

Life in the Word

Cornerstone Sermon-based Life Group Lesson



Sermon Series: **1 John Series**

Sermon Title: **Living With Confidence**

Scripture Passage: **1 John 3:19-24**

Getting Started *Sharing from personal experience*

1. Some Christians go on an emotional roller coaster ride when life throws them a curve. Others use emotional ups and downs as an adventure in watching God work. Consider the events of this past year, from the election to Covid-19. What has strengthened your faith and what has shaken your faith?

Are you stronger in your faith in Christ than you were a year ago—or do you find yourself needing to regain some ground?

Observation *Discovering the context*

2. Consider what Jesus said in John 3:17 and Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 11:32?

With this in mind, it may seem difficult to understand what John was referring to in 1 John 3:20-21 when he used the phrases, “Whenever our hearts condemn us,” and