

Theme: Authentic faith is rooted in regeneration, and is displayed in an orthodox faith and in a willing, joyful life of obedience to God's commands that overcomes the world.

I. Intro - Defender of Faith

- A. British Monarch known as Defender of the Faith
- B. Charles considered 'Defender of Faith' or 'Defender of Faiths'
- C. He now says he will keep traditional title - because it has same meaning
- D. He is in line with modern conception - faith is very generic
- E. How do we know what is authentic, biblical faith?

II. Authentic Faith Is Rooted In Regeneration

- A. Once again John roots everything in regeneration
Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ **is born of God**, and everyone who loves **the father** loves his **child** as well... ⁴ for everyone **born of God** overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. 1 John 5:1, 4
 - 1. John brings up regeneration 4x in passage
 - 2. The Father literally "the one begetting"
 - 3. Child literally "one begotten"
 - 4. For John everything - even faith - begins with regeneration
- B. Why John keeps stressing regeneration as the root
 - 1. Once again - regeneration is perfect tense - it is a past action with present results

- 2. For John everything - even faith - begins with regeneration
- 3. This guards against salvation by works - we are saved by God's work, not ours
- 4. But it also guards against an "intellectual faith"
- 5. Authentic faith is not merely intellectual understanding or even intellectual acceptance of the facts of Christianity. Authentic faith is rooted in the experience of being regenerated by the Spirit of God.

III. Authentic Faith Embraces Biblical Belief (Orthodoxy)

- A. Authentic faith believes in the Deity of Jesus
Who is it that overcomes the world? **Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.** 1 John 5:5
 - 1. The word "belief" is the same as "faith"
 - 2. There have always been groups who denied the Deity of Jesus but claimed to be Christian
 - 3. John - Son of God refers to the Deity of Jesus
 - a. John always uses υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ to refer to Jesus
 - b. We are always τέκνα θεοῦ - children of God
 - c. Only Jesus is God's Son by nature
 - 4. Authentic faith recognizes that Jesus is the Unique Son of God, and is thus Divine. Any "faith" that denies the Deity of Christ is inauthentic and is not Christian.

B. Authentic faith believes in the Incarnation of Christ
Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well. 1 John 5:1

1. Authentic faith believes Jesus is the Christ

2. Gnostics denied the Incarnation

a. Some said Jesus only “appeared” to be human (Docetists) [1 John 1:1]

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. 1 John 1:1

This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, 1 John 4:2

b. Some said the “Christ” descended upon human Jesus at baptism and left before crucifixion

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well. 1 John 5:1

c. All denied the Incarnation - that Jesus was God taking human flesh - the God-Man

3. Authentic faith confesses that Jesus is the Christ - the God-Man, fully God and fully human in one Person.

IV. Authentic Faith Embraces Biblical Obedience (Orthopraxy)

A. Authentic faith loves God

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well. ² This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands. ³ This is love for God: to obey his commands. 1 John 5:1–3

1. The first effect of authentic faith is loving God

2. Unregenerate monk Martin Luther - “Love God? I hate Him!” - this is not authentic faith

3. Before we turn to obeying God’s commands we begin with deep, authentic love for God Himself. Our primary motive for obeying God is that we love Him.

Jesus replied, “If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. ²⁴ He who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.” John 14:23–24

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. ⁶ These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Deuteronomy 6:5–6

B. Authentic faith obeys God’s commands

This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands. ³ This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, 1 John 5:2–3

1. Authentic faith in God and authentic love for God produces authentic obedience to God's commands.
2. This is a consistent teaching in Scripture
We know that we have come to know him if we obey his commands. 1 John 2:3

Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him."... ²³ Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. John 14:21, 23

3. Especially the command to love God's children
Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and **everyone who loves the father loves his child as well.** ² **This is how we know that we love the children of God:** by loving God and carrying out his commands. 1 John 5:1-2

- a. Once again John has a specific command foremost in his mind - loving the children of God.
- b. Authentic faith produces a life of love for the children of God. Those who do not love God's people can not claim to love God - because God says this is impossible.

C. Authentic faith overcomes the world

This is love for God: to obey his commands. **And his commands are not burdensome,** ⁴ for everyone born of God **overcomes** the world. This is the **victory** that has **overcome** the world, even our faith. ⁵ Who is it that **overcomes** the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God. 1 John 5:3-5

1. Believers are now able to overcome the influence of the world to obey God
 - a. **Νίκη** - Overcome (or 'victorious') 4x in 2 verses!
 - b. Authentic faith is strong and virile and overcomes the world!
2. Those who have been regenerated and have authentic faith and love for God do not find obeying God's commands to be a burden, but rather a delight.
Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long. Psalms 119:97
3. Notice this flows from our faith - this is part of our inheritance in Christ [1 John 2:13-14]
Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God. 1 John 5:5

V. Applying the Authentic Word

A. Do I understand authentic faith?

1. Authentic faith is not just vague belief in a 'higher power' or something 'spiritual'
2. The vague thing many call 'faith' today is unbiblical and ultimately of little value
3. Authentic faith is rooted in regeneration, and is displayed in an orthodox faith and in a willing, joyful life of obedience to God's commands that overcomes the world.
4. Is this what I mean when I speak of my 'faith'?

Authentic Faith

1 John 5:1-5

August 2, 2015

Communion

Hebrews 13:20-21

Teaching keywords: faith; regeneration; Christology; Deity of Christ; God's Law; incarnation; love; obedience

B. Do I have authentic faith?

1. Everything hinges on authentic faith!
2. A vague faith in a vague god or savior does not save us from sin and the righteous wrath of God. Only authentic faith in Jesus as found in Scripture can save.
3. Do I have authentic faith in Jesus?
4. Do I see all that flows from authentic regeneration and faith?
 - a. Christianity is supernatural - it begins with the work of God in regeneration
 - b. All we have is by faith alone - all obedience and work flows from faith
 - c. This is why the Christian life is one of joyful and willing obedience, rather than weary, forced submission.
 - d. Authentic faith in the Authentic Jesus produces Authentic victory over the fallen, broken world system.

C. The Table of authentic faith

1. This Table celebrates the Authentic Faith
2. It points us to the real body and real blood of the Authentic God-Man, Jesus Christ
3. At this Table, the Authentic Spirit of God gives us strength to overcome the world
4. Come and receive!

May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, ²¹ equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever.

Amen. Hebrews 13:20–21

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well. ² This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands. ³ This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, ⁴ for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. ⁵ Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God. 1 John 5:1–5