

1 John 4:18-5:5

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18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love.

Review POINT: If you fear God or some type of punishment from God, You Don't Understand GOD'S "AGAPE" LOVE FOR YOU!

- a. *Punishment* is a word in our culture that is associated with BAD.
- b. *Punishment* is the Greek word **kolasis**, that means penal infliction or Torment and as a believer. **REMEMBER:** ROM 8:1 "therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus", **THEREFORE...FEAR OF GOD has no place for those Born of God and it has NO PLACE in your New Relationship with God as your Heavenly Father no matter what you may have done!**
- c. **Fact 1:** God LOVES you as His child, **AND** Jesus is ALSO our mediator before ourselves and God the Father.....AND the Holy Spirit has been placed inside every believer, as God's SEAL OF LOVE!
- d. **FACT 2:** God the Holy Spirit is working NONSTOP to help us LOVE LIKE GOD and if we fail, we need to tap into more of God's GRACE!
1 JOHN 1:9...and then rest in God's GRACE for another "DO OVER"
(QUESTION=Does God keep score? IF YOU THINK SO WHAT IS AGAPE? After all God is NOT a heavenly Father who chooses to LOVE *sometimes*, John has already taught us **GOD IS LOVE!!!!)**
- e. **AND if we willfully, continually, don't care about being obedient to God, He might "discipline" us (NOT PUNISHMENT) to help us with course correction, BECAUSE HE LOVES US 😊**

19 We love (Agape), because He first loved us.

- a. **John wants to make sure we understand, AGAPE LOVE is impossible apart from God**-You cannot agape *others* apart from the Holy Spirit!
- b. **AND don't forget,** AGAPE is the LOVE OF CHOICE (*Feelings follow*)!
- c. **Agape is the mark of all true believers,** because we are Born of God and as NEW creatures in Christ we reflect His Glory to the world!

20 If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen.

- a. **John seems to be having fun with the Anti-Christ**s who apparently love NO ONE and at the same time is giving some real-world advice to his fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. *God may be invisible but your Love is to shine like the light of Christ to the world!*
- b. **Here is my paraphrase:** You can't claim to LOVE GOD if you are not loving other believers right in front of you *AND you can't LOVE our invisible God as a believer, unless you are loving His visible kids 😊*
- c. **AND ONCE AGAIN...** AGAPE LOVE can only come from God who loved us first and made AGAPE possible for others!

*21 And this commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God **should** love his brother also.*

- a. **John now boils obedience to God down to something so simple even infant babies in Christ can get this one...**"If you agape (LOVE) you **SHOULD** be loving other children of God and might I add....
IN THOUGHT, WORDS **AND ACTION!!!!!!!**

*5:1 Whoever **believes** that Jesus is the **Christ is born of God**, and whoever loves the Father loves the child born of Him. ² By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments.*

The Catholic Church has a New Pope and Jesus is being proclaimed 😊
And while I'm NOT Catholic any longer, I love Catholics who love Jesus!

³ *For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.*

a. **Our relationship with God is NOT COMPLICATED, like some of our other human relationships!**

b. How many of you have DRAMA in some of your human relationships?

c. How many of you wish you could have DRAMA FREE relationships?

d. **NEWSFLASH**....Your personal relationship with God is DRAMA FREE so don't try and overcomplicate it!!!!!! ☺

NOW WATCH JOHN PLAY THE FAITH CARD AS THE MEANS TO AGAPE LOVE and STRONGER FAITH from God!

