

1 John 5:1 Commentary

PREVIOUS

NEXT

CLICK VERSE

To go directly to that verse

[1 John 5:1](#)
[1 John 5:2](#)
[1 John 5:3](#)
[1 John 5:4](#)
[1 John 5:5](#)
[1 John 5:6](#)
[1 John 5:7](#)
[1 John 5:8](#)
[1 John 5:9](#)
[1 John 5:10](#)
[1 John 5:11](#)
[1 John 5:12](#)
[1 John 5:13](#)
[1 John 5:14](#)
[1 John 5:15](#)
[1 John 5:16](#)
[1 John 5:17](#)
[1 John 5:18](#)
[1 John 5:19](#)
[1 John 5:20](#)
[1 John 5:21](#)

FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD AND HIS CHILDREN
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Charts from [Jensen's Survey of the NT](#) - used by permission
Another Overview Chart - [1 John](#) - Charles Swindoll

BASIS OF FELLOWSHIP		BEHAVIOR OF FELLOWSHIP	
Conditions of Fellowship	Cautions of Fellowship	Fellowship Characteristics	Fellowship Consequences
Meaning of Fellowship 1 Jn 1:1-2:27		Manifestations of Fellowship 1 Jn 2:28-5:21	
Abiding in God's Light		Abiding in God's Love	
Written in Ephesus			
circa 90 AD			

From Talk Thru the Bible

1 John 5:1 Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and whoever loves the Father loves the child born of Him:

Greek - Pas ho pisteuon (PAPMSN) hoti Iesous estin (3SPAI) ho Christos ek tou theou gegennetai (3SRPI) kai pas ho agapon (PAPMSN) ton gennesanta (AAPMSA) agapa (3SPAI) kai ton gegennemenon (RPPMSA) ex autou.

HCSB Everyone who believes that Jesus is the **Messiah** has been born of God, and everyone who loves the parent also loves his child.

NET Everyone who believes that Jesus is the **Christ** has been fathered by God, and everyone who loves the Father loves the child fathered by him.

ESV Everyone who believes that Jesus is the **Christ** has been born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves whomever has been born of him.

Wuest - Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ, out from God has been born and as a result is His child. And everyone who loves the One who begot, loves the one who has been begotten out from Him.

Young's translation while awkward is more literal and helps us see that **believing** is the result of having been **born of God** ([see explanation of significance of tenses below](#)) - Every one who is **believing** that Jesus is the Christ, of God he **hath been begotten**, and every one who is loving Him who did beget, doth love also him who is begotten of Him:

- **believes:** 1Jn 2:22,23 4:2,14,15 Mt 16:16 Joh 1:12,13 6:69 Ac 8:37 Ro 10:9,10
- **is born:** 1Jn 5:4 2:29 3:9 4:7
- **and whoever:** 1Jn 2:10 3:14,17 4:20 Joh 15:23 Jas 1:18 1Pe 1:3,22,23
- See comments on Born Again in John 3
- [1 John 5 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

DO YOU HAVE THE BIRTHMARK? WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE ABOUT JESUS?

John Stott helps us disentangle John's tightly woven argument in 1Jn 5:1-5 - We have by now become familiar with the three tests which John applies, with repeated but varied emphasis, to the professing Christian. In chapter 2 he describes all three tests in order, obedience (1Jn 2:3-6), love (1Jn 2:7-11) and belief (1Jn 2:18-27). In chapter 3 he treats only obedience (1Jn 2:28-3:10) and love (1Jn 3:11-18), while in chapter 4 only belief (1Jn 4:1-6) and love (1Jn 4:7-12). In 1Jn 4:13-21 he has combined the doctrinal and social tests. Now, however, in the brief opening paragraph of chapter 5, we meet the three together again. The words 'believe' and 'faith' occur in 1Jn 5:1, 1Jn 5:4 and 1Jn 5:5, 'love' in 1Jn 5:1, 1Jn 5:2 and 1Jn 5:3, and the need to obey or carry out 'his commands' in 1Jn 5:2 and 1Jn 5:3. What John is at pains to show is the essential unity of his threefold thesis. He has not chosen three tests arbitrarily or at random and stuck them together artificially. On the contrary, he shows that they are so closely woven together into a single, coherent fabric that it is difficult to unpick and disentangle the threads. The previous paragraph, at the end of chapter 4, ended with a statement of our duty, if we love God, to love our brother also (1Jn 4:21). John now elaborates the essential connection between these two loves, and between them and both belief and obedience. We cannot believe in Jesus Christ without loving the Father and his children (1Jn 5:1-2a); we cannot love the Father without obeying His commands and overcoming the world (1Jn 5:2b-4a); and we cannot overcome the world without believing in Jesus Christ (1Jn 5:4b-5). So this compressed paragraph begins and ends with belief, but between these two termini is concerned with love and obedience. The real link between the three tests is seen to be the new birth. Faith, love and obedience are all the natural growth which follows a birth from above, just as in 1Jn 4:13-16 faith and love were shown to be evidences of the mutual indwelling of God and His people. ([The Letters of John: An Introduction and Commentary](#))

