

1 John 3:18-24 (Teaching)

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- [0 : 0 0] Good morning. Good morning, man. We're back on 1 John this morning, hopefully. We'll wrap up the third chapter. 1 John this morning.
- I went a little further last week, and I probably should have. So we'll actually begin and just kind of recap the first that we ended on last week, which was 1 John, the third chapter, verse 18.
- I've got, which I've said before, I've got several many bodies at the house. And some of them have paragraph markers, some of them don't, some of them are actually in paragraph form, instead of verse form.
- And it's intriguing to look at those because some of them have the paragraph marker at verse 18, and some of them have the paragraph marker at verse 19.
- And the best I can tell, the paragraph actually begins, that we're in right now, at verse 18. And I said, I read that last week, and we talked about it just a little bit, and I was thinking, and I had more time last week than I did, because I wasn't thinking 11 o'clock is when service starts, I was thinking I had till 11 o'clock.
- [1 : 2 1] That's happened before, y'all are well aware of. But anyway, we'll start in 1 John chapter 3 and verse 18. I say we read this last week, so we won't spend a whole lot of time on it.
- This says, my little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but indeed and in truth. And we talked last week about how John is basically saying here, it's one thing to tell someone that you love them, but it's a whole other thing to show someone that you love them.
- That's what John says, it's not enough just to tell someone I love you. The examples I believe I gave last week was, I tell my wife I love her, but I go home and I kick her, that's not showing her that I love her.
- There's a broad spectrum there of examples that we could use, but it's in showing that you love them. We can tell people we love them all day long, but if we're not showing it, first of all, do we really love them?
- Second of all, are they aware that we love them, if we indeed do? So John says, don't just say the words, but you need to do the deeds that prove this love.
- [2 : 3 8] This not only applies to people, this is something I believe I failed to get into last week, not only applies to people, this applies to our love toward God as well.
- Now, John here is specifying people, but if we expand that just a little bit, and we go to God in prayer and we tell God how much we think of Him, we tell God how wonderful He is, how glorious He is, and how much we love Him, but we go throughout the rest of the course of our day and don't show our love toward God, do we really love Him?
- Do we really love Him like we claim that we do, like the Scriptures command us to for that matter? So it's not only applies to people, but it also applies to our love toward God.
- We can say our prayers at night and get up and live like demons the next day. That's not showing God that we love Him, and it's certainly not showing the world around us that we have a love for God if we do that.

So loving people indeed and in truth is one thing, but loving God indeed and in truth can be compiled in that as well.

[3 : 56] So my little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but indeed in truth, verse 19, and hereby we know that we are of the truth and shall assure our hearts before Him.

For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then we have confidence toward God.

And there's all kinds of different ways, if you read commentaries or if you have a study Bible or whatever the case is, there's all kinds of different directions that people go with these verses here.

As far as this condemnation that John is bringing up here, he says, hereby we know that we are of the truth and shall assure our hearts before Him. What does he mean by of the truth, first of all?

Well, every time I read the word truth in Scripture, every time, whether I'm in the Old Testament or New Testament, regardless, I always revert back to John 14 where Jesus says, I'm the way, the truth, and the lie.

[5 : 02] Jesus Christ is the truth and we know that we are of the truth if we are indeed in Jesus Christ. If we are abiding in Christ, and Christ is indeed abiding in us.

That's the way I handle the word truth every time that I run across it in Scripture. Hereby we know that we are of the truth and shall assure our hearts before Him.

This word, assure, or assurance, to be assured, is a wonderful thing in the Scripture. I know I covered just two or three Sundays ago, I guess.

We talked about assurance and we talked about how me personally, I don't always feel saved. I don't always feel like I'm in relationship with God, but I have assurance that I am.

I know that I am because I'm not basing it on how my day is gone. And if you all base it on how your day is gone, sometimes, in fact, a lot of times more often than not, if you're basing it on how bad your day has been, on things that happen.

