

**FOR THE BROTHERS:
A STUDY IN THE EPISTLES OF JAMES, JOHN, JUDE
AMEN BIBLE STUDY 2016-2017**

John: Confidence Before God

I John 3:19-24

February 23, 2017

I. Be wary of a condemning heart. (vv.19-20a)

A. The truth is infallible.

¹⁹ *By this we shall know that we are of the truth...*

B. Our hearts are not.

...and reassure our heart before him; ²⁰ for whenever our heart condemns us, ...

II. Be confident in a greater God. (vv.20b-22)

A. The Lord is the judge.

...God is greater than our heart, and he knows everything.

cf. Romans 8:31-34

B. The Lord is the one who justifies.

²¹ *Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God;*

cf. Romans 3:21-26

C. The Lord answers our prayers.

²² *and whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him.*

cf. Hebrews 4:14-16

III. Be obedient to the one commandment. (v. 23)

²³ *And this is his commandment, ...*

cf. Matthew 22:34-40

A. Trust in Jesus as Savior and Lord.

...that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ ...

cf. Romans 10:9

B. Love one another.

...and love one another, just as he has commanded us.

cf. John 15:12-13

IV. Be assured by the presence of the indwelling Spirit. (v.24)

A. The evidence of the Spirit's presence.

²⁴ *Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God, and God in him. ...*

cf. John 15:1-11

B. The intimacy of the Spirit's presence.

... And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us.

cf. John 15:26; 16:12-14

Discussion Questions

1. In the beginning of these verses John speaks about our hearts condemning us and also speaks of our hearts *not* condemning us. What are some of the reasons that our hearts seem to be all over the spectrum on spiritual issues?
2. On what should our “confidence before God” be based? How do we keep that confidence from turning into presumption or pride?
3. In his commentary on I John, Dr. John Stott wrote: *Obedience is the indispensable condition of answered prayer, not the meritorious cause of answered prayer.* What is the contrast he is trying to define? How would this play out in the life of a believer?
4. Why does John connect obedience to God’s commands to an assurance of faith? How is this not legalistic and discouraging?

Going Deeper

1. When your heart condemns you, what are the accusations it brings?
2. What things do you do and what truth do you preach to yourself to “set your heart [right] in his presence” (v. 19)?