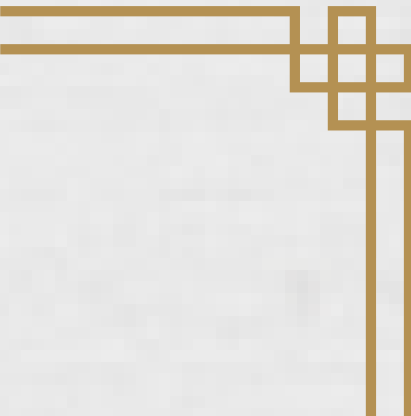
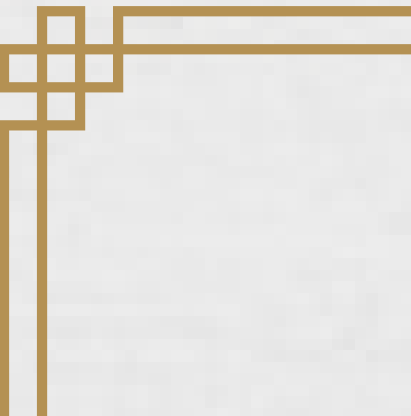
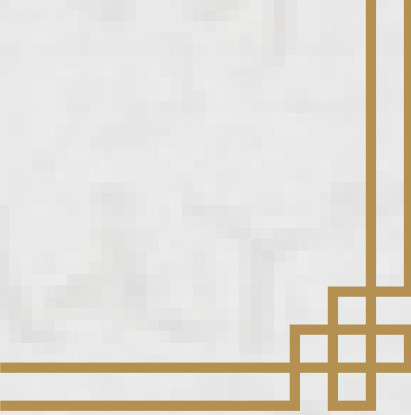
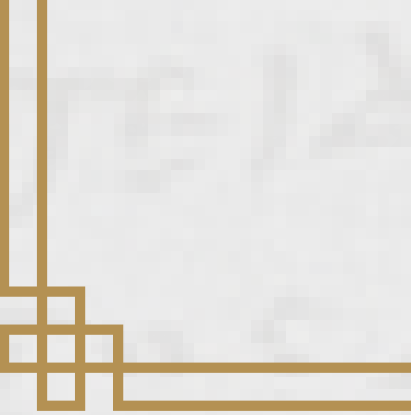




1 John

An Exegetical Series

1 John 3:19-24: Confidence Against Self-Deception and Self-Condemnation



Summary of 1 John 3:11-18

- Those born of God do not live like Cain, characterized by hatred and resentment toward God's people and, whether consciously or not, seek the destruction of God's people.
- Those born of God, instead, **model the sacrificial love of Christ** by laying down their lives for their brothers and sisters through the giving of their **time, energy, resources, patience, truth, and care.**
- Christian love is not merely felt or commanded—it is **sacrificially lived.**

Opening Questions

- Can trying to do what is right ever leave you feeling like you haven't done enough? Why do you think that happens?
- If I had God's vantage point and could see myself as I truly am—including every way I fall short of what God desires of me—would I become more confident before God or less confident?
- What does my answer reveal about how I believe God looks at me?

Confidence, Not Condemnation

John's Pastoral Heart (1 John 3:19-21)

- John anticipates a feeling of helplessness and desires to provide assurance to those who have remained in the church
- On the one hand there is a assurance that “we belong to the truth” and assurance within our conscience that results in confidence before God on the other
- *The question I want to ask before we work the text is this: What does the word “This” in v. 19 connect to? Does it connect to the previous passage or does it stand alone?*

Confidence, Not Condemnation

John's Pastoral Heart (1 John 3:19-21)

- The “*this*” in v. 19 provides immediate connection to the previous passage—if this were not the case, the purpose of makes less sense
- The demand of both right beliefs and right, outward actions has become very heavy for our love is to reflect that of Christ and our sacrificial love includes both our recourses and our time, effort, conveniences, patience, and so on—and to not do such love comes with heavy condemnation!

Confidence, Not Condemnation

John's Pastoral Heart (1 John 3:19-21)

- John desires that we have confidence, though! If John desires us to have confidence, then God, through the inspired author, also wants us to have confidence in light of our best efforts!
- Given this, the answer is found in v. 20, specifically, “God is greater than our hearts and he knows all things.”
- What is your immediate understanding of what this verses is trying to communicate?

Confidence, Not Condemnation

The major translations do not always capture the intention of 1 John 3:20. The NLT, however, does capture it well:

“It is by our actions that we know we are living in the truth, so we will be confident when we stand before the Lord, even if our hearts condemn us. For God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything.”

➔ In other words, living rightly in relationship with others is the fruit of being right with God, and whenever that is true, it makes visible the inner reality of who one is—God knows this!

Confidence, Not Condemnation

What is our response to be in light of God knowing all things, in that, he knows we are doing our best within our new nature and reality (1 John 3:21)?