Pulpit Commentary summarizes John's argument - To believe in the Incarnation involves birth from God. To be born of God involves loving God. To love God involves loving His children. Therefore to believe in the Incarnation involves loving God's children.

Hiebert introduces this section (1Jn 5:1-5) - The inward and the outward results of redeeming love are grounded in the divine love revealed in Christ Jesus. In the first five verses of chapter 5 John shows that the varied relationships of love are all related to God in the Christian life. He states the relationship between saving faith and the experience of love (1Jn 5:1), notes that love is revealed in our obedience to God's commandments (1Jn 5:2-3), and portrays the power of saving faith in a life of victory over the world (1Jn 5:4-5). ([The Epistles of John- An Expository Commentary](#))

Whoever believes echoes other passages in this letter in which John used the verb **confesses**. The sense of both believe and confess is similar, the verb believe placing emphasis on the internal change and confess places emphasis on the outward expression. (cp "confess with your mouth Jesus [as] Lord, and believe in your heart..." - Ro 10:9-10-note)

1Jn 4:2-3-note "By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that **confesses** that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; and this is the [spirit] of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world."

1Jn 2:22-23-note Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son. Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father; the one who **confesses** the Son has the Father also.

1Jn 4:15-note Whoever **confesses** that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.

1Jn 5:5-note Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who **believes** that Jesus is the Son of God?

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TENSES OF BELIEVES AND BORN

Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God - The verb **believes** is in the **present tense** and the verb **born** is **perfect tense**. **John Stott** explains that this "shows clearly that **believing** is the consequence, not the cause, of the new birth. Our present, continuing activity of believing is the result, and therefore the evidence, of our past experience of new birth by which we became and remain God's children." ([Ibid](#)) Don't misunderstand, faith (belief) alone saves, but the faith that saves is not alone. (See verse by verse commentary on "Faith and Works" in James 2:14-26-note; cp Paul's phrase the obedience of faith) Both John the Baptist and Jesus exhorted their hearers to bring forth fruit in keeping with repentance. If there is absolutely no (spiritual) fruit, this is strong presumptive evidence that there is not root (of genuine saving faith). In 1Jn 5:1 the "spiritual fruit" so to speak is the fact that an individual keeps on believing in Jesus. His continuing to believe in Jesus does not save him, but demonstrates that he is genuinely saved.

MacArthur explains it this way - The tenses of the verbs in 1Jn 5:1 reveal a significant theological truth. Believes translates a **present tense** form of the verb *pisteuo*, whereas *gegennētai* (is born) is in the **perfect tense**. The opening phrase of verse 1 literally reads, "*Whoever is believing that Jesus is the Christ has been begotten of God*." The point is that, contrary to Arminian theology, continual faith is the result of the new birth, not its cause. **Christians do not keep themselves Born Again by believing, and lose their salvation if they stop believing**. On the contrary, it is their perseverance in the faith that gives evidence that they have been born again. The faith that God grants in regeneration (Eph. 2:8) is permanent, and cannot be lost. Nor, as some teach, can it die, for dead faith does not save (James 2:14-26). There is no such thing as an "unbelieving believer." ([1-3 John- MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#))

Believes ([4100](#))(*pisteuo* from *pistis*; *pistos*; related studies **the faith**, the **obedience of faith**) means to consider something to be true and therefore worthy of one's trust.

