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### **Believe God's Love**

Definitions in **bold letters** are from **Strong's** Exhaustive Concordance  
Other definitions are from **Webster's** Dictionary, 1828 Edition  
or Roget's Thesaurus – **April 19, 2015**

## **1 John 4:13 – 5:5**

**Introduction:** John's readers had to face an early form of heresy called Gnosticism. This error, which held that **spirit** was **good** but **matter** was **evil**, taught falsehoods about the Person of Christ. Gnostics denied His humanity because they believed a **human body** would have **contaminated** Him.

Another Gnostic error was a lack of **love**. Believing that they possessed a superior knowledge (gnosis), they set themselves apart as an elite class and **despised (hated)** all others. Gnostics believed it was their **knowledge** that gave them a special relationship with the God of pure spirit.

These false teachings necessitated John's special emphasis in this letter. The incarnation of Christ, for example is found several times (1 John 1:1; 2:22-23; 4:1-3; 5:20).  
(Source: *The Bible Expositor and Illuminator, Union Press Publication- Christian Life Series*)

**1 John 1:5-7**, This then is the **MESSAGE** which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is **LIGHT**, and IN him is no darkness at ALL. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and **walk (LIVE [exist]) IN darkness**, we **lie**, and do not the truth: but if we **walk (LIVE) IN** the light, as he is IN the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

**Intro continued.** There are two principal subjects discussed in this chapter:-- **I.** The method by which we may determine that we have the Spirit of God, 1 John 4:1-6. The apostle had said (1 John 3:24) that it could be determined that God dwells in them by the Spirit which he has given them; but as it is probable that the teachers of error, the persons whom John regarded as "**antichrist**," (1 John 2:18,19,) would lay claim to the same thing, it was important to know how it could be ascertained that the Spirit of God had been really given to them, or how it could be determined that the spirit that was IN them was not the **spirit of antichrist**, the very thing against which he would guard them. In doing this, he (1.) cautions them against trusting to every kind of spirit, or supposing that every spirit which animated even the professed friends of religion was the Spirit of God, 1 John 4:1; and (2.) he shows them how it might be determined that they had really the Spirit of God, or what would, be the effect of the **influences** of the Spirit on the **MIND**. This evidence consisted of the following things: (a.) they had the Spirit of God who confessed that Jesus Christ had come **in (as) the flesh, (a human being)** 1 John 4:2; (b.) they who denied that, had not the Spirit of God, and the denial of this was the real spirit of antichrist, 1 John 4:3; (c.) they who had the Spirit of God had not the spirit of this world, 1 John 4:4,5; and (d.) they who had the Spirit of God would hear those who were his apostles, or who were sent by him, 1 John 4:6. **II.** The **DUTY, power, and influence** of **LOVE**, 1 John 4:7-21. This is a favourite subject with John, and he here considers it at length, as a subject that was essential in determining the evidences of piety (regeneration). (Source: *Barnes' Notes on the New Testament classic.studylight.org/com/bnn/*)

**1 John 4:12**, No man hath **seen God** at any time. If we **love one another**, God dwelleth **IN us**, and his love is **PERFECTED IN us**.

**Thought 1.** This is a repeat of John's main point throughout this letter that when he says "one another", he is referring to Christians as a "family": the household of faith.

**NOTE:** The **warning** in this verse to the effect that the revelation of God is available to people only **IN Christ** is widely needed. All such things as **astrology, spiritism, witchcraft** and **Satanism** are basically ways of finding a so-called "reality" **apart** from Biblical revelation. This apostolic injunction states unequivocally that there is **NOTHING** out there which might **enlighten** or **bless** people. The true revelation has already been given through people who is "the way, the truth, and the life." Despite this basic truth, the spectacle of a high ranking ecclesiastic losing his life in a desert while trying to communicate with spirits, only recently, was spread on the pages of the newspapers.

(Source: Coffman Commentaries on the Old & New Testament classic.studylight.org/com/bcc/)

**1 John 4:13**, Hereby know we that **we dwell IN him**, and **HE IN us**, because he hath given us of his Spirit.

**NOTE:** Certainly this mutual inhabitation is something more noble and great than we are well acquainted with or can declare. One would think that to speak of God **dwelling IN us**, and **we IN him**, were to use words too high for **mortals**, had not God gone before us therein. What this indwelling imports has been briefly explained on ch. 3:24. What it fully **is** must be left to the revelation of the blessed world. But this mutual inhabitation we **KNOW**, says the apostle, because he hath given us of his spirit; he has lodged the image and fruit of his Spirit in our hearts (v. 13), and the Spirit that he hath given us appears to be his, or **of him**, since it is the Spirit of power, of zeal and magnanimity (greatness of MIND) for God, of love to God and man, and of a sound mind, of an understanding well instructed in the affairs of God and religion, and his kingdom among men, 2 Tim. 1:7.