[6 : 12] If you're basing that on your relationship with God, then we have no relationship with God if that's what we're basing it on. But that's not what I base it on. I base it on the fact that God says, or that the Word of God says, that if I confess Jesus Christ with my mouth and I believe in my heart that God has raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. I have assurance of my faith and I have assurance of relationship with God because I know, and I can go back to the time, I can go back to the place in my mind where God saved my soul.

That's my assurance that I'm in relationship with God. Not how my day is going. Not at all how my day is going. I mean, we just read from Job this morning. Job didn't base the experiences that he was facing in his life at that time on what kind of relationship he had with God, whether he had a good relationship or a bad relationship or any relationship at all.

This man, he had his entire family taken away from him, lost all of his livestock, lost his living, had sores from the top of his head to the bottom of his feet, and all these things.

And yet, the man said, though he slay me, yet will I trust him. He's the very one that said, the Lord gave him the Lord, take away blessed be the name of the Lord. That's a relationship with God. That's knowing the Lord.

He's the very one that said, I know my Redeemer, live. He knows his Redeemer lives. These are the words of Job, a man that suffered a whole lot more than you or I, either one have in our lives.

[7 : 56] So we cannot base our relationship with God on things that are happening in our lives, things that are going on. I mean, you look at Brother Paul in the New Testament, what all did he suffer?

In fact, Jesus Christ told him when Jesus Christ first saved his soul and he was first calling him into the ministry, he said, I'm going to show you the things that you should suffer for my name's sake, for my sake.

He showed Paul these things. God didn't call us into a life of luxury. God knew and God warned us that we would be hated of all men for his names sake.

Jesus said that we would be hated of all men for his names sake. In fact, we're warning in the Word of God that, you know, if the world loves us, we need to watch out.

We need to be aware of that. The world doesn't love Christians. The world doesn't love those that are in a relationship with God. But why was that? Because the world doesn't know Jesus Christ.

[9 : 00] The world doesn't have any desire to know Jesus Christ. And because they don't know Jesus Christ, they hate those that follow Jesus Christ. So don't base your relationship with God.

Don't base your salvation. Don't base any of these things on what happens throughout the course of your day. You base it on what Scripture says. And Scripture says we believe and we confess and we repent that we will be saved.

Praise God for that. Hereby we know that we are of a truth that shall assure our hearts before Him. For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart and knoweth all things beloved. If our heart condemn us not, then we have confidence toward God.

Back to verse 20 again. For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart. If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart. Now we just left the verse in verse 19 that's talking about the assurance of our faith, the assurance of our salvation, the assurance that we have a relationship with God.

Now listen, these days that come, that do come in my life and in your life, where we're closer to God than we may have been the previous day. And there's days that kind of where we're further away from God than we were the previous day.

[10 : 19] Or that maybe that we will be in the future, but that does not negate the assurance that we have from the Word of God that we are indeed His child.

We've got to remember that, but John says, for if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart. If our heart, if our conscience, if it condemns us, God is greater than our heart.

You know, we might hit our knees and this has happened to me in the past more than once. We might hit our knees and get to pray and get to think of something that we might have said throughout the course of the day, or some impure thought that we may have had.

And that's your heart, that your conscience condemning you. That's my conscience condemning me, that God is greater than that. And God forgives that sin, yes. We go to God in repentance. We go to God for mercy.

We cast ourselves on the mercy of Almighty God. It does us no good to cast ourselves on the mercy of men. Now if we sin against man, yes, we should seek forgiveness of that man or of that woman, yes, but we should seek forgiveness of God for that.

[11 : 24] As well. But if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart. If your conscience condemns you, then your conscience is not stronger than what God is.

Your conscience isn't like that. Now, we're not finished with that. We'll come back to it here in just a second. God is greater than our heart and knoweth all things.

Now, there are some people that will read this verse, and this is the very verse that a lot of people get. The phrase, well, God knows my heart. And be careful with that. Because a lot of times that's the problem.