As an aside, while we are saved by faith alone, that initial faith must be genuine and not fake faith. Does the latter occur in the New Testament? Absolutely. Notice in John 2:23-24 we read "Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, **many believed** in His name (**Ed**: Ostensibly this sounds like they were genuine believers, but read on), beholding His signs which He was doing. But Jesus, on His part, was not entrusting Himself to them, for He knew all men." (Jn 2:23-24) The well known Bible teacher John Piper explains that "Some Belief Is Not Saving. In view of this, John 2:23-25 has an unsettling effect. What it says, in essence, is that Jesus knows what is in every heart, and so he can see when someone *believes* in a way that is not *really believing*. In other words, Jesus' ability to know every heart perfectly leads to the unsettling truth that some belief is not the kind of belief that obtains fellowship with Jesus and eternal life. Some belief is not *saving belief*." (If you are unsure of this truth read Dr Piper's full sermon - [He Knew What Was in Man](#)).

When missionary [John Paton](#) was translating the Scripture for the South Sea islanders, he was unable to find a word in their vocabulary for the concept of believing, trusting, or having faith. He had no idea how he would convey that to them. One day while he was in his hut translating, a native came running up the stairs into Paton's study and flopped in a chair, exhausted. He said to Paton, "It's so good to rest my whole weight in this chair." John Paton had his word: **Faith** is resting your whole weight on God. That word went into the translation of their New Testament and helped bring that civilization of natives to Christ. Believing is putting your whole weight on God. If God said it, then it's true, and we're to believe it.

Nothing before, nothing behind,
The steps of faith
Fall on the seeming void, and find
The rock beneath

- Whittier

Jesus is the Christ - That is, they continue in belief that Jesus is the **Messiah** about which the OT prophesied. He is the fulfillment of the OT promises of a coming Redeemer. Do you possess that quality of belief, not just an intellectual head knowledge, a mental assent, but your belief has produced a genuine change that has transformed your heart and mind? Then, dear reader, you have been born from above (born again spiritually) by God the Spirit (Jn 3:5-8+ in John 3). This was John's purpose in the Gospel in which he stated "but these have been written (**perfect tense** = speaks of permanence of effect of this writing) so that **(term of purpose)** you may believe that Jesus is the **Christ (the Messiah)** (as in 1Jn 5:1), the **Son of God** (as in 1Jn 5:5); and that believing you may have life in His Name." (Jn 20:31) **Do you believe that the Man Jesus is the Jewish Messiah of which the OT**

prophesied?

See Related Resources:

- [Messiah the Anointed One](#)
- Messianic Prophecies
- [Josh McDowell's classic "More than a Carpenter"](#)
- [How a Jewish man Michael Goldstone met Messiah \(site has Jewish testimonies\)](#) - Highly recommended if you have Jewish friends to whom you would like to share the Good News.
- [Is Jesus the Messiah?](#)
- [Where do the Hebrew Scriptures prophesy the death and resurrection of the Messiah?](#)
- [Which psalms predict the coming of Jesus Christ?](#)
- [What does Messiah mean?](#)
- [Why do most Jews reject Jesus as the Messiah?](#)

Vine on belief that **Jesus is the Christ** - what is involved in this is not merely the existence of a historical fact; to believe that Jesus is the Christ, is to believe in the personal manifestation of God Himself, and, further this involves the foundation truths of the faith relating to Christ. The acceptance of the doctrine leads to the acceptance of the person.

Wuest - The Cerinthian Gnostics denied the identity of Jesus and the Christ. That is, they denied that the individual whom the Christian Church knew by the name "Jesus" was also the Christ. The word "**Christ**" is the English spelling of the Greek word **Christos** which means "**the anointed one.**" But the predicted Anointed One was to be God-incarnate, virgin-born into the human race (Isa 7:14, cp Ps 2:2, Da 9:25, Da 9:26). Thus, the incarnation is in view here. But this belief is not a mere intellectual assent to the fact of the incarnation, but a heart acceptance of all that it implied in its purpose, the substitutionary death of the Incarnate One for sinners, thus making a way of salvation in which God could bestow mercy on the basis of justice satisfied. That person, John says, and he uses the **perfect tense** here, has been born of God and as a result is a child of God. [Word Studies from the Greek New Testament](#)

Christ (5547)(**Christos** from **chrío** = to rub or anoint, consecrate to an office) means one who has been anointed, symbolizing appointment to a task. The majority of the NT uses refer to Jesus (exceptions = "false Christs" - Mt 24:24, Mk 13:22). Christos is translated in the NAS 1995 edition as Christ (516x), Christ's (11x) and Messiah (4x - Mt 1:1, 16, 17, 2:4). The NIV and ESV never translate **Christos** as Messiah, but always as Christ. The Holman Christian Standard Bible has an interesting approach and translates **Christos** as Messiah many times depending on the context (see explanatory note) The NLT paraphrase translates **Christos** as Messiah over 80 times. The NET translates Christos as Messiah in Jn 4:29, Acts 3:20, Eph 2:12. Many interpreters over the ages have commented on a possible wordplay between the Greek words for good (chrestos) and Christ (Christos), which as you note differ by only a single Greek letter. Whether a wordplay is intended or not, every believer can personally attest to the truth that Christos is chrestos!

