

I John 4:20 – 5:5

- Intro.**
- What specific aspect of divine love is addressed in this passage?
 - Has this aspect of love been addressed previously in this epistle?
- 4:20**
- Does John have “someone” in mind who claims to “love God”?
 - Does “hate” include...
 - loathing, abhorrence, detesting?
 - enmity, hostility?
 - neglect, indifference, failure to act?
 - Who is the “brother” that is being referred to in this verse?
 - a Christian?
 - anyone in need?
 - Is a liar...
 - someone who is inconsistent?
 - someone who tells an untruth?
 - someone who derives what he does from the “father of lies”? (cf. Jn. 8:44)
 - Why does absence of love for the visible brother disallow love for the invisible God?
 - because it is easier to love the visible and more difficult to love the invisible?
 - because God only becomes visible when His character of love is expressed visibly to others?
 - because love for God necessarily implies that God’s love will be directed to others?
 - because in loving others with God’s love, we evidence that we love God?
- 4:21**
- How is the concept of “commandment” consistent with new covenant grace?
 - Is the “commandment” that John refers to equivalent to that mentioned in...
 - Matthew 12:28-31?
 - John 13:34?
 - John 15:12,17?
 - II John 4-6?
 - Why is it that “the one who loves God should love his brother also”?
 - legal responsibility?
 - moral obligation?
 - logical consequence?
 - derivational consistency?
- 5:1**
- What does it mean to “believe that Jesus is the Christ”?
 - to make an orthodox assertion of Christology?
 - to mentally affirm that Jesus is who He said He was?
 - to allow for the receptivity of Christ’s activity?
 - Is being “born of God” the necessary prerequisite for “believing that Jesus is the Christ”? (cf. John 20:31; Eph. 1:13)
 - What does John mean by the phrase: “Whoever loves the Father loves the child born of Him”?
 - whoever loves the parent loves the child born of the parent?
 - whoever loves his father must love his siblings who are born of the same father?
 - whoever loves God loves those in whom God’s life dwells?
 - whoever loves God loves Jesus?
- 5:2**
- When compared to 4:20, does this sound like circular reasoning?
 - Do we love God when we love our brother? (4:20)
 - Do we love the children of God when we love God? (5:2)

- Is John saying that...
 - to love the children of God is a condition for loving God?
 - to love the children of God is an evidence of loving God?
- When John refers to “observing His commandments”, is this...
 - a legal obedience to precepts of performance?
 - a moral obligation?
 - an expression of the indwelling God of love that fulfills His love commandments?

- 5:3**
- Is the “love of God” that John mentions...
 - our love for God?
 - God’s love for us?
 - How do the following passages relate to John’s statement that “His commandments are not burdensome”?
 - Deut. 30:11
 - Matt. 11:30
 - Matt. 23:4
 - Phil. 4:13
 - When John refers to “His commandments are not burdensome”, do you think there an implied reference to the false-teachers who were imposing performance standards?
 - Explain why “His commandments are not burdensome” within the new covenant context of grace in Jesus Christ.

- 5:4**
- After reading verses 4 and 5 how would you answer the following questions:
 - Have you been born of God?
 - Have you overcome the world?
 - Did your faith overcome the world?
 - What is the “world” that John is referring to in verses 4 and 5?
 - planet earth?
 - world of mankind?
 - world of fallen mankind?
 - world-order of evil?
 - In what sense are John’s readers alleged to have “overcome” the world?
 - obliterated, annihilated, put it out of commission?
 - to conquer, be victorious over, triumph over?
 - Does John’s statement that “our faith” has overcome the world contradict the statement made by Jesus in John 16:33? Explain how they correlate.
 - What does John mean by “our faith”?
 - our conversion faith?
 - our commitment faith?
 - our orthodox faith?
 - our trust and reliance in God’s power?
 - our receptivity of the loving activity of God? (cf. Gal. 5:6; Rom. 8:37-39)

- 5:5**
- Who is the one who overcomes the world?
 - What does it mean to “believe that Jesus is the Son of God”?
 - to assent to a creedal confession of Christological orthodoxy?
 - to remain faithful to Jesus in every circumstance?
 - to allow for the dynamic receptivity of the Victor’s activity of love?

- Conc.**
- How does this paragraph relate to, and rely upon, the previous statements that “God is love” (4:8,16)?
 - How can you declare that you “love God”, when your attitude to others (parents, children, spouse, neighbors, co-workers, etc.) is not expressive of God’s love?