

Sermon #1,233 (Funeral Sermon #46): 1 John 5:4-12

8-8-16 (Funeral Service for Wayne Dalchow), Bethany-Princeton MN

WAYNE HAS LIFE THROUGH FAITH IN JESUS AS THE SON OF GOD

**The Text: 1 John 5:4-12. <sup>4</sup>For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world - our faith. <sup>5</sup>Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? <sup>6</sup>This is He who came by water and blood - Jesus Christ; not only by water, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who bears witness, because the Spirit is truth. <sup>7</sup>For there are three who bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one. <sup>8</sup>And there are three that bear witness on earth: the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three agree as one. <sup>9</sup>If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for this is the witness of God which He has testified of His Son. <sup>10</sup>He who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself; he who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given of His Son. <sup>11</sup>And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. <sup>12</sup>He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.**

Lord, this is Your Word and these are Your words. Sanctify us by the truth. Your Word is truth. Lord, we thank You that Wayne did not depend on human wisdom but learned to place all his hope on the testimony You have given in Your holy Word: that there is eternal life in Jesus Christ Your Son. Because of this, we can be comforted, confident, and certain today that Wayne is not dead but has life through faith in Jesus Christ, and that we who believe in Jesus will see Wayne again. Amen.

Dear fellow redeemed in our risen Lord Jesus Christ, especially Wayne's loved ones: The peace of the Lord be with you. Amen.

Borrowing these words from 1 John, what's important today is to know whether Wayne has life. There is a contrast here between a person who has life and a person who does not have life. It's one or the other.

The evidence of this coffin, and Wayne's deceased body inside it, are that Wayne does not have life. He cannot get up by his own powers. He can't sit up and talk to us, and Wayne loved to talk and to laugh. The coffin,

and the death inside it, taunt us with this reality that Wayne does not have life. The world tells us that there is nothing as certain as death. The world does not know why death is so certain. But we do. The Bible tells us the truth behind this. It says: *"The wages of sin is death,"* and: *"Death spread to all men, because all sinned"* (Ro 6:23, 5:12). The coffin preaches a sermon about sin. It says Wayne does not have life since he had sin.

The first part of our reading from 1 John speaks about this. It speaks of **"he who overcomes the world."** What is this "world" that John is talking about? Earlier in this first epistle he defines what he means by "the world. He says: *"All that is in the world [is] the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life."* So "the world" refers to all the sin on the inside that leads to the sins that we do. Knowing Wayne and how he always tried to do the right thing, we naturally think of other people who outwardly lived much worse lives, or even people who wronged Wayne and did things that hurt or took advantage of him.

But this is speaking about any failure to fear, love and trust in God above all things. Wayne was guilty of this too, every day. He admitted that. He confessed his sins. He confessed that he deserved God's punishment both now and in eternity, because he had sinned against God in thought, word, and deed. So he, himself, was not able to "overcome the world." Especially because the Bible teaches that even one sin condemns a person to death, even eternal death: *"Whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all"* (Ja 2:10).

For all these reasons it would be true that Wayne did not have life and that he did not overcome the "world," that is, sin and its punishment. But in fact Wayne does have life and he has overcome the world. Can we see this? No. But God tells us in His Word that it is true. Does His Word say: "Wayne Dalchow has life"? Not in those words. But here it says: **"God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life."** It also says: **"And this is the victory that has overcome the world - our faith. Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?"** Wayne believed that Jesus is the Son of God. He had the Son, he had Jesus, so he has life. In this way the Bible, God's holy Word, does say: Wayne Dalchow has life and has overcome the world, that is, sin and its punishment.

But then the question is: How can this be? How can Wayne, who confessed he had sin, have no sin? How could Jesus give this victory over the world to Wayne? These verses give us the answer. They tell us what Jesus did. It says Jesus is He **“who came by water and blood.”**

This refers to Jesus’ death on the cross, when after Jesus cried out **“It is finished!”** and: **“Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit,”** the soldier pierced His side with a spear and this same John – who was standing there watching – reports in his gospel that **“immediately blood and water came out” (Jn 19:34)**. Why is this important? Because – as it says in 1 John 1:7 – **“the blood of Jesus Christ God’s Son cleanses us from all sin.”**

Jesus shed His holy, precious blood. His blood atoned for the sins of every person in the world, including Wayne and including you and me. But in order to get the benefit of this, it has to be received by us. What Jesus did for us has to come to us. It had to come to Wayne. Just as in the Garden of Eden the woman was taken out of the side of the first Adam, now out of the side of the second Adam – Jesus – water and blood flow to bring forth the bride of Christ, the Church, all who believe in Him, including Wayne.