Is born (ESV, HCSB = "has been born") - Once a baby is born it cannot be "unborn!" (i.e., assuming it is a real baby and not a manufactured baby made to look like the real thing). Once you are born, you are born! So just as in physical birth, so too in spiritual birth a new born believer cannot be unborn and will cease believing! Stated another way, he or she cannot lose their salvation (new birth)! And just as a physical baby is born into a family, so too believers are born into a family, the family of God (Jn 1:12-13). And as a newborn baby has characteristic features of its parents, spiritually new born babes have characteristics of their heavenly Father (cp 2Pe 1:4). In context he or she is born with a desire to love the Father and love the children in His family.

As Paul writes in Romans "all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" (Ro 8:14-15)

Born of God - Notice the NET version's boldly anthropomorphical rendering "fathered by God" which carries on John's image in the Gospel - "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, [even] to those who believe in His name, who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John 1:12-13)

John Calvin observed "Since God regenerates us by faith, He must necessarily be loved by us as a Father; and this love embraces all His children."

As **Kistemaker** says "In essence, faith and love are inseparable. In God's family, faith in God and love for him and his children are totally integrated."

Born (1080)(**gennao** from **genos** = offspring, in turn from ginomai = to become) is used three times in this one verse and means to beget, to bring forth, to give birth, to procreate a descendant, to produce offspring. As discussed above the **perfect tense** signifying

the permanent effect of the (new) birth. In other words, everyone God has been saved in the past continues to give evidence of that fact in the present (in context they keep "believing" as explained above).

Wuest adds that the **perfect tense** signifies that "The relationship between God and the believer as Father and child is a permanent one." ([Word Studies](#)) So even the tense of the verb supports the doctrine of eternal security! Once saved, always saved! The caveat is one must be genuinely saved! Asking Jesus into one's heart and living the rest of your life like the devil is absolutely not evidence of genuine salvation contrary to what some evangelical scholars write! Do not be deceived, dear reader! ([Word Studies from the Greek New Testament](#))

MacArthur comments that the **perfect tense** signifies that "Everyone God has saved in the past continues to give evidence of that fact in the present. Those who possess the life of God have the capacity and the experience of loving (*"whoever loves the Father, loves the child born of Him"*). In contrast, the one who does not love does not know God. Those whose lives are not characterized by love for others are not Christians, no matter what they claim. The Jewish religionists (scribes, Pharisees, and other leaders) of Jesus' day, as well as the false teachers in the church of John's day, knew a lot about God, but they did not really know Him (cf. 1Ti 6:20; 2Ti 3:7). The absence of God's love in their lives revealed their unregenerate condition as conclusively as did their aberrant theology." ([1-3 John- MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#))

James writes that "In the exercise of His will **He brought us forth** (**apekueo** in **aorist tense**) by the word of truth, so that we might be, as it were, the first fruits among His creatures." (James 1:18-note)

Peter writes "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy **has caused us to be born again** (**anagennao** in the **aorist tense** - this verb is used only one other time in 1Pe 1:23-note) to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." (1Peter 1:3-note)

Steven Cole makes a good point writing that "We live in a culture which has taken some biblical words and used them in a way that redefines and cheapens them so that they no longer mean what the Bible means. But then they seep back into the vocabulary of Christians with their devalued meaning. Take the term "**Born Again**." The media uses it to describe anyone who makes a comeback or gets a fresh start in life. A baseball team that has been in the cellar and suddenly starts winning is called "the born again" Dodgers. Chrysler under Lee Iacocca was a "born again" corporation. And so it's not surprising when over 50 percent of Americans say that they're "**born again Christians**." They mean that they had some sort of religious or emotional experience that resulted in a fresh start in life. It may have involved praying to Jesus or "inviting Him into their hearts." But in most cases, they have no idea what the Bible means by being **born again**. ([Sermon](#))

RIGHT BELIEF YIELDS RIGHT CONDUCT

Loves ([25](#))(**agapao**) "speaks of a love which is awakened by a sense of value in an object which causes one to prize it. It springs from an apprehension of the preciousness of an object. It is a love of esteem and approbation. The quality of this love is determined by the character of the one who loves, and that of the object loved." ([Wuest](#)) **Agapao** is in the **present tense** speaks of our habitual practice, of the general direction of our life, loving continually, self-sacrificially, unconditionally.

