



REAL FREEDOM. REAL LOVE.

1 JOHN 5:1-5

Background

Date: 80's Author/Reader: Apostle John/Circular Letter

Occasion: Firm faith against seductive false teaching

Theme: Live in the Light. Christ is the Light.

Tone: A father's heart to clarify, assure, gird, and guide

¹Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of him. ²By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. ³For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome. ⁴For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world-- our faith. ⁵Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? 1 John 5:1-5

Truths About Christianity

Knowing Real Love

"Only someone who is on fire with the love of his Maker can be said to love his fellow humans in the right way." ~ St. Bede the Venerable (672-735 A.D.)

Knowing Real Freedom

"Freedom, then, is not the absence of limitations and constraints, but it is finding the right ones, those that fit our nature and liberate us." ~ Tim Keller

"You, my brothers, were called to freedom. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love." ~ Galatians 5:1

Going Deeper

(For individual or small groups to go deeper with the passage)

Read 1 John 5:1-5.

1. What are some truths John asserts about a Christian?
2. What surprises or comforts you in these verses? What challenges your thinking?
3. Why do you think John says the way to love other Christians is to love God and do what God commands?
4. How does the world (created order in opposition to God's good rule) make obeying God's commands heavy? How does this shape your understanding of freedom?
5. How does love remove the "burden" of obedience in relationships in your life? Does love necessitate restriction? Does real freedom require constraint?
6. Consider Romans 3:20 and Galatians 5:13. How do these verses relate to love, freedom, and obeying God?

Spiritual Exercise: This week focus on seeing opportunities to act in self-sacrificial love toward a brother or sister in Christ. Be attentive to the Spirits' leading to share your time, possessions, or words with another of God's beloved. Act in faith.