- Simply, we trust God and rest in this fact: We are doing our best and leave the rest to God (Legitimate/Illegitimate guilt)
- That is, we must do our best to love others, but we must also trust God not only in the provision to love but the peace of mind in God's grace that perfectly and eternally covers us when we do fail to love as he calls us to (1 John 1:9, 2:1)

God's Desires, Not Our Own

Verse 21 links to Verse 22: Confidence = Alignment of Will

- When our trust in God silences our self-doubt or self-condemnation, we move toward spiritual maturity both in our knowledge of God by his grace and an understanding and alignment of his will
- Karen Jobes, “It is another way of saying that people who keep God’s command and do what pleases him *know* God’s will. As a result, they will ask only what is consistent with what they know of God, for they are his children.”

God's Desires, Not Our Own

Verse 21 links to Verse 22: Confidence = Alignment of Will

- Think of it this way:

- ▶ When I have confidence before God and trust him, and continue to follow his commands, I will find myself praying in this way and asking for such things like:
 - God, help me to love that person more.
 - God, give me opportunities to give.
 - God, I trust you even though I failed and sinned

God's Desires, Not Our Own

Karen Jobes, Exegetical Commentary on the NT, 1, 2, 3, John:

“Jesus taught that following him requires us to trust and depend on the Father and to ask as an acknowledgment of that dependence. On his last night with his disciples he told them, *“And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it”* (John 14:13–14). God is pleased to grant such requests to his children because it reveals his glory through Jesus and shows that God's power is at work in the world when his children invoke it by their prayers.”

Continue to Believe

The Command Given to Us (1 John 3:23)

- Continued belief is the call for those who have professed faith in Christ and have experienced the cleansing of sin in their lives!
- Verse 23 is straightforward: Remain in what you have learned about Christ and strive to live in obedience, specifically in love toward each other in the church, to God's commands exemplified in Christ (1 John 2:6)
- *John 20:31 points us in a similar direction!*

The Work of the Holy Spirit

The Role of the Spirit in the Life of the Christian (1 John 3:24)

- The “a” section of v. 24 is simple: If we remain in Christ, he continues to remain in us in so far as we are God’s and in the hand of Christ (John 10:28-30)
- The “b” section is more interesting—Our English translation seem to emphasize, more so, that John has the Holy Spirit in mind, and this is right!
- BUT! John is known for his double meanings—this also includes a sense of the spirit of the one born of God

The Work of the Holy Spirit

The Role of the Spirit in the Life of the Christian (1 John 3:24)

- Think of the double meaning this way:
 - ▶ The Holy Spirit is the one who:
 - Baptizes us washes us clean (John 3; 1 John 5)
 - He causes us to be reborn (John 3)
 - He is the truth that is given to us and reminds us regarding the truth of Christ (John 14, 16; 1 John 2:27)

The Work of the Holy Spirit

The Role of the Spirit in the Life of the Christian (1 John 3:24)

- Think of the double meaning this way:
 - ▶ The Holy Spirit is the origin of our transformation by the cleansing of sin that Christ secured for those born of God!
 - ▶ The Spirit and the Gospel message are the “seed” by which our renewal has become a reality in our spiritual experience (and physical — worldview shift!)

The Work of the Holy Spirit

The Role of the Spirit in the Life of the Christian (1 John 3:24)

- Think of the double meaning this way:
 - ▶ Thus, the Holy Spirit animates, as it were, the spirit of those born of God toward perseverance, faith, right actions, and especially love of God and love of others!
 - ▶ In one sense the Spirit given to us is the Spirit himself and the newness of our own Spirit from death to life by his cleansing power!

The Work of the Holy Spirit

The Role of the Spirit in the Life of the Christian (1 John 3:24)

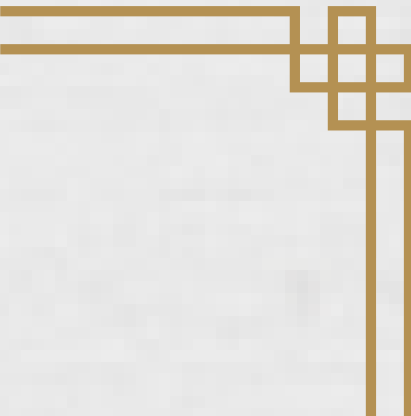
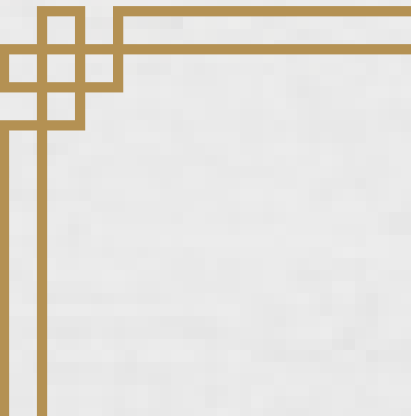
- The Spirit also affirms to us the work HE is doing within us as one's born of God—Paul said it this way in **Romans 8:16-17**

“The Spirit himself testifies together with our spirit that we are God's children, and if children, also heirs—heirs of God and coheirs with Christ—if indeed we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.”

➡ In other words, my confidence, despite my failures as a child of God is not in my continued work but in the Triune Lord!

Closing Questions

- When your heart condemns you, what are you ultimately trusting to determine your confidence before God? your own faithfulness and feelings, or God's faithfulness?
- And if the Spirit is transforming our desires to become more like God's desires, what evidence should we expect to see in our lives?



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