MacArthur - The new birth brings people not only into a faith relationship with God, but also into a love relationship with Him and His children. John has emphasized that principle throughout this epistle: 1Jn 2:10-11-note, 1Jn 3:10-note, 1Jn 3:14-note, 1Jn 3:17-note, 1Jn 3:23-note, 1Jn 4:7-8-note, 1Jn 4:12-note, 1Jn 4:20-21-note.

Paul defined this supernatural **love** in his first letter to the Corinthians writing "**Love (agape)** is patient (**makrothumeo** = has a "long fuse" so to speak! And **present tense** = continually!), **love** is kind (**present tense**), [and] is not jealous (**present tense**); **love** does not brag (**present tense**) [and] is not arrogant (**present tense**), (13:5-note) does not act unbecomingly (**present tense**); it does not seek (**present tense**) its own, is not provoked (**present tense**), does not take into account (**present tense**) a wrong suffered (it does not keep books on evil. You never "keep books" do you?), (13:6-note) does not rejoice (**present tense**) in unrighteousness, but rejoices (**present tense**) with the truth; (13:7-note) bears (**stego** [great verb for husbands to understand!]**present tense**) all things, believes (**present tense**) all things, hopes (**present tense**) all things, endures (**present tense**) all things. (1Cor 13:4-7-note) Notice that love is not a one time act but an ongoing process as emphasized by the repeated use of the **present tense**. Don't dare try to love like this by relying on yourself. This "**present tense love**" clearly calls for continual reliance on the Spirit, not on the self!!

Loves the child born of Him - The test of true love for God is whether we love the children of God, our Christian brethren.

Vine- Since every believer has part in the gift of divine life (cp 2Pe 1:4), by which he is born of God, it is inevitable that this life will be manifested in love to those who likewise are born of God... In 1Jn 4:7-21 stress was laid upon the outward expression of brotherly love, as the effect of the inward experience of the love of God; here the stress is laid upon the outward expression, as the effect of the inward experience of the new birth. In the former passage the truth set forth was that every believer has experience of

God's love and therefore shows it in love to others. Here what is set forth is that every believer shares the gift of life in Christ, and this again involves the manifestation of love to those who likewise are blessed. None of this is possible apart from faith in Christ, but, on the other hand, faith inevitably leads to the exercise of love. The whole of this passage teaches, not that in loving our brother we rise to the love of God, but that, on the contrary, God Himself is the Source of all the love that we can and do show." ([The Collected Writings of W. E. Vine](#))

Craig Keener on loving "the child born of" God - Families were often viewed as a unit, hence one could not love one member of a family while despising other members. This verse may also reflect the idea that children bear their parents' nature. ([The IVP Bible Background Commentary- New Testament](#))

Life Application Bible Commentary - THREE TESTS FOR BELIEVERS - Throughout this letter, John has been describing how to determine true believers. The false teachers had done a good job of confusing the believers, so John went back to the basics and described three tests for discerning true believers. Like a braided cord, these three "tests" are interwoven, each dependent upon the other, none existing alone in the life of a true believer.

True believers ...

1. Obey God's commands in his Word. 1Jn 2:3–6; 1Jn 2:28–3:10; 1Jn 5:2–3
2. Love God and other believers; have lifestyles characterized by love. 1Jn 2:7–11; 1Jn 3:11–18; 1Jn 4:7–12; 1Jn 5:1–3
3. Believe in the truth of the Gospel message that Jesus Christ is the Savior. 1Jn 2:18–27; 1Jn 4:1; 1Jn 5:1, 1Jn 5:4–5 [Life Application New Testament Commentary](#)

Criswell agrees writing that "Interwoven in this paragraph (1Jn 5:1-5) are three characteristics of genuine Christianity which appear throughout the book: (1) right belief (1Jn 5:1, 5); (2) righteousness, i.e., obedience to God's law (1Jn 5:2, 3); and (3) love (1Jn 5:1-3)."

