

The First Epistle of John

(Week 37 – 1John 3:19-24 part2)

I. BLESSED ASSURANCE (part 2)

A. 1John 3:19-20, “*By this we shall know that we are of the truth and reassure our heart before him; ²⁰for whenever our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and he knows everything.*”

1. Last class we viewed verse 20 as a consolation to those who strive to do God’s will:
 - a. Sometimes we experience momentary failure
 - b. As a result, our hearts (conscience) condemn us
 - i. Does this mean that God no longer loves us and wants nothing to do with us? No!
 - c. God is greater -- in a positive way -- than our hearts
 - d. He knows everything: He knows our motives, He knows whether or not we truly love Him; He also knows our frailties (Ps. 103:10, 14).
 - e. Consider Peter:
 - i. Jesus tells the apostles they will all fall away (Matthew 26:31)
 - ii. Peter says he will never fall away (Matthew 26:33)
 - iii. Jesus tells Peter he will deny Him three times (Matthew 26:34)
 - iv. Peter tells Jesus he will never deny Him (Matthew 26:35)
 - v. Peter denies Jesus three times, his heart condemns him and begins to weep bitterly! (Matthew 26:69ff)
 - vi. In all this, Jesus knew Peter would bounce back!
 1. Notice the following passage:
 - “*Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, ³²but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.*” (Luke 22:31-32 ESV)
 - Notice how Jesus knew Peter would return and therefore, tells him to strengthen his brothers when he returns (from his momentary failure).
 - God knows ALL things indeed!
 - f. Things to remember:
 - i. God’s love has made you His child (1John 3:1)
 - ii. The evidence of your son-ship is shown:
 1. By your love for God’s people (1John 3:14)
 2. And by the godly sorrow you experience whenever you fail momentarily (a condemned heart)
3. The remedy for a “condemned” heart is:
 - Confession (1John 1:9), produced by godly sorrow that leads to repentance (2Cor. 7:10)
 - a. He is faithful to forgive!
 - Having Jesus as your Advocate (1John 2:1-2)
 - a. His blood propitiates (appeases God’s wrath), expiates (removes guilt), and atones (reconciles)!

- Knowing that IN Christ, there is no condemnation (Romans 8:1)
- Knowing that you are a beloved child of God (1John 3:1) and He disciplines those He loves (Heb. 12:6) so that they may share in His holiness (Heb. 12:10)!

g. Let us look at verses 19-20 as a warning

i. John just finished giving God’s children the exhortation not to love with words but with action:

1. “*Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth*” (1John 3:18)

- Notice he is addressing the Christians (little children)
- He tells them that *love* is action, and *love* must be “*in truth.*”

a. **Question: We know what it means to “love in deed,” but what does it mean to “love in truth?”**

- i. Encouraging a child of God to do what is right (like John just did in verse 18)
- ii. Having a genuine concern for the physical/spiritual welfare of others
- iii. Having genuine love (Romans 12:9) that comes from the heart (1Peter 1:22), a love that is not cold and formal, but warm!

2. He goes on to say that our son-ship in God is shown by our love for one another:

➤ “*By this we shall know that we are of the truth and reassure our heart before him*” (1John 3:19 ESV)

a. “*By this...*” refers back to what he said in verses 14, 16-18:

- i. Our love for each other shows we passed from death to life (vs. 14)
- ii. Just as Christ laid His life down for us, we ought to do the same for each other (vs. 16)
- iii. Love expresses itself through action (vs. 17-18)

3. Putting love into practice brings **reassurance** and **confidence** (1John 3:19, 21)!

➤ 1John 3:21, “*Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God*”

4. But if we merely speak of love, our heart will condemn us.

5. And God is greater than our heart – He knows everything: our ways, our motives, our actions!