(Source: The Matthew Henry Commentary on the whole Bible classic.studylight.org/com/mhc)

**1 John 3:23-24**, And this is his commandment, That we should **believe** on the **name (authority)** of his Son Jesus Christ, and **LOVE** one another, as (like) he gave us commandment. And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth **IN him**, and he **IN him**. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by **the Spirit** which he hath **given us**.

**2 Timothy 1:7**, For God hath **not given us** the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

**1 John 4:14**, And we have **seen** and do **testify** that the Father **sent** the Son to be the **Saviour** of the world.

**NOTE:** A tremendous weight of Christian truth is concentrated in this verse. **The Father sent the Son ...** The entire story of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation is here reduced to one line. **To be the Saviour of the world ...** The world's being lost in **sin** is implied; otherwise no Saviour would have been required.

(Source: Coffman Commentaries on the Old & New Testament classic.studylight.org/com/bcc/)

**NOTE:** Jesus Christ manifested in the flesh; see 1 John 1:1, and do testify-bear witness, in consequence of having the fullest conviction, that the Father sent the son to be the Saviour of the world. We have had the **fullest proof** of this from his **doctrine** and **miracles**, which we heard and saw during the whole time that he sojourned (dwell for a time) among men. (Source: Barnes' Notes on the New Testament classic.studylight.org/com/bnn/)

**Matthew 16:15-17**, He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the **Christ**, the **Son** of the **living God**. And Jesus

answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but **my Father** which is in heaven.

**1 John 4:15**, Whosoever shall **CONFESS** that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth IN him, and he IN God.

**Confess defined 3670, covenant** (verb i., to enter into a formal agreement).

**NOTE:** Much stress is laid on this confession, because the false teachers **denied** the reality of the incarnation (act of taking a human body and the NATURE of man.); but this confession implied also such a **belief** IN Christ as put them in possession of his pardoning mercy and indwelling Spirit.

(Source: *The Adam Clarke Commentary* [classic.studylight.org/com/acc/](http://classic.studylight.org/com/acc/))

**Hebrews 2:16-17**, For **verily (indeed doubtless)** he took **NOT** on him the **nature** (*nature" was added by the translators*) of angels, but he took on him the SEED of Abraham.

Wherefore in **ALL things** it behoved him to be **made** LIKE unto **his brethren...**

Nature, when we speak of the nature of man, we understand the peculiar constitution of his BODY or mind, or the qualities of the species which distinguish him from other animals.

**1 John 4:16**, And we have **known** and **believed (TRUST)** the **love** that God *hath to us*. **God is LOVE;** and he that dwelleth IN love dwelleth IN God, and God IN him.

**NOTE:** As Morris declared, "**Believing** and **knowing** the **LOVE** is certainly a very unusual expression." It is perhaps John's way of referring to one's knowing and believing the whole thesis (subject matter) and system of Christianity, which might be summed up, really, as "knowing and believing the love of God." What a beautiful way to express it!

**Abideth in love ...** is in this verse equated to "**abideth IN God,**" making the expressions synonymous (expressing the same thing). It is an exercise in futility to attempt to make some kind of distinction between those and a dozen other similar expressions in the word of God. Note: It is undeniable that the New Testament teaches that Christians are **IN God**, IN Christ, IN the Holy Spirit, and IN love (in the sense of abiding in love); and at the same time the New Testament reveals that each of these: God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, and love all abide, indwell, or reside **IN Christians**.

**1 John 2:27**, But the **anointing** which ye have received of him **abideth** IN you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same **anointing** teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath **taught you**, ye shall **abide** **IN HIM**.

There are other significant additions to this list, such as "the mind of Christ" (Philippians 2:5), and "the word of Christ" (Colossians 3:16), both of which are flatly represented as dwelling "IN Christians." It is the conviction repeated several times in this series of commentaries, that it is absolutely impossible to distinguish such expressions as indicating different states or conditions of the soul; on the other hand, they are clearly multiple designations of a **single condition**, that is, the **saved condition**, that which belongs to every Christian. (Source: *Coffman Commentaries on the Old & New Testament* [classic.studylight.org/com/bcc/](http://classic.studylight.org/com/bcc/))

**1 John 4:17**, Herein is our love made **PERFECT**, that we may have **boldness** in the day of judgment: because as he **IS**, **SO** are **WE** IN this world.

