

INTRO

- Summer is here! With many plans disrupted including vacation trips, how are you planning to rest, recharge and enjoy recreation this summer?

READ

1 John 5:1-5

REFLECT & RESPOND

Throughout John's letter, his motivation is to assure people of authentic faith. It all comes together in this short passage.

GETTING STARTED IN AUTHENTIC FAITH

There is a difference between being created by God and being "born of God." In Jn 3, Jesus tells us that in order to see and be part of God's kingdom, we need to be "born again."

Qu: if we're all created by God in his image, why is that not enough to be part of God's kingdom?

GROWING IN AUTHENTIC FAITH

By now, we are very familiar with John's 3 tests of authentic faith: Head (belief test), Heart (love test), Hands (obedience test). They are so intertwined and are the natural growth which follows being born of God.

Loving God is not just external obedience; it means having a heart toward God that finds obedience not burdensome (v3).

Read Mt 11:28-30. Enjoying the fullness of life Jesus offers us means embracing the way of life Jesus invites us into.

Qu: how would you assess the growth of your faith right now? What is God specifically revealing to you during this time?

OVERCOMING THROUGH AUTHENTIC FAITH

For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. v4

John uses imagery of a battle for our faith in the world. The worldly system that ignores and opposes God makes believing, loving and obeying difficult. BUT, we are reminded that our birthright as children of God is to be an overcomer. The conflict is real but instead of being overcome, we are to overcome!

We are to be *in* the world, not *of* the world, *for* the world's sake. Like Jesus. Because Jesus' victory is our victory, we are free to love and obey.

Authentic faith means we are becoming more like Jesus in the world in Head, Heart, and Hands as we overcome our own flesh, sin, and Satan.

Qu: Your faith is a powerful weapon in overcoming. How might God be encouraging you to exercise it more especially as you face temptations and discouragement?

PRAY

- Pray for anyone in the group who feels overburdened right now to experience God's love and freedom afresh.
- Pray for increasing victory in Christ over the flesh, Satan and the world.