Matthew Henry - True love for the people of God, may be distinguished from natural kindness or party attachments, by its being united with the love of God, and obedience to His commands. The same Holy Spirit that taught the love, will have taught obedience also; and that man cannot truly love the children of God, who, by habit, commits sin or neglects known duty (1Jn 5:2). As God's commands are holy, just, and good rules of liberty and happiness, so those who are born of God and love Him, do not consider them grievous, but lament that they cannot serve Him more perfectly (1Jn 5:3).

JOHN PIPER SUMMARIZES JOHN'S EVIDENCE OF THE NEW BIRTH

I think God wants the totality of this book to have its impact on us. It is dominated by the concern to give "tests of life" or effects and evidences of the new birth. He gives at least eleven evidences that we are born again. We could probably boil them all down to **faith** and **love**. But for now let's let them stand the way he says them. (ED: See comments on Born Again) Here they are:

1. Those who are born of God keep his commandments.

1 John 2:3-4 **note**: "By this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. Whoever says 'I know him' but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him."

1 John 3:24 **note**: "Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God, and God in him."

2. Those who are born of God walk as Christ walked.

1 John 2:5-6 **note**: "By this we may know that we are in him: whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked."

3. Those who are born of God don't hate others but love them.

1 John 2:9 **note**: "Whoever says he is in the light and hates his brother is still in darkness."

1 John 3:14 **note**: "We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death."

1 John 4:7-8 **note**: "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love."

1 John 4:20 **note**: "If anyone says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar."

4. Those who are born of God don't love the world.

1 John 2:15-**note**: “If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”

5. Those who are born of God confess the Son and receive (have) him.

1 John 2:23-**note**: “No one who denies the Son has the Father. Whoever confesses the Son has the Father also.”

1 John 4:15-**note**: “Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.”

1 John 5:12-**note**: “Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.”

6. Those who are born of God practice righteousness.

1 John 2:29-**note**: “If you know that he is righteous, you may be sure that everyone who practices righteousness has been born of him.”

7. Those who are born of God don’t make a practice of sinning.

1 John 3:6-**note**: “No one who abides in him keeps on sinning; no one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him.”

1 John 3:9-10-**note**: “No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God’s seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he has been born of God. By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother.”

1 John 5:18-**note**: “We know that everyone who has been born of God does not keep on sinning, but he who was born of God protects him, and the evil one does not touch him.”

8. Those who are born of God possess the Spirit of God.

1 John 3:24-**note**: “By this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us.”

1 John 4:13-**note**: “By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.”

9. Those who are born of God listen submissively to the apostolic Word.

1 John 4:6-**note**: “We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us; whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error.”

10. Those who are born of God believe that Jesus is the Christ.

1 John 5:1-**note**: “Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God.”

11. Those who are born of God overcome the world.

1 John 5:4-**note**: “Everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.”

Two Wrong Conclusions - One of the effects of all those “tests of life” is to overwhelm us with the sense that John may be saying: “If you’re born again, you’re perfect. If you’re born again you don’t sin at all. There is no defeat in the Christian life. There is only victory.”

Another effect that these tests might have in our minds is to make us think we can lose our salvation. That is, we can be born again for a while and then begin to fail in these tests and die and lose the spiritual life that we were given in the new birth.

Two Key Clarifications - John is very aware that his words could be taken in these two wrong ways. So he is explicit as any writer in the New Testament that this is not the case: Christians are not sinless, and born-again people cannot lose their spiritual life and be lost.

He says in 1 John 1:8-10-**note**, “If we say we have no sin [present tense], we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins [present tense], he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.” So John is at pains to say that “walking in the light” (1Jn 1:7-**note**) does not mean walking flawlessly. It means that, when you stumble, the light of Christ causes you to see it and hate it and confess it and move forward with Christ.

And John is just as jealous to make sure we don’t infer from these “tests of life” that we can be born again and then later lose our life and be lost. 1John 2:19-**note** is one of the clearest statements in the Bible that there is another way to understand what happens

when a person abandons the church. It says, "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us."

