

Living in *Love*.

How God's Love Changes My Life 1 John 4:17-5:4

John has just described the unconditional love of God toward us. In these verses he describes how living in the security of that love impacts your life.

4 WAYS REAL FAITH TRANSFORMS ME

1. I grow in _____

God is love. Whoever **lives in love** lives in God, and God in them. This is how love is made complete among us so that we will have **confidence** on the day of judgment: In this world we are like Jesus. There is **no fear** in love. But **perfect love drives out fear**, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who **fears** is not made perfect in love. We love because **he first loved us**. 1 John 4:16b-19

2. I grow in _____

Whoever claims to **love God yet hates** a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever **does not love** their brother and sister, whom they have seen, **cannot love God**, whom they have not seen. And he has given us this command: Anyone who loves God **must also love their brother and sister**. 1 John 4:20,21

Callback: If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister **in need** but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? 1 John 3:17

3. I grow in _____

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who **loves the father** loves his child as well. This is how we know that we love the children of God: **by loving God**... 1 John 5:1,2a

4. I grow in _____

...and **carrying out his commands**. In fact, this is love for God: **to obey his commands**. And his commands are **not burdensome**, for everyone born of God overcomes the world. 1 John 5:2b,3

This is the victory that has **overcome the world**, even our **faith**. 1 John 5:4

QUESTIONS for personal reflection or group discussion

1. When you were growing up, how did you think of God? How has that changed for you—and why?
2. Read 1 John 4:16-5:3. In last weekend's verses, John says that when we "live in love," when we really soak in the love of God for us in Christ, that leads to growth in four areas: Confidence, love for others, love for God, and obedience to God's commands.

Do an honest inventory of your own spiritual life: how are you doing in these areas?
 - Are you growing in confidence? How? How can a realization of God's love increase your confidence?
 - Are you growing in love and generosity for others? How? How can a realization of God's love increase your love for others?
 - Has your love for God grown? Where do you see that growth?
 - Has your consistency in obeying God's commands grown? How can a realization of God's love change the way you look at obeying God's commands?
3. How do you think love and obedience are connected? Why is love a better motivator for obedience than fear?
4. Think of another person that you are struggling to love. In what way can you show the love of God to that person this week?

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