God does know your heart. The heart is deceptive above all things and desperately wicked. Who shall know it? That's the words of Jeremiah, the prophet. It's deceptive above all things. Yes, God knows our heart.

He knows the good of our heart. He knows the bad of our heart. Now, when I got saved, according to what I read in the scripture, God took away that stony heart and he put in a heart of flesh.

[12 : 27] He put in a heart that was soft, a heart that he could mold, a heart that he could work with. And God done that with you, with your saving. God changes our lives. He changes our heart. He changes our desires.

He changes our consciences. He changes everything about us. But our conscience will still haunt us from time to time. Maybe even on a daily basis, our conscience might get all of us. But you remember, dear Christian, that God is greater than your heart.

God is greater than your conscience. And no condemnation that we can put ourself under is greater than the forgiveness that God can give us. But once again, I'm not done with that and neither is John. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then we have confidence toward God.

We've got to be careful with this verse too. Because this is, once again, these two verses, a lot of people will read this and say, well, God knows my heart and I feel no guilt over what you're calling sin. Therefore, I'm in good relationship with God.

We've got to be careful with that. Every time I hear somebody speak words such as that or to that tune, my mind always goes back to Romans 1, where God hands people over to a reprobate mind. He gives people over to their own vile affections according to what Paul writes in Romans 1.

[13 : 54] They don't have any guilt because they've seared their conscience. They've done it so many times that there can't be any guilt for it. The only way they can feel guilty is if the Holy Spirit of God truly gets a hold of that heart and squeezes that heart and shows them that, no, what you're doing is sin, but people will reject and they will reject and reject and reject the Word of God and the Spirit of God.

That's the blessing of me of the Holy Ghost, but that's a whole other lesson in all that's settled. They will reject the Spirit of the living God and God will finally just give them over and say, this is the life you want, this is the life I will let you have.

That's what it is to be handed over to a reprobate mind. That's what it is to be given over to your own vile affections. That's why we say, if this is living your best life now, then that means you're on your way to hell.

My best life is yet to come. My best life is promised in Scripture, but I'm certainly not living it right now. Now, let's read these verses again.

For if our heart condemns God is greater than our heart and knows all things beloved, if our heart condemns not, then we have confidence toward God. And I believe these words and I believe what John says and I believe everything that I just taught you all about this.

[15 : 21] But we have to remember that in these two verses, God is the ultimate judge. Whether you have a guilty conscience or not, God is the ultimate judge of your life.

God is the ultimate judge of your keeping of the commandments which none of us can do perfectly. God is the ultimate judge of how pure you are. God is the ultimate judge of whether or not you've ever even been saved.

He is the judge of that in both of these verses. People will take these verses and once again, the last verse that we read, they will say, well, I have no guilt.

Therefore, it must not be sin because the Bible says so. That's not what John is getting at. What I believe John is getting at is regardless of how you feel about any situation, about any sin, about anything else.

God is the ultimate judge of all. That's what I believe John is getting at in both of these verses here. And we need to keep that in consideration. Once again, our conscience might condemn us.

[16 : 26] How many of you all have ever had a demon whisper in your ear where you ain't even saved? I have. My goodness, that's almost a daily event for me. You ain't even saved.

What are you doing holding that Bible? What are you doing teaching? What are you doing preaching? Why are you telling people about Jesus? You don't know God, but I can go back. I'm approaching 14 years now, it'll be 14 years, February 10th, that I've been saved.

I'm approaching that mark and I can go back to that greasy two room floor in Bristol, Virginia, where I got saved. I can go back there and I know that I went down there, I lost man, but when God raised me up, He raised me up assuredly.

He raised me up utterly and He raised me up utterly. And I take those demons back to that spot every time they do that, every time they try to get in my conscience, every time they try to make me feel guiltier than what I actually am.

Yes, I'm guilty of sin and you are too. Everyone of us are. Yes, I'm guilty of that, but the blood of Jesus Christ is all power for us. Wash away all sin and hallowed be it.