⁴ *For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world — our faith.* ⁵ *Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?*

Question 1. Where does your faith to get saved come from?

a. **"WHATEVER"** is born of God is the FAITH that comes from GOD AS A GIFT WE DON'T DESERVE **Eph. 2:8** *For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; ⁹ not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.*

b. **BY GOD'S GRACE "ANYONE" has the ability and responsibility to trust in Christ WITH FAITH** *instead of themselves or any other person or thing!*

c. **WHO GET'S THE KERNAL OF FAITH NECESSARY TO BE SAVED?** John 3:16 and 2nd Peter..... (**IOW's**) ETERNAL LIFE is God's Love in Action!

d. **WHAT ARE WE TO DO WITH THIS GRACE FAITH?**-Love others the way God loves YOU *and* be obedient to God with lots of AGAPE!

e. **POINT: EVERY believer is an overcomer who has overcome the world**

f. **How is this possible?** BECAUSE WE ARE EACH **BORN OF GOD**!!!!!!.....As Christ has overcome the world, so too, have each one of us believers

DON'T FORGET THE "PRACTICAL" SIDE OF AGAPE LOVE AND FAITH, JOHN HAS ALREADY TAUGHT US IN THIS LETTER.....

1John 3:17 But *whoever* has the world's goods, and *sees his brother in need* and closes *his* heart against him, how does the love (AGAPE) of God abide in him?

THE WRITER JAMES ACTUALLY GAVE US THIS SAME MESSAGE IN THE BOOK OF JAMES AND IS REALLY WORTH READING TOGETHER....

HOW MANY OF YOU HAVE HEARD THIS VERSE..."Faith without works is dead", which is too often translated as "Unless you have works, which is NEVER quantified, you are not getting into heaven" ☺

- a. If that interpretation were correct, how would you ever know when YOU have enough works? **And what kind of works?** AND what does that say about the finished work of Jesus on His CROSS???

James 2:1 My brethren, do not hold your faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ with an attitude of personal favoritism. ² For if a man comes into your assembly with a gold ring and dressed in fine clothes, and there also comes in a poor man in dirty clothes, ³ and you pay special attention to the one who is wearing the fine clothes, and say, "You sit here in a good place," and you say to the poor man, "You stand over there, or sit down by my footstool," ⁴ **have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil motives?** ⁵ Listen, my beloved brethren: **did not God choose the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him?** ⁶ But you have dishonored the poor man. Is it not the rich who oppress you and personally drag you into court? ⁷ Do they not blaspheme the fair name by which you have been called? ⁸ If, however, you are fulfilling the royal law according to the Scripture, **"You shall love your neighbor as yourself,"** you are doing well. ⁹ But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. ¹⁰ For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all. ¹¹ For He who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, **"Do not commit murder."** Now if you do not commit

adultery, but do commit murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. ¹² **So speak and so act as those who are to be judged by the law of liberty.** ¹³ For judgment will be merciless to one who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment. ¹⁴ **What use is it, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but he has no works? Can that faith save him?** ¹⁵ If a brother or sister is **without** clothing and in need of daily food, ¹⁶ and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and be filled," and yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that? ¹⁷ **Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself.** ¹⁸ But **someone** may well say, "You have faith and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works." ¹⁹ You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also **believe**, and shudder. ²⁰ **But are you willing to recognize, you foolish fellow, that faith without works is useless?**

²¹ Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar? ²² You see that faith was working with his works, and as a result of the works, **faith was perfected** (Gk. *Made Complete*); ²³ and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness," and he was called the friend of God. ²⁴ You see that a man is justified by works and not by faith alone. ²⁵ In the same way, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way? ²⁶ For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.

ANY DOUBTS ON FAITH ALONE IN CHRIST ALONE? READ ACTS 15 ☺

NOW LET'S TIE THIS ALL TOGETHER....

- a. Faith without AGAPE LOVE is useless...Pray that the Holy Spirit will give you more LOVE FOR OTHERS of the type that God loves YOU WITH.
- b. LOVE IN ACTION looks like helping others...Look for opportunities!
- c. Begin by CHOOSING to LOVE OTHER believers, who are your brothers and sisters in Christ more fervently and extend MORE GRACE TO THEM

- d. REMEMBER: Loving others the way God loves YOU is impossible apart from the Holy Spirit...*"We love because He first loved us"*
- e. AND FINALLY REMEMBER: Serving others is the most "Tangible way to grow in AGAPE LOVE FOR OTHERS and TO GROW in personal FAITH"

What is your next step of faith???????