

# HOW TO BE SURE YOU'RE ON THE WINNING SIDE 1 John 5:2-10

Everybody wants to be on the winning side!

In theological world, a major discussion revolves around John's statement in his letters to the seven churches:

*"To him who overcomes, God will..."*

He will be identified with God in His victory over the world.

The big theological discussion revolves around whether WE will overcome.

It's often used in discussions about security. *You must be an overcomer!*

John explains how we "overcome" in final chapter of 1 John

Let's see what John says about **how we can be sure WE're on the winning side.**

## **COMPANIONS OF LOVE 5:2b-10**

2 things accompany genuine love for God & for one another:

### **1. OBEDIENCE TO GOD'S COMMANDS 5:2b-3a**

*"We love the children of God, when we love God & obey his commandments. <sup>3</sup>For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments."*

Love & obedience to God's commands go together.

**When we truly love God & keep His commands, we love His children.**

So, the first traveling companion to our love for one another is obedience to God's commands. They go together.

2<sup>nd</sup> logical companion of the love God produces in those who walk in fellowship with Him is...

### **2. VICTORY OVER THE WORLD 5:3b-10**

## **People who love God keep His commands**

(such as “love one another).

**3** *“For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. & his commandments are not burdensome.”*

**For such people, His commands aren't a burden.**

**BECAUSE everyone born of God is on the winning side**—the one that overcomes the world (which hates God's children! 3:12-18)

Refers back to the conflict in 3:12-18:

The world hates God's children.

Those who are God's children,  
love His children!

His commands aren't “burdensome.” lit., “heavy”

Little girl carrying her baby brother. Observer was concerned about the load she was carrying: “Little girl, isn't he awfully heavy for you?” She replies: **“He isn't heavy; he's my brother!”**

God's commands aren't “heavy” —they're motivated by love for Him.

They aren't heavy because they call us to love the family too.

In this conflict between the world and God's family, those born of God are on the winning side.

People who trust Jesus win!

**People who are born of God overcome the world!**

**4-5** *“For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. & this is the victory that has overcome the world —our faith.*

<sup>5</sup>*Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?”*

Two things are true of people who are truly born of God . . .

They love God's kids

They're on the winning side      Who is able to "overcome?"  
 People who are born of God  
 People who trust Christ are "world-conquerors."

**They believe that Jesus is the Son of God 5:5**

Our faith is the basis of our victory—but it isn't *just faith!*  
 It isn't faith *in faith*—some mystical belief we hold on to.  
 It isn't faith *in ourselves* —trusting ourselves—that gives us  
 victory.

Faith in *Jesus* gives us victory!

This doesn't satisfy the post-modern view that every faith is  
 the same!

—that any old faith will do—you have yours and I have mine  
 —as long as we believe in *something!*

It's exclusive! "*ONLY he who believes that Jesus is God's  
 Son!*"

Only he who trusts JESUS! —He's the *ONLY* way to the  
 winning side!

**They receive the testimony God has given concern-  
 ing His Son.**

**5:6-10** *"This is he who came by water & blood —Jesus Christ; not  
 by the water only but by the water & blood. & the Spirit is the one  
 who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. <sup>7</sup>For there are 3 that  
 testify: <sup>8</sup>the Spirit & the water & the blood; & these 3 agree. <sup>9</sup>If we  
 receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater, for  
 this is the testimony of God that he has borne concerning his Son.  
<sup>10</sup>Whoever believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself.  
 Whoever does not believe God has made him a liar, because he*

*has not believed in the testimony that God has borne concerning his Son.”*

That testimony shows that He is the source of eternal life.

He who has the Son has eternal life.

Our faith (trust in Him) is the victory that overcomes the world. 5:4

What does that tell us about the promises in Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21?

(Transition to life in Jesus 5:11-21)

Who will overcome?

*Only those who trust in JESUS are on the winning side!*

[ You may be getting lost about now as to where John is going!

Let's go back and pick up the flow:

God is holy (1:5-3:10);

God is love (3:10-5:10)

He has begun a . . . ]

**Transition to 3<sup>rd</sup> major premise:**

Since God (Jesus) is life, 5:20

*“We know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true; and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.”*

**to enjoy fellowship with God, we must have life.**

**(5:11-24)**

**Transition:** moving from love to life.

Transition goes from 4:13 to 5:10

He concludes the transition with a word about God's testimony concerning His Son.

**People who trust Jesus have overcome the world.**

**5:5**

**People who trust Jesus have accepted (believed/ acknowledged as true) the testimony God has given concerning His Son. 5:6-10**

**People who trust Jesus (have His Son) have eternal life. 5:11-13**

New point: to have fellowship with the living God—with the God who IS LIFE—you must have life.