Notice three things John says to protect us from misunderstanding. 1) Those who seemed to be born again and forsook the faith never were born again—they never were of us. "They went out from us, but they were not of us." In other words, the explanation is not that they lost their new birth. They never had it. 2) Those who are truly born again ("of us") will persevere to the end in faith. 1Jn 5:19b-note: "For if they had been of us, they would have continued with us." Endurance is not the cause of the new birth. The new birth is the cause of endurance, and endurance is the evidence of new birth. 3) God often makes plain who the false Christians are in the church by their eventual rejection of the truth and the people of God. Verse 19c: "But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us." It became plain. And it often becomes plain today. ([Everyone Who Has Been Born of God Overcomes the World](#))

THE NEW BIRTH: ITS EVIDENCES AND RESULTS 1 JOHN

The Apostle John does not point out in this Epistle how regeneration can take place, because that he had already done in his Gospel, particularly John 1:12, 13+, and the whole of chapter 3. Here in his Epistle he points out the proofs whereby we may know we are born from above.

I. **Faith** is both the condition and the proof of regeneration. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God" (1 John 5:1+).

II. **Love**. "Every one that loveth is born of God" (1 John 4:7+).

III. **Life**. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit (margin, "practice") sin; or as W., "No one who is a child of God is habitually guilty of sin" (1 John 3:9+). This is to say, one of the clearest proofs of the new birth is to be found in the fact that a new life is begun. Not a life of sin as before, but a life of victory—there may be, there usually is, especially in the early days, lapses into sin, but not a life of sin. By and by we learn the secret of full victory.

IV. **Overcomes**. "For whosoever is born of God overcometh the world" (1 John 5:4+).

V. **Kept**. "We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not, but He that was begotten of God (i.e., the Lord Jesus) keepeth him" (1 John 5:18+, R.V.). The begotten one is kept by the only Begotten of the Father. And the result?

VI. **Holiness**. Personal holiness. "Every one that doeth righteousness is born of Him" (1 John 2:29+).

([James Smith - Handfuls on Purpose](#))

A Family Thing - When I was growing up, I often heard my pastor read the Ten Commandments and our Lord's command to love God with our whole being and our neighbor as ourselves. I knew I didn't fully live up to those demands, but I took them seriously.

As an 8-year-old, I felt sadness when a 6-year-old neighbor boy in a non-Christian family died. But I also felt guilt because I was not as sad as I would have been if this had happened to one of my brothers. And still today, even though my brothers and I all have our own families who come first in our lives, we still take a keen interest in one another.

God is pleased when we cherish these family ties, but He also wants us to love all who have entered our spiritual family by being born again. This is the family Jesus referred to when He responded to a message that His mother and brothers desired to speak with Him. He looked at the audience before Him and said, "Here are My mother and My brothers! For whoever does the will of God is My brother and My sister and mother" (Mark 3:34-35). Loving the lost is our duty, but loving those born into God's family, no matter what their faults, should come naturally. It is, after all, a family thing. ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Love is an attitude, love is a prayer,
For a soul in sorrow, a heart in despair;
Love is good will for the gain of another,
Love suffers long with the fault of a brother. —Anon.

We show our love for God when we love His family.

"Everyone who loves the Father loves his child as well." —1 John 5:1

Where there is love to Jesus, there will be love to those who are his by redemption, his by regeneration, and his by personal possession. The more, also, that we see and the more that we know of the beauty and blessedness of the Lord of life and glory, the more we shall love his image as we behold it visibly marked in his dear people, and the more we shall cleave to them as being Christ's with tender affection.

It is our dim, scanty, and imperfect knowledge of God the Father in his eternal love; and of the Lord Jesus Christ in his grace and glory, which leaves us so often cold, lifeless, and dead in our affections towards him; and with the declension of love towards the Head comes on decay of love towards his members. If there were more blessed revelations to our soul of the Person and work, grace and glory, beauty and blessedness of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is impossible but that we would more and more warmly and tenderly fall in love with him; for he is the most glorious object that the eyes of faith can see. He fills heaven with the resplendent beams of his glorious majesty; and has ravished the hearts of thousands of his dear family upon earth by the manifestations of his bleeding, dying love. So that if we love him not, it is because we know him not. If, then, to those who know him he makes himself precious, it is evident that just in proportion to our personal, spiritual, experimental knowledge of him will be our love to him. -- J. C. Philpot. Daily Portions

Octavius Winslow. Daily Walking with God - JUNE 22.

