

C. Faith is the victory that overcomes the world.

- i. It is not our deeds of love that overcome the world, but “faith, which expects everything from God and hopes in the coming of Christ and His Kingdom.” (Bonhoeffer)

- ii. It is faith in a new world in which things don’t work the same way they work in the old; a world which works in a way not testable in this world; one that requires faith.

LIVE THE STORY

The following questions are designed for use in our Community Groups as an aid to growth in the Gospel and Community.

- Have you ever wanted a “Christianity” with child-free zones? What does John think about that?
- Do you ever think about the children of God as unnecessary irritants to your walk with God? How does that misconceive what it means to know God?
- Are there things which the enemy has in you that allows him to get you to live motivated by fear rather than by love?
- How are the ideas of Day of Judgment and overcoming related in John’s way of thinking?
- What does it mean to “overcome the world” in view of 2:15-17? How does faith help us do that?
- Is the command to love sacrificially too hard? Explain. How does the promise of overcoming enable us to love?
- Discuss the 1st Volf quote as intended (applied to marriage) and also applied to what it means to love one another in the church.
- Why is it important through faith and the lens of Christ to see the future judgment brought into our present? How does that help us live the life of the coming age now?

Light, Life, Love – the Gospel we heard from Him

Fearless Love

Jerry Cisar — November 8, 2020

Text: 1 John 4:17—5:5

Introduction: Child-free Zones?

How can we overcome the desires of our flesh, the desires for all we see, and the arrogance of having achieved our possessions by our own hard work, in order to pour out our lives on behalf of others?

I. Fearlessness in the Day of Judgment (4:17-18)

A. The Day of Judgment and Overcoming the World

i. Fearlessness on the Day of Judgment (4:17)

ii. Overcoming the World (5:4-5)

a) Overcomers get their reward on the Day of Judgment:

b) “To the one who overcomes...” (Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21).

Christ’s judgment and reward is the pattern, the model, for our own judgment and reward!

B. How Telescopes Changed the World

i. *By changing our perspective.*

ii. The cross takes God’s future judgment and brings it into the present for all who have faith in Jesus enabling them to live fearless love on behalf of others.

If we want to be like Jesus in the Day of Judgment we must be like Jesus in this world!

- C. At the cross, a moment of earthly judgment, Jesus as the propitiation for our sins (2:2; 4:10), accepted our future judgment as his own in order to save us from our eternal fate!
 - i. By bringing the future judgment right to the present, the believer has nothing to fear and can enter into all earthly trials and suffering pouring out their lives in love.

Believers actually live new creation in the present old creation.

- ii. At the cross, the place of judgment has become the place of salvation and therefore the believer is fearless in love.

II. Love for Our Difficult Siblings (4:19—5:2)

- A. Love for God and love for one another are inseparable.

Bonhoeffer: “In Jesus, service to the least brother or sister and service to God became one. ... For *in Christ God became our brother*; therefore service to God in worship and service to one another have also become one.”

- i. Matt. 25:34-36, 40
- ii. Commitment to Christ is a commitment to sacrificial love for the family.

- B. The Brother or Sister We Can See is the most difficult to love.

Miroslav Volf: “[Love] has to do with how you treat each other when dishes need to be washed or garbage taken out, when misunderstandings arise and when one has transgressed against the other. Love is not just the desire to be united with the other, but action on behalf of the other, and constancy in pursuit of his or her well-being.”

III. Faith and Overcoming the World (5:3-5)

- A. What does it mean to overcome the world?
 - i. 1 John 2:15-17

- ii. To overcome the world, then, means to overcome the love of the world... to lay down one's life for each other, to join Christ in submitting to the world's judgment that we might bring life... turning judgment into salvation. No fear.

- B. Does the ruler of this world find anything in you? (1 John 2:16)

Andreas: “Jesus said: ‘The ruler of this world is coming, and he shall find nothing in me.’ We ought to be the same, so that nothing of this world may be found in us either.”

- i. Nothing in Jesus

- ii. What about you?

- C. Is the command to love sacrificially too hard?

Miroslav Volf: “Is love a raw deal? From the perspective of contractual relations it is. But love has its own rewards. Remember that Jesus said it is more blessed to give than to receive. The return that I get when I practice self-giving love is not more to me, but more to us – more to the beauty of our common love.” (*Against the Tide*)

- i. If you think of how we sacrifice transactionally, it is a raw deal. If you think of it through the telescope of faith and the cross, through Christ, it is a joyous adventure!

- ii. Love is a commitment to sacrifice for the good of the other. Hard? Yes, but joyously so. Too hard? No.