Jesus not only **“came by water and blood,”** but now He comes by water and blood. Jesus comes to a person to save him. Wayne felt very strongly this presence of Jesus. He believed that he met Jesus face to face. As this passage teaches, it happens by Jesus coming by water and by blood.

The water of baptism gives birth to a Christian. This is how Wayne became a Christian, when he was baptized at 6 weeks old. It was Jesus coming to Wayne by water, and Jesus coming by His blood in the water connected with His Word, washing his sins away. But to stay a Christian, a person has to keep hearing the Word of God, because faith comes by hearing. Every time Wayne heard the forgiveness of his sins, the Gospel, Jesus was coming by blood, Jesus was there with His blood cleansing Wayne of his sins. Every time He came to the Lord’s Supper and ate Jesus’ body and drank Jesus’ blood for the remission of his sins, Jesus was there cleansing Wayne of his sins. Wayne loved the weekly gift of the Lord’s Supper, he said, **“so the sins don’t pile up so high!”**

Because Jesus kept coming personally to Wayne by water and blood, God preserved Wayne in the true faith. He needed this, with the losses he suffered in life, especially the death of his wife Marilyn 34 years ago. That is a long time to live missing someone. But through Jesus coming to Wayne regularly in His Word and in the Sacrament, God took care of Wayne's faith and kept him believing. Wayne "**believed the testimony that God has given of His Son**" to the very end. He loved to hear the Word. We can be sure Wayne has overcome the world, has retained the victory Jesus won for him. Death can't have him. He has life, eternal life.

But also because he believed this, Wayne told everyone. He had to speak of his Savior to everyone he would meet. Whether it was when he was selling seed, or when he went to live in the care center, Wayne would tell me how many people he spoke to about Jesus.

You see, Wayne really lived the essence of this passage. It is not only that "**he has life,**" because he "**believes in the Son of God.**" It does not say "*my faith*" is the victory that overcomes the world - but "**our faith.**" Wayne, who could not stand being alone but always had to be talking to people and being with them, who loved to come to church and see the people who shared his faith, who when I asked him how it was going in the care center said, "They all like me here," - he is with a multitude now and they all love him and are loved by him, centered in their unified love of Christ. Some of them may be there - or will be there in the future - in part because Wayne spoke to them of Jesus, or encouraged them in their faith. We in this room are part of that multitude too, as we listen to God's testimony in His Word, repent of our sins as Wayne did, and believe in Jesus the Son. Then we too have life and overcome the world. Amen!

### **Christian Obituary for Wayne Dalchow**

Wayne Alfred Dalchow was born on April 26, 1934, to Alfred and Alta (Swenson) Dalchow in Princeton, Minnesota. The Triune God who gave him life in the womb and brought him safely into this world also gave him the new birth and saving faith on June 14, 1934, when he was baptized in infancy in the name of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. He confessed this faith publicly when he was confirmed in the Lutheran confession of faith on May 14, 1947. Wayne partook in the joys of regularly being gathered by the Holy Spirit, as a communicant member of Bethany Lutheran Church (ELS) in Princeton starting in 2001. The Holy Spirit preserved him in faith until November 11, 2016, when the holy angels carried his soul to heaven. He will receive Christian burial today, November 16, to await the resurrection of his body when the Lord Jesus Christ returns on the last day with all His holy angels.

God's tender mercies to Wayne during his life included joining him in holy matrimony with Marilyn Lindberg on May 9, 1959, and granting them 23 years of marriage; giving him a sister, Marlene, and the privilege of being godfather to his niece Theresa (Dalchow) Totzke (husband Ruston). God also gave him has preserved his nephew Dean Hellman, aunts Yvonne (Swenson) Sundberg and Marilyn (Swenson) Anderson, and his cousins Leroy Dalchow, Kevin Wedell, Elaine Olene, and Lois Dalchow, and other family members, to grieve his departure. Blessed be his memory.