"Every one that loves him that begat loves him also that is begotten of him." 1 John 5:1

THE feeling here referred to is a love to the saints, as saints. Whatever natural infirmities we may discover in them, whatever different shades of opinion they may hold to us, and to whatever branch of the Christian Church they may belong, yet the feeling which is to establish our own divine relationship is a love to them as brethren. Irrespective of all dissonance of creed, of denomination, of gifts, of attainment, of rank, of wealth, of nation—when we meet in a Christian professor the image of Christ, the family-likeness, our love will prompt us immediately to recognize that individual as a believer in Jesus, and to acknowledge him as a brother in the Lord. And what are the grounds of my affection? I may esteem his character, and prize his gifts—may admire his talents, and feel there is an assimilation of disposition, of taste, and of judgment—but my Christian love springs from an infinitely higher and holier source. I love him because the Father is in him, because the Son is in him, because the Holy Spirit is in him. I love him because he is an adopted child of the same family; a member of Christ, and of the same body; and a temple of the same Holy Spirit. I love him that is begotten, because I love Him that begat. It is Christ in one believer, going out after Himself in another believer. It is the Holy Spirit in one temple, holding fellowship with Himself in another temple. And from hence it is that we gather the evidence of our having "passed from death unto life." Loving the Divine Original, we love the human copy, however imperfect the resemblance. The Spirit of God dwelling in the regenerate soul yearns after the image of Jesus, wherever it is found. It pauses not to inquire to what branch of the Christian Church the individual resembling Him belongs; that with which it has to do is the resemblance itself.

Now, if we discover this going out of the heart in sweet, holy, and prayerful affection, towards every believer in Christ—be his denominational name what it may—the most to those who most bear the Savior's image—then have we the Spirit of Christ dwelling in us. A surer evidence we cannot have. There is the affection which surmounts all the separating walls of partition in the Church, and in spite of sects, and parties, and creeds, demonstrates its own divine nature and heavenly birth, by its blending with the same affection glowing in the bosom of another. And where this love to the brethren exists not at all in any Christian professor, we ask that individual, with all the tenderness of affection consistent with true faithfulness, where is the evidence of your union with the body of Christ? You have turned away with contractedness of heart, and with frigidity of manner, if not with secret disdain, from one whom God loves, whom Christ has redeemed, and in whom the Holy Spirit dwells, because he belonged not to your sect. Yes, you have turned away with coldness and suspicion from Christ Himself! How can you love the Father, and hate the child? What affection have you for the Elder Brother, while you despise the younger? If you are a living branch of the same vine, can you, while cherishing those feelings which exclude from your affection, from your sympathies, and from your fellowship, other Christians, more deeply wound Jesus, or more effectually grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom they are "sealed unto the day of redemption"? Perhaps you have long walked in darkness and uncertainty, as to the fact of your own personal adoption into the family of God. Anxious fear and distressing doubt have taken the place of a holy assurance, and a peaceful persuasion that you were one of the Lord's people. In endeavoring to trace this painful state of mind to its cause, did it never occur to you, that your lack of enlargement of heart towards all saints, especially towards those of other branches of the same family, has, in all probability, so grieved the Spirit of adoption, that he has withheld from your own soul that clear testimony, that direct witness, by which your interest in the covenant love of God, and your union with Christ, would have been clearly made known to you? You have grieved that same Spirit in your brother, who dwells in you, and upon whom you are so dependent for all your sweet consolation and holy desires; and He has suspended the light, and peace, and joy of your own soul.

He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? (Micah 6:8)

No one has ever felt unloved because he was told that the attainment of his joy would make another person happy. I have never been accused of selfishness when justifying a kindness on the basis that it delights me. On the contrary, loving acts are genuine to the degree that they are not done begrudgingly.

And the good alternative to begrudgingly is not neutrally or dutifully, but gladly. The authentic heart of love “loves kindness” (Micah 6:8); it doesn’t just do kindness. Christian Hedonism forces this truth into consideration.

By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome. For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. (1John 5:2–4) Read these sentences in reverse order and notice the logic. First, being born of God gives a power that conquers the world. This is given as the ground or basis (“**For**”) for the statement that the commandments of God are not burdensome.

So being born of God gives a power that conquers our worldly aversion to the will of God. Now his commandments are not “burdensome,” but are the desire and delight of our heart. This is the love of God: not just that we do his commandments, but also that they are not burdensome.

Then in verse 2 the evidence of the genuineness of our love for the children of God is said to be the love of God. What does this teach us about our love for the children of God?

Since love for God is doing his will gladly rather than with a sense of burden, and since love for God is the measure of the genuineness of our love for the children of God, therefore our love for the children of God must also be done gladly rather than begrudgingly.

Christian Hedonism stands squarely in the service of love, for it presses us on to glad obedience.