

The following content is based on the message on 12/20/20 at New City Church in Phoenix, AZ. It is not meant to be a full synopsis, but rather a resource to help you analyze and apply the main ideas. To use this devotional effectively, please listen to the message found at <http://newcityphx.com/sermons/>.

## MONDAY // CHILDREN OF GOD

**Read 1 John 5:1.** Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God. If you believe in Jesus, you are now a child of God. This is a huge deal to John. It may not seem like a big deal to us, but John says that we are children of God. Our Father in heaven is king of the universe, and yet He chose to call us sons and daughters. We are part of God's family. This should fundamentally change how we see ourselves! It should shape our identity.

- *What perceptions need to change to see God as your perfect Father?*
- *Set a timer to sit in silence and reflect on God being your perfect Father.*

## TUESDAY // HIS COMMANDS ARE NOT BURDENSOME

**Read 1 John 5:2-5.** John has been saying that the test of loving God is whether we love His children and whether we obey His commandments. In this passage, John says the reverse side of that equation. He says that if we can truly love one another (who are not always lovable), then we can truly love God. If we truly love God and love one another, then we are obeying Him. When we obey God, it shows we trust/love Him. These commands are not burdensome for those who have been born of God. This spiritual birth occurs when we place our faith in Jesus. Loving God, loving others who have been born of God, and obeying God are natural expressions of that reality—it's from a new nature that replaces our worldly nature. Our spiritual birth, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, enables us to overcome the world. The only way to overcome the destructive attitudes and values of this world is to live your life believing Jesus is who He says He is—the Son of God.

- *Why can't we separate the love of God and love of His children? How does this challenge you to love others?*
- *Set a timer and sit in silent reflection. Reflect on Jesus proving His love to you.*

## WEDNESDAY // THESE THREE AGREE

**Read 1 John 5:6-13.** What does John mean when he says THREE THINGS testify to Jesus? WATER: Water likely refers to Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist, which marked the beginning of his public ministry on earth. Water might also include Jesus' ministry of baptism (see John 4:1-2). BLOOD: The "blood" likely refers to his actual, physical death on the cross, and its atoning work in our lives. Remember, this was being disputed in these early churches by some. SPIRIT: The Holy Spirit, who lives in every believer, testifies about these things. Whoever believes in the Son of God has the

testimony in himself through the Holy Spirit. John says that these three things agree. In biblical times, you needed two or three witnesses to agree. If we'll accept the testimony of human beings, how much more should we accept the testimony of God (His Spirit)—it is greater! So what do these three say? The testimony is simple: God grants eternal life to anyone who believes in His son, Jesus. If you do not have Jesus, you do not have eternal life.

- *How can you feel confident in the love of Jesus? Why is it important to feel secure in His salvation?*
- *Set a timer and sit in silent reflection on the Holy Spirit indwelling you right now.*

## THURSDAY // CONFIDENCE IN CHRIST

**Read 1 John 5:14-18.** What is it like to have eternal life? A secure relationship with a loving Father that is for our good. One of the blessings of being a child of God is that we can ask things of Him. He gives us those things—when they are also what he wants for us! In the context of loving one another, John applies this principle. One way we can love our brothers and sisters in Christ is to pray for them when they commit sins. If we pray for someone who is sinning, God will give him life. But John brings up this concept of a sin leading to death. So what kind of sin leads to death? The answer is simple: any sin that isn't covered by the atoning work of Jesus on the cross. The only sin that isn't covered by the work of Jesus is the rejection of Jesus. The point is this: if we see anyone, who is a believer in Jesus, committing sin, then we should pray for that person.

- *How can we be confident that Jesus will give us what we ask for within His will?*
- *How is it tempting to view this verse as a proof-text to try to get anything that we want? What does it mean if God doesn't grant you what you asked for?*
- *Set a timer and sit in silent reflection on the Holy Spirit indwelling you right now.*

## FRIDAY // KEEP YOURSELF FROM IDOLS

**Read 1 John 5:19-21.** According to John, there is a sin that leads to death. It is probably the same sin that many of his opponents are committing: rejecting Jesus. We can and should pray for the salvation of those rejecting Jesus. But it is not guaranteed. People generally walk away from Jesus when something other than Jesus begins to look more appealing. Their hearts drift toward that thing. These "things" are what God calls "idols"—it is whatever takes the place of God in our lives. These idols make false promises to do things for us that only God can. They promise to satisfy—which they do, but it is never enough. So we begin to treat these idols the way we are designed to treat God. We give them first place in our lives. We love them and pursue them above all else. It is vital that we stay away from idols and keep others away too. Jesus is the true God. Only in Him will you find eternal life.

- *Toward what do you have the tendency to drift? How is Jesus more appealing?*
- *Set a timer and sit in silent prayer. Ask God to satisfy you with His presence.*