

3 ¹For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: ²and his ³commandments are not ³burdenous.

4 ¹For all that is born of God, overcome this world: ²and this is that victory that ³hath overcome this world *even* our ⁴faith.

5 ¹Who is it that overcome this world, but he which believeth that Jesus is that Son of God?

6 ¹This is that Jesus Christ that came by water and blood: ²not by water only, but by water and blood: and it is that ³Spirit that beareth witness: for that Spirit is truth.

7 For there are three, which bear record in heaven, the Father, the ¹Word, and the holy Ghost: and these three are ²one.

8 And there are three, which bear record in the earth, the Spirit, and the Water and the Blood: and these three agree in one.

9 ¹If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for ²this is the witness of God, which he testified of his Son.

CHAPTER 5

^a Matt. 11:30^b 1 Cor. 15:57^c John 3:16^d 1 John 3:22

10 ¹He that believeth in that Son of God, hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God, hath made him a liar, because he believed not the record, that God witnessed of that his Son.

11 ¹And this is that record, *to wit*, that God hath given unto us eternal life, and this life is in that his Son.

12 He that hath that Son, hath that life: and he that hath not that Son of God, hath not that life.

13 ¹These things have I written unto you, that believe in the name of that Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe in the Name of that Son of God.

14 ¹And this is that assurance that we have in him, ²that if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us.

15 And if we know that he heareth us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions, that we have desired of him.

5:3 ¹ The reason: for to love God is to keep his commandments, which being so, and seeing that both the loves are commanded of one and the selfsame lawmaker (as he taught before) it followeth also that we do not love our neighbor, when we break God's commandments.

² Because experience teacheth us that there is no ability in our flesh, neither yet will to perform God's commandments, therefore lest the Apostle should seem, by so often putting them in mind of the keeping of the commandments of God, to require things that are impossible, he pronounceth that the commandments of God are not in such sort grievous or burdensome, that we can be oppressed with the burden of them.

³ To them that are regenerate, that is to say, born anew, which are led by the Spirit of God, and are through grace delivered from the curse of the Law.

5:4 ¹ A reason: Because by regeneration we have gotten strength to overcome the world, that is to say, whatsoever striveth against the commandments of God.

² He declareth what that strength is, to wit, Faith.

³ He useth the time that is past to give us to understanding, that although we be in the battle, yet undoubtedly we shall be conquerors, and are most certain of the victory.

⁴ Which is the instrumental cause, and as a mean and hand whereby we lay hold on him who indeed doth perform this, that is, hath and doth overcome the world, Even Christ Jesus.

5:5 ¹ Moreover he declareth two things, the one what true faith is, to wit, that which resteth upon Jesus Christ the Son of God alone: whereupon followeth the other, to wit, that this strength is not proper to faith, but by faith as an instrument is drawn from Jesus Christ the Son of God.

5:6 ¹ He proveth the excellency of Christ, in whom only all things are given us by six witnesses, three heavenly, and three earthly, which wholly and fully agree together. The heavenly witnesses are: the Father who sent the Son, the word itself which became flesh, and the holy Ghost. The earthly witnesses are, water, (that is, our sanctification) blood, (that is, our justification) the Spirit, (that is, acknowledge of God the Father in Christ by faith through the testimony of the holy Ghost.)

² He warneth us not to separate water from blood, (that is, sanctification from justification, or righteousness begun, from righteousness imputed) for we stand not upon sanctification but so far forth as it is a witness of Christ's righteousness imputed unto us: and although this imputation of Christ's righteousness be never separated from sanctification, yet it is only the matter of our salvation.

³ Our spirit, which is the third witness, testifies that the holy Ghost is truth; that is to say, that that is true which he telleth us, to wit, that we are the sons of God.

5:7 ¹ See John 8:13, 14.

² Agree in one.

5:9 ¹ He showeth by an Argument of comparison, of what great weight the heavenly testimony is, that the Father hath given of the Son, unto whom agreeth both the Son himself and the holy Ghost.

² I conclude this aright: for that testimony which I said is given in heaven, cometh from God, who so setteth forth his Son.

5:10 ¹ He proveth the sureness of the earthly witnesses by every man's conscience, having that testimony in itself, which conscience he saith cannot be deceived, because it consenteth the heavenly testimony, which the Father giveth of the Son: For otherwise the Father must needs be a liar, if the conscience, which accordeth and assenteth to the Father should lie.

5:11 ¹ Now at length he showeth what this testimony is, that is confirmed with so many witnesses: to wit, that life or everlasting felicity, is the mere, and only gift of God, which is the Son, and proceedeth from him unto us, which by faith are joined with him, so that without him life is nowhere to be found.

5:13 ¹ The conclusion of the Epistle wherein he showeth first of all, that even they which already believe, do stand in deed of this doctrine, to the end that they may grow more and more in faith, that is to say, to the end that they may be daily more and more certified of their salvation in Christ through faith.

5:14 ¹ Because we do not yet in effect obtain that which we hope for, the Apostle joineth invocation or prayer with faith, which he will have to proceed from faith, and moreover to be conceived in such sort, that nothing be asked but that which is agreeable to the will of God: and such prayers cannot be vain.