

Faith Talk - August 16, 2026

Series: 1 John- Life in the Light and Love of God

Sermon: The Victory of Faith

Scripture: 1 John 5:1

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

Summary

As John enters the final chapter of his letter, he pulls together the threads he has been weaving throughout: faith, love, and obedience, which are not separate spiritual activities but a single, inseparable progression: born again, love God, overcome the world, love one another.

The foundation is faith. Believing in Jesus is not merely knowing the facts about Him or agreeing they are true. Saving faith is trust, like sitting down in the chair, placing the full weight of your hope on Christ alone for salvation.

From that new birth flows a love for the Father, and love for the Father is never meant to stay abstract but to be tangibly expressed in the way we love one another. God has a love language, and it is specific: keep His commands, live your born-again life, and love other believers the way God has loved you.

We have summarized nearly fifty “one another” commands in the New Testament into six categories: welcoming, serving, bearing burdens, forgiving, correcting, and submitting to one another. (See page below for a list of all 50 and the summary categories.)

The world cannot produce this kind of love; it is supernatural. Faith is our victory, not because it gives us willpower to try harder, but because it grants us access to a born-again life transformed by God's love and empowered by His Spirit.

If there is someone in our church family you are struggling to love, that is not primarily a relational problem; it is an invitation to go deeper into the victory of faith.

Discussion Questions

Conversations with Adults

- John defines saving faith as trust — not just knowing or agreeing, but placing the full weight of your hope on Christ alone. Is there any area of your life where you are still trying to carry weight that faith is supposed to hand over to Jesus?
- John says loving God and loving one another are inseparably linked; you can't truly do one without the other. Where do you find that connection most challenging to live out, and what do you think gets in the way?
- Of the six categories of "one another" commands — welcoming, serving, bearing burdens, forgiving, correcting, and caring for one another — which one do we as the church do well, and which one do you think we have the most room to grow in?

Conversations with Students

- John says the difference between knowing about Jesus, agreeing Jesus is real, and actually trusting Jesus is like the difference between knowing a chair can hold you and actually sitting in it. Where are you in that progression, and is there anything keeping you from fully sitting down?
- John says his commands are not burdensome, not because they are easy, but because we don't do them by human effort but from a place of fellowship with God. What's the difference between trying to love someone in your own strength versus loving them from that place?
- Is there someone in your youth group or church that you've been finding it hard to love? What do you think faith has to do with that?

Conversations with Kids

- John says believing in Jesus means trusting Him, like actually sitting in a chair, not just knowing the chair is there. Can you think of a time you had to really trust someone? What made it feel safe to trust them?
- John lists ways we are supposed to love each other, things like welcoming people, helping carry heavy things, forgiving when someone hurts us, and caring for each other. Which of those is easiest for you, and which one is hardest?
- John says faith gives us victory, like winning. What do you think we are winning against when we choose to love someone even when it's really hard?

Closing Prayer

Father, **thank You** that You didn't leave us to love one another in our own strength, that the same faith that saves us is the faith that gives us victory over everything in the world that makes love hard. Thank You that Your commands are not a burden but an invitation into the most beautiful experience available to us: Your love, shared with one another.

We ask You to deepen our trust in You, not just our knowledge of You or our agreement with You, but our full, sitting-down trust in Jesus alone. Where we have been trying to love others in our own effort and failing, remind us to go back to the source.

We commit to staying in the dance, living our born-again life, and stepping into the victory of faith, especially toward anyone in our church family who seems difficult to love right now. In Jesus' name, Amen.