**Perfect defined 5048, complete, i.e. (literally) accomplish, or (fig.) consummate.**

**NOTE:** Happy they who have holy boldness and assurance in the prospect of that day, who look and wait for it, and for the Judge's appearance! So do, and so may do, the **lovers of God**. **Their love to God** assures them of **God's love to them**, and consequently of the friendship of the Son of God; the more we love our friend, especially when we are sure that he knows it, the more we can **trust his love**. As God is good and loving, and faithful to his promise, so we can easily be persuaded of his love, and the happy fruits of his love, when we can say, Thou that knowest all things knowest that we love thee. And hope maketh not ashamed; our hope, conceived by the consideration of God's love, will not disappoint us, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost that is given to us, Rom. 5:5 .

...Love hath conformed us to him; as he was the great lover of God and man, he has taught us in our measure to be so too, and he will not deny his own image. Love teaches us to conform in sufferings too; we suffer for him and with him, and therefore cannot but hope and trust that we shall also be **glorified together** with him, 2 Tim. 2:12 (Source: *The Matthew Henry Commentary on the whole Bible classic.studylight.org/com/mhc*)

**1 John 4:18**, There is **NO FEAR** in love; but **perfect love casteth out fear (terror)**: because fear hath TORMENT. He that feareth is not made **PERFECT** in love.

**NOTE:** The man who feels that he loves God with all his heart can never dread him as his Judge. As he is now made a partaker of his Spirit, and carries a sense of the Divine **approbation** (approval) in his conscience, he has nothing of that fear that produces **terror** or brings torment. The perfect love-that fulness of love, which he has received, casteth out fear-removes all terror relative to this day of judgment, for it is of this that the apostle particularly speaks.

(Source: *The Adam Clarke Commentary classic.studylight.org/com/acc/*)

**1 John 4:19**, We **love him**, because **he first loved us**.

**NOTE:** This is the foundation of **our love to God**. 1. We love him because we find he has loved us. 2. We love him from a sense of OBLIGATION and GRATITUDE. 3. We love him from the influence of his own love; from his love shed abroad in our hearts, our love to him proceeds. It is the seed whence our love springs. The verse might be rendered, Let us therefore love him, because he first loved us: thus the Syriac and Vulgate.

(Source: *The Adam Clarke Commentary classic.studylight.org/com/acc/*)

**1 John 4:20-21**, If a man say, **I love God**, and **hateth his brother**, he is a **liar**: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That **he who loveth God love his brother** also.

**Thought 1.** John, again states the truth about "believers" loving believers as a "family." A point Jesus made to the Pharisees when they were claiming to be "children" of God, and at the same time **HATING** him and plotting his death. They were as these Gnostics who really didn't **KNOW** God, and were "children" of the Devil.

**John 8:39-42, 44**, They answered and said unto him, **Abraham** is our **father**. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the **WORKS** of Abraham. But now ye seek to **KILL me**, a man that hath told you the **truth**, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham. Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have **one Father**, even **God**. Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would LOVE ME: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.

...**Ye** are of **your father** the **DEVIL**, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a **murderer** from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is **NO TRUTH** in him.

When he speaketh a **lie**, he speaketh of his own: for he is a **LIAR**, and the **father** of it.

**NOTE:** The eye is wont to affect the heart; things **unseen** less catch the **mind**, and thereby the heart. The incomprehensibility of God very much arises from his invisibility; the member of Christ has much of God visible in him. How then shall the hater of a visible image of God pretend to love the unseen original, the invisible God himself? 2. As suitable to the express law of God, and the just reason of it: And this commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God love his brother also, v. 21. As God has communicated his image in nature and in grace, so he would have our love to be suitably diffused. We must love God originally and supremely, and others IN him, on the account of their derivation and reception from him, and of his interest IN them. Now, our **Christian brethren** having a **new nature** and excellent privileges derived from God, and God having his interest in them as well as in us, it cannot but be a natural suitable **obligation** that **he** who **loves God** should **LOVE** **his brother** also.

(Source: *The Matthew Henry Commentary on the whole Bible classic.studylight.org/com/mhc*)

**1 John 5:1**, Whosoever **BELIEVETH** that **Jesus** is the **Christ** **IS BORN** of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him.

**Believe defined 4100, pisteuo pronounced pist-yoo'-o ; to have FAITH in, by implication, to ENTRUST (especially one's spiritual well-being to Christ).**

**NOTE:** Whosoever believeth, are to be taken in connection with the subjects necessarily implied in them. He that believeth that Jesus is the **Messiah**, and confides in him for the **remission of sins**, is begotten of God; and they who are pardoned and begotten of God love him in return for his love, and love all those who are his **children**. (Source: *The Adam Clarke Commentary classic.studylight.org/com/acc/*)

**1 John 5:2**, By this we **KNOW** that we **love** the children of God, when we love God, and **keep** his commandments.

**NOTE:** Our love of God's followers is a proof that we love God. Our love to God is the cause why we love **his children**, and our keeping the commandments of God is the proof that we love him. (Source: *The Adam Clarke Commentary classic.studylight.org/com/acc/*)

**1 John 3:23**, And this is **his commandment**, That we should **believe** on the **name (authority)** of his Son Jesus Christ, and **LOVE** one another, as (like) he gave us commandment.

**John 13:34**, A new commandment I give unto you, that ye **LOVE** **one another**; AS (like) I have **LOVED** you, that ye also **LOVE** one another.

**1 John 5:3**, For this is the love of God, that we KEEP his commandments: and his commandments are not **grievous (burdensome, heavy)**.

**NOTE:** On the love of God, as being the **foundation** of all religious worship, there is a good saying in *Sohar Exod.*, fol. 23, col. 91: "Rabbi Jesa said, how necessary is it that a man should love the holy blessed God! For he can bring no other worship to God than love; and whoever loves him, and worships him from a principle of love, him the holy blessed God calls his beloved." (Source: *The Adam Clarke Commentary classic.studylight.org/com/acc/*)

**1 John 5:4**, For whatsoever is **BORN** of God **overcometh** the world: and this is the **victory** that **overcometh** the world, even our FAITH.

**NOTE:** In John 16:33, the Saviour says, "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." See Barnes "John 6:33". He obtained a complete triumph over **him** "who **rules** the **darkness** of the **world**," and laid the foundation for a victory by his people over **all** vice, error,

and SIN. John makes this affirmation of all who are **born** of God. "Whatsoever," or, as the Greek is, "Everything which is **begotten of God**," (\~pan to gegenhmenon\~;) meaning to affirm, undoubtedly, that in *every instance* where one is truly **regenerated**, there is this victory over the world.

(Source: Barnes' Notes on the New Testament classic.studylight.org/com/bnn/)

**Thought 1.** This verse reveals the truth that it's the BORN AGAIN experience that gives us the ability to live right: overcoming the temptations of the world by faith in God's word as we learn and grow. That's how Jesus did it before he was filled with power.

**1 John 2:16**, For all that is in the **world**, the lust of the flesh ...the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

**Thought 2.** The second experience with the Holy Spirit is to be supplied with POWER, called being "filled" by the Spirit. This experience gives us the miracle working power from God by his Spirit to be witnesses and DO the WORKS of God like Jesus after he was filled.

**Luke 4:17-19**, And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The **Spirit** of the Lord is **UPON** me, because **HE** hath **anointed** me to **preach** the gospel to the POOR; he hath **SENT** me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to **SET** at **liberty** them that are bruised, To **preach** the acceptable year of the Lord.

**Acts 1:8**, But ye shall receive **power (force, miraculous power, strength)**, after that the Holy Ghost is come **UPON** you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem... in all Judaea... in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the **earth**.

**Thought 3.** Now, the first example we'll look at to further prove there are two experiences with the Spirit is the life of Paul. He was BORN of God's Spirit on the Damascus road and then "FILLED" by the Spirit 3 days later.

**Acts 9:17**, And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, **Brother Saul**, (*He was born again on the Damascus road*) the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be **FILLED** with the Holy Ghost.

**Acts 8:12**, But when they **believed** Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were **baptized**, both men and women.

**Acts 8:14-17**, And when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the **word** of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might **RECEIVE** the Holy Ghost: (For as yet he was **fallen (seize** [stir about, do wonders]) upon **NONE** of them: only they were **baptized** in the name of the Lord Jesus.) (*They had only been baptized in water.*) Then laid they their hands on them, and they **RECEIVED** the Holy Ghost.

**Receive/ Received 2983, be amazed** (astonished [daze, stagger, electrify]; confounded [to stupefy { STUN} with amazement] with surprise or wonder).

**1 John 5:5**, Who is he that **overcometh** the **world**, but he that **BELIEVETH** that **Jesus** is the Son of God?

**NOTE:** "Look at any Greek lexicon you like, and you will find that the word [faith or believe] does not merely mean to believe, but to **TRUST**, to **confide in**, to commit to, **entrust with**, and so forth; the very marrow of the meaning of faith is confidence in, RELIANCE UPON." (Spurgeon)

(Source: David Guzik's Commentaries on the Bible classic.studylight.org/com/guz)