[17 : 41] Whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight. Now, this is another verse that's blown way out of proportion as well as several other verses in the scripture that are locket.

Whatsoever we ask, and whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him. A lot of people like to take that out of this particular verse and just leave it there. Say, well, the Bible says whatsoever I ask of the Lord, I'll receive it.

And once again, it says very, very locked things in other parts of the scripture. But we got to continue. Whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him because we keep His commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight.

This almost sounds like a reward program for God, and that's not what it's getting at at all. But it sounds like, well, I went through a day without lying, God should reward me. I'm going to ask God to give me a winning lottery ticket.

I'm going to ask God for a Rolls Royce and my driveway in the morning. And people literally, they look at these verses and they literally think that way.

[18 : 55] That's not what it's getting at. So where we ask, we receive of Him because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight. Why do we keep the commandments of God?

Christians, why do we keep the commandments of God? Because we love God. Why do we keep Him because we love Him? And do those things which are pleasing in His sight.

How many of us live our lives day to day, hour to hour, and minute to minute, completely, completely to please God? Not a one of us. I don't, and you don't.

We try our best. We might try. But there's something that will come up throughout the course of the day, throughout the course of the week. There's something that will come up that will please your flesh.

And I'm not talking necessarily about sinful things, but there's something that will come up that you'll put God on the back burner for just a moment. Once again, I'm not talking about sensual things or just gross sin or wherever the case is.

[19 : 58] But something will come up throughout the course of our life. Really, our daily lives, weekly lives, something will come up to where we'll put God in the back seat for just a moment.

And that's when we're not living our lives to please God. And we're all guilty of it. I ain't pointing a finger at you all and not accusing myself. We're all guilty of doing that.

But it says that we are, whatsoever we ask, we receive Him because we keep His commandments. We do that because we love them. And do those things which are pleasing in His sight.

This goes back to verse 18. We do those things which are pleasing in His sight. This is loving indeed and in truth and not just in word and in time.

This is the action that takes place. Once again, verse 18, the very first verse that we read this morning, it reverts back to that. So whatsoever we ask, we receive Him because we keep His commandments.

[21 : 02] We love God and we're keeping His commandments and we're doing those things that are pleasing in His sight. We are in good, awesome relationship with Almighty God. And if we are in a good, awesome relationship with Almighty God, we're going to be seeking the heart of God.

We're going to be seeking what God wants for our life. And if it's what God wants for our life, why would He not give it to us if we asked it of Him? This is what John's getting at, not anything that we want.

It's what God wants. It's what God wants. You read over in the Old Testament in the books of Samuel when David was wanting the temple built.

God says, no, it's not going to be you. It'll be one of your descendants, Solomon, will build it. David still wanted that part of it anyway. When David realized that this was going to happen, that the temple would be built a place where God could dwell and live amongst His people, instead of being carried around in a tent from place to place.

Anyway, David just felt guilty because he lived in a palace. There's God basically in curtains with a couple of sticks. David felt guilty about that.

[22 : 25] But when he found out that the temple was going to be built, that God was going to allow this, what did he say to God? He said he praised God and he thanked Him for the prayer that God placed in his heart.

He thanked Him for the prayer that God put in his heart. A lot of times we pray things that God has nothing to do with. But I promise you, if it's a prayer that you pray that God has placed in your heart, you will receive whatever it is.

God put it there. You will receive it. But we ask so many times for things that we want instead of the things that God wants. Then people get mad.

They say, well, the Bible says, asking you shall receive, knocking you shall be ill, seeking you shall find. My goodness, read those things in context and they don't mean what you might think that they mean.

Read them in the context that they're in. It doesn't mean God will give us whatever we want. God will give us whatever He wants for us. And if we are in tune with Him, I said if we're doing His commandments and we're doing what delights God, we will be seeking the things of God and what He wants for our lives.