This life is found in His Son.

**Parenthesis: Comments about the testimony concerning God's Son 5:6-10**

Numerous points of view about this section!

I feel strongly about my view, but it's not what most people believe.

*You don't have to agree with me!*

**Main pt. is clear: God has affirmed that Jesus is His Son.**

Concept of sonship in Hebrew mind

= like the Father

=> He is characterized by the same things that characterize the father.

=> He is GOD!

Those who trust Jesus accept God's testimony and receive life.

5:6-10 => 5:11-13

Whatever you do with the rest of the details, that's the bottom line:  
God has affirmed that Jesus is His Son.

Those who trust Jesus acknowledge God's testimony and receive life.

If you're not interested in the details take that truth and hang on to it

–the rest really doesn't change John's main point!

I'm going to deal briefly with the details, because they're in the text!

You have to do *something* with them, whether you agree with me or not.

**Jesus is the One who came by water & blood.**

**5:6a** *"This is he who came by water & blood—Jesus Christ; not by the water only but by the water & the blood.*

**Three main views:**

**Whichever view you take, it's used as evidence to confirm God's Son.**

**1. Most common=>water = baptism.**

God clearly affirmed His Sonship at Jesus' baptism.

**2. Water & blood= 2 agents of cleansing**

Water = Word of God; blood of Christ

2 agents God provided for our cleansing.

Neither view explains "He comes through"

Nor do they take John 3 into account: "you must be *BORN* by water."

**3. Water = incarnation**

**Witness of the incarnation & death of Christ.**

**Water –cp. John 3– Water refers to Jesus' physical birth.**

Christ became a man, same way we become human

He became one of us.

**Circumstances surrounding Jesus' birth show that He is God's Son.**

This was no *normal* human birth.

That's confirmed by the testimony of the shepherds, the angels, and the wise men.

**Blood points to Christ's *death***

**Circumstances surrounding Jesus' death show that He is God's Son.**

This is no *normal* human death!—much less a normal criminal's death!

Remember John's introduction: "*We're talking about something we've seen with our own eyes & experienced personally.*"

The testimony didn't end with the evidence from Jesus' incarnation.

Jesus' life is important—but it isn't enough by Himself.

His death is central to the significance of His coming!

The way He *died* is critical to the testimony that He is God's Son.

**3 witnesses concerning God's Son: The Spirit, the water, & the blood. 5:6b-8**

[Textual problem—see NIV footnote]

Not found in any Greek manuscript before 14<sup>th</sup> century.

Not found in the text of *any* version before the 4<sup>th</sup> century.

Not even the textual tradition adopted by the *textus receptus* & KJV support these lines!

We've already considered testimony from the incarnation and death of Jesus, . . .

**Holy Spirit adds His testimony inside our heart,**

to the *external* evidence from His birth & death

**The 3 witnesses agree: God has affirmed that Jesus is His Son. = 5:9**

*“If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater, for this is the testimony of God that he has borne concerning his Son.”*

His birth, His death, & the testimony of the Spirit affirm: Jesus is God’s Son (=God Himself—of one nature with Him)

That testimony should lead us to trust Him and join in His victory over the world.

**People who trust in Jesus accept God’s testimony concerning His Son.**

**5:10** *“Whoever believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself. Whoever does not believe God has made him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has borne concerning his Son”*

John forces us to make a choice.

It isn’t true that any old view will do.

You must ACCEPT the testimony or REJECT it!

If you accept what God has said, you will trust His Son.

If you reject what God has said, you make Him a liar

–AND you don’t have eternal life.

**WE MUST MAKE A CHOICE!**

**Anyone characterized by trusting in the Son of God has the testimony inside him (on the inside).**

God’s Spirit causes him to see the light about Jesus and he has internalized it.

**Anyone characterized by not trusting in the Son, has made God a liar.**

Because he hasn't believed the testimony God has testified concerning His Son.

Because He doesn't believe what God says about Jesus.

***What Difference Should this Make in Our Lives?***

*What should we DO about it?*

*This is pretty theological stuff!*

What's the *practical* implication of this passage?

**Main issue: What will WE do about the testimony God has given?**

**What will WE do with Jesus?**

**5:11 "He who has the Son has life!"**

**5:13 "I have written these things to those who believe in the name of the Son of God so you may know that you have eternal life."**

Back to John's point:

**This testimony is the basis for our faith, the faith which overcomes the world.**

**In the face of the conflict with the world...**

**We have confidence that we're on the winning side!**

**We love people who belong to God's family.**

So how should we live today?

First, we should TRUST HIM!

Then we should have confidence

That should lead us to love for one another.