

Title: A CLASH OF IDEOLOGIES, 1 JOHN 5:1-6
(Chatham, NJ; 05/10/15, AM) [S-P, Exegesis, String of Beads]

Theme: In confessing faith in Christ we have not only overcome the world, but we have confronted it and now live in opposition to it.

Purpose: To demonstrate that faith, love, and keeping the commandments of God are all contrary to the ways of the world but that we should still maintain our faith and courage in the face of these things.

Introduction:

1. The church speaks to culture.
2. Hebrews 1:2 is a voice for the whole world not just for the church.
3. Jesus has told us to shout his words from the rooftops.
4. A letter to the editor in *World*, 5/16/15, p. 67 reads: "Recently I asked a dear friend and minister if, with our culture in a slog toward Sodom and Gomorrah, I had wasted 20 years as a naval officer protecting our country and culture. He replied that we're not in a slog, we're running, and if Christians are true to the Scriptures we'll be persecuted. There has always been a cost to discipleship, and our culture is raising the price."
5. We must understand the confrontational role that Christianity sometimes plays in society.
6. Yet in this role we are still victors.

I. Born of God = Belief in Jesus

A. Born of God, 1 John 5:1

1. John 1:12-13, God makes possible a new way of life
2. God has come near (1:14) and has revealed himself in Christ (1:18)
3. We can enter the Kingdom of God but only by being born again, John 3:3-6
4. 1 John 5:1 recognizes that our faith represents our status as born again
5. Do not underestimate the power and implications of the new birth

B. Faith overcomes the world, 1 John 5:4-5

1. Overcoming implies obstacles
2. It also implies adversaries
3. John has already defined the "world" in negative terms, chap. 2
4. James 4:4 reminds us that "friendship with the world is enmity with God"
5. In Christ we have sided with God against the world
6. This is what faith overcomes

II. Love Is Adversarial (It should not surprise us that the world co-opts and redefines the most important virtue and characteristic of God. In doing so, the world can assume an air of respectability and righteousness.)

A. Abide in God's love, John 15:9, 12

1. Christ insists that we abide in the love of God
2. What seems to be a universally accepted way of relating to God and others is distorted by the world
3. A recent book by an actress revealed her same-sex attraction for her son's godmother; when she revealed this to her son, he said, "What's the big deal? Love is love, mom."
4. The world thinks love is nothing more than any impulse that makes us feel good, gives us a romantic feeling, or satisfies physical or emotional attractions
5. It is a muddled sentimentalism

B. Lay down your life, John 15:13

1. God defines love, not us

2. See also 1 John 3:16
3. We have opportunities to do this in small ways every day
4. With our spouses, our children, our neighbors, the people we deal with in the store
5. We lay down our lives by serving them, Galatians 5:13-14
6. Love is not about satisfying our impulses

III. Keep the Commandments

A. A Clash of Ideologies

1. 1 John 5:3, "This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments."
2. Confirmation of Jesus' own words in John 14:21 & 23
3. This definition of love flies directly in the face of the desires that control the worldly human heart: "desires of the flesh and eyes," 1 John 2:16
4. These are the same impulses that say, "Love is love."
5. Love is whatever we want that satisfies our desires
6. The feeling justifies the behavior
7. Yet God's commands most often contradict what our impulses desire

B. For one another also

1. Love for God and love for others are inextricably linked
2. The first two commandments: love God, love neighbor
3. The second is not less important, but it is dependent on doing the first
4. Everything else derives from loving God and keeping his commandments

Conclusion:

1. All have the opportunity to be born of God, and the stakes are high: your eternal destiny.
2. Do not fear what the world says; fear God and keep his commandments.
3. When you love him, he abides with you.
4. Believe in Jesus; be born again by water and the Spirit; love God, love your neighbor.
5. The kingdom of this world is dying; the Kingdom of God awaits.