5and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. 6After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep; 7then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles; 8and last of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared to me also. (1 Corinthians 15:1-7)**

When we confess Jesus is the Son of God—in effect, as Lord and God—we are saved!

**9that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; 10for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. 11For the Scripture says, "WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED." 12For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; 13for "WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED." (Romans 10:9-13)**

Section 2

*17By this, love is perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because as He is, so also are we in this world. 18There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love. (1 John 4:17-18)*

*Because as He is, so also are we in this world.* What does that mean? It means we can be confident in facing judgment because the indwelling Holy Spirit has made us increasingly like Him. As I have said so often, "check your fruits!" There are two lists in Galatians 5, and we need to be like the second one. If the first one looks more like our lives, then we have some unconfessed sin to deal with...and perhaps have not yet been "born again."

**17For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. 18But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law. 19Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, 20idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, 21envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. 22But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.**

**24Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. (Galatians 5:17-25)**

The Gospel is a miraculously simple thing—we just read a summary of it in five verses—and we should not present it to those we wish to see converted in a way that is unnecessarily convoluted. However, as we mature in the faith we must come to see that salvation really is at least a five-part event. Three of these happen instantaneously when we are saved: we are regenerated by the Holy Spirit, we are justified legally before God, and we are adopted into His family. The next part, sanctification, is a lifelong process of continuing and increasing conformity to Christ's Character. If this is not present in our lives, then we have reason to doubt our salvation, and Peter therefore warned his readers to **be diligent** in performing the works that were commensurate with a true salvation experience. If the only evidence in your life that you are saved is that you “made a decision” or “prayed a prayer” or “filled out a card” or anything else past like that, and you don't have any continuing obedience and growth to indicate that you are a child of God, you very likely need to be saved—repent and believe today!

(The last part of salvation, glorification, does not occur until the Final Resurrection.)

**1Simon Peter, a bond-servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours, by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ: 2Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; 3seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. 4For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust. 5Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge, 6and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness, 7and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love. 8For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9For he who lacks these qualities is blind or short-sighted, having forgotten his purification from his former sins. 10Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble; 11for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you. (2 Peter 1:1-11)**

### Section 3

*19We love, because He first loved us. 20If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen. 21And this commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also. (1 John 4:19-21)*

God loved us first, even when we were dirty, filthy, unlovable sinners. In fact, He chose us before the foundation of the world to be His People! Not only that, He causes us to be **conformed to the image of His Son**. This is one reason that we cannot claim to love God if we do not love the brethren: if the brethren are conformed to the image of Christ and we don't love them, we can't possibly love God either! If we love God, we must also love His People.

**28And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. 29For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; 30and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified. (Romans 8:28-30)**

### Section 4

*1Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and whoever loves the Father loves the child born of Him. (1 John 5:1)*

Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God. This is beyond merely believing in God or that God exists, and is even beyond acknowledging that such a person as Jesus existed. This is the faith of the demons, and of the false believers that Paul warned would come.

**19You believe that God is one You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder. (James 2:19)**

**1But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. 2For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, 3unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, 4treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, 5holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; Avoid such men as these. (2 Timothy 3:1-5)**

No, faith that saves, faith that makes us the children of God, is faith that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah, the Deliverer, the One that the entire Old Testament promised would come to save His People from their sins. It is this faith, trusting in Christ and His finished work on our behalf, that saves, and is the faith upon which Christ Himself said He would build His Church.

**13**Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He was asking His disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" **14**And they said, "Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets." **15**He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" **16**Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." **17**And Jesus said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven." **18**"I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it. (Matthew 16:13-18)

So, in order to be saved, we trust in and confess Jesus as the risen and reigning Lord and Christ, calling upon Him to save us and trusting that His death was sufficient to atone for the sins of all that call upon Him, and that His resurrection demonstrated the same power that will one day raise His people from the dead to live forever in His presence.

**9**that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; **10**for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. **11**For the Scripture says, "WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED." **12**For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; **13**for "WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED." (Romans 10:9-13)

Take some time this afternoon to read Revelation 20-22, to remind yourselves of the tremendous and glorious promises of the life that awaits those that believe...contrasted with the eternal death and torment that awaits those that remain in their sins. Then, thank God for your salvation (or, if you are not yet saved, cry out to Him to save you from the punishment you deserve—He has promised to do just that!).

## Section 5

*2*By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments.*3*For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome. *4*For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world--our faith. *5*Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? (1 John 5:2-5)

Verse 2 seems a bit circular in light of some of the things we have read. Earlier, in Chapter 3, we read that love for the brethren is evidence of salvation. And, in John 15 we read that we are confirmed in the faith as we abide in Him by keeping His commandments. Now, it says that if we keep His commandments, we know we love the brethren. Obedience to God's commands and love for the brethren are inseparable marks of a true believer.

**14**We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. (1 John 3:14)

**10**"If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. **11**"These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full. (John 15:10-11)

*His commands are not burdensome???* What about Peter and Paul? Peter said that they Jews were never able to bear the **yoke** of God's Law, and Paul bemoaned the fact that so much sin remained in his flesh!

**7**After there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, "Brethren, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles would hear the word of the gospel and believe. **8**"And God, who knows the heart, testified to them giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He also did to us; **9**and He made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith. **10**"Now therefore why do you put God to the test by placing upon the neck of the disciples a yoke which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear? **11**"But we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same way as they also are." (Acts 15:7-11)

**14**For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin. **15**For what I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate. **16**But if I do the very thing I do not want to do, I agree with the Law, confessing that the Law is good. **17**So now, no longer am I the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me. **18**For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not. **19**For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want. **20**But if I am doing the very thing I do not want, I am no longer the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me. **21**I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wants to do good. **22**For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man, **23**but I see a

**different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members. 24Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death? 25Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin. (Romans 7:14-25)**

In the flesh, the commands of God are burdensome—indeed, impossible to fulfill! But, as Paul said, God through Christ sets us free **from the body of this death**. This is nothing other than the promise God conveyed through Jeremiah to write His law on our hearts, giving us a new nature that, while warring with the flesh in this life, still desires to serve Him, and that service will be perfected when we get to Heaven.

**31"Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, 32not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them," declares the LORD. 33"But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the LORD, "I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 34"They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares the LORD, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more." (Jeremiah 31:31-34)**

How do we receive this promise, the Holy Spirit that indwells us and gives us a new, godly nature? Peter told the crowd during his first sermon after the Resurrection: Repent and believe in Jesus Christ!

**32"Thus Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses. 33"Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear. 34"For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says:**

**"THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD,**

**"SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND,**

**35UNTIL I MAKE YOUR ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR YOUR FEET.""**

**36"Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ--this Jesus whom you crucified." 37Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?" 38Peter said to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39"For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself." (Acts 2:32-39)**

It is our faith, that faith which itself is a gift of God, that enables us to overcome the world, the flesh, and the Devil. We should always be thankful that He not only gave us the Gospel by which we could be saved, but gave us the faith needed to actually obey the Gospel and be saved!

**8For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; 9not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9)**

**16But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. 17For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. 18But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law. (Galatians 5:16-18)**

**24"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life. (John 5:24)**