[23 : 37] And if we're seeking those things, He will give them to us. And this is the commandment that we should believe on the name of His Son, Jesus Christ, and love one another as He gave us commandment.

I want you to pay attention to this. This is the commandment, that singular commandment. These are the commandments. This is the commandment.

Then we read that we should believe on the name of His Son, Jesus Christ, there's one and love one another. That's two. Well, there's two commandments there, but John here is collaborating them into one commandment.

Just the same way that Jesus Christ did. I understand that when Jesus Christ was asked, what is the greatest commandment? And He said to the Lord, all that heart, all that mind, all that strength.

I understand that He said that He said, the second is liken to it. It's just like it in other words. Second is liken to it to love thy neighbor as thyself. I understand that there's a distinction there between loving people and loving God.

[24 : 43] But if we love God, we will love people. Therefore, we can collaborate it all into one commandment. And John here says, this is His commandment, that singular, that we should believe on the name of His Son, Jesus Christ, and love one another.

We cannot separate those two. If we believe on the name and on the Lord Jesus Christ, we have to love one another. We have to love each other. We have to love people in general.

But remember, John here is speaking specifically about the brethren that have a locked faith, the brethren of the church. That's who he's specifically talking about.

But that's the commandment that we believe on the Son, Jesus Christ, and love one another as He gave us commandment. And He did give us commandment to do that. He gave us commandment in John chapter 6.

He gave us commandment in John, I mean my goodness, I didn't want to say here on the list all the places that He gave us commandment to do so. And it's right here in 1 John as well, on more than one occasion.

[25 : 46] We're to love God and love our neighbors. And it's spoken or written in different ways, different words, but it all comes up to the same thing, believe on the name of Jesus Christ and love one another.

That's the commandment of God as He gave us commandment. And He that keepeth His commandments dwelleth in Him, and He in Him. And hereby we know that He abideth in us by the Spirit which He hath given us.

He that keepeth His commandments dwelleth in Him. Praise God for that. That goes back to this whole abiding thing that we brought up off and on going through the book of 1 John.

If we keep His commandments, He that keepeth His commandments dwelleth in Him. We dwell in Jesus Christ if we keep His commandments. Now, does that mean that I'm going out throughout my day, I'm praising God and I'm praying and got my hallelujahs rolling and all like that?

And something comes up, I have a bad thought. You know, somebody steps on my toes or runs a red light and almost hits my car and I have a sudden bad thought about them.

[27 : 00] Does that mean I'm not abiding with God during that one little moment of my day? No, it doesn't mean that. I praise God, that's not what that means. That goes back to assurance. Well, we were talking about a few minutes ago.

There's people that believe that. There's people that believe that, you know, if I shout out the word that somebody, you rascal, or anything else, we won't get anything else.

But there's people that believe if I get angry at one point in my life and I don't repent of that, if I'm killed in the next moment, I go to hell. There are people that believe this and that is not what Scripture teaches. That is not what Scripture says.

That's not what Jesus taught. It's not what Paul taught. And certainly nothing like what John is teaching here in 1 John. It all goes back to assurance.

Yes, we're going to have bad thoughts. Yes, we're going to get angry. What's the Bible say about that? Ephesians chapter 4b, angry and sit not. Either get a place in the devil and let the sun go down upon you or wrath.

[28 : 05] Don't stay angry about it. Don't go to bed. Don't go to bed. Let your head down at night. Still angry about something that happened at noon that day. My goodness, that's just walking around with a chip on your shoulder.

I didn't want to live like that when I was lost. I sure don't want to live like that since I've been saved. Nobody wants to go to bed angry. Me and me getting into all that.

He that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him. I dwell in Jesus Christ. But praise God it continues. And he in him, I'm dwelling in Christ. I'm abiding in Christ.

And he is abiding in me and dwelling in me. How is this going on? John goes on to tell us and hear about we know that he abideth in us by the Spirit which he hath given us.

This is the Spirit. This is the Comforter that Jesus Christ promised us over in the Gospel of John. He said I must go away but I will pray to the Father and he will send the Comforter.

[29 : 06] He will send the Comforter. He will send the Spirit. Romans chapter 8 Paul tells us that the Spirit abides in anyone who is saved.

And it goes on to say though that he hath not the Spirit of Christ as none of his. If we don't have the Spirit of Christ, if we don't have the Holy Spirit, if we don't have the Holy Ghost, we are not saved.

It's that simple. But if we have the Spirit, we are saved. He will never convince me going back to my example I had given a little while ago. Somebody rear ends me or sideswaps me or almost causes me to rip apart the cases.

And I suddenly have a bad thought about that person or about that situation. And I'm angry about it that suddenly the Holy Spirit jumps out of me. But two or three seconds later I say Lord I'm sorry and the Holy Spirit jumps back in me.

It's not how this works folks. It's not how this works. He says hereby we know that he hath byeth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.

[30 : 13] The Holy Spirit of God is a gift from God. By the Spirit that he hath given us. He gave it to us to do what though? He didn't just give it to us, to mark us as saved individuals.

Yes it does do that. But that's not the only reason that he done it. The Holy Spirit according to the words of Jesus Christ and the Gospel of John, it testifies of Jesus Christ.

He says when he comes, when the Comforter comes, he will testify of me. So if the Spirit of God is dwelling in us, what's it doing? It's testifying of Christ.

And if it's testifying of Christ to us, what should we be doing? We should be testifying of Christ to others. We should be witnessing Christ to others. Tell another people about Jesus Christ.

Tell them how he saved your soul. Tell them how unworthy you were. You don't have to get into every dirty sin that you ever committed in your life. But none of us were worthy of it. None of us were worthy of that gift of God.

[31 : 19] But he has given us his Spirit. He's given it to us, to guide us, to testify of Christ to us that we can testify to the rest of the world of Christ. He has given us this.

And this Spirit, if you went down on your knees one time and got saved and nothing changed in your life, you were still going to the same places, you were still doing the same things, you were still hanging around with the same people, speaking the same language, using all the four letter words and everything else that you were doing previously.

You know why we're doing that? Because you never received the Spirit. And if you never received the Spirit, you are not saved. But that Spirit is of God. And everything of God is eternal. Everything of God is eternal.

Jesus said, he that believes on me hath everlasting life. He that believes on me hath everlasting life.

Of course, I know what everlasting means. And I know what eternal means. And I know what that word hath means. We can get back into tenses once again. It's present perfect. It's continual. It's perpetual. It's never ending.

[32 : 40] Jesus said, he that believes on me hath everlasting life. So when this Spirit, he abideth in us. Once again, let's go to tenses again. In this last verse, hear about how we know that he abideth in us.

Abideth is the present perfect tense. It's continual. It cannot stop. It is eternal. It is everlasting. It's immortal. Nothing can be done about it. God has sent it in motion and no man can stop that. No demon that knows that hell is going to be home one day can stop that. No nymph that knows that hell is going to be home one day can stop that. It is a continual thing.

He abideth in us. But we know that he abideth in us forever. Forever. By the Spirit which he hath given us.

I receive the Holy Spirit of God and I know that I receive the Holy Spirit of God. I am not the person that I used to be. And that's not of my own will. It's not of my own want. It was because of the want of God. It was the want of God to make me his child, to grasp me in.

It was he that done that. Not me. Yes, there was belief and yes, there was repentance. But ultimately it was God that sought me out. It was God that convicted me of my sins. It was God that saved my soul. It's God that will keep me and it's God that will keep me home one of these days.

[34 : 08] I have nothing to do with it. This is a gift that God has given us. The Spirit of God. And we'll wrap that up right there. We've got about 10 minutes but I'm going to get into chapter 4.

Anybody got any questions or comments on any of that? Anything at all? Alright, God bless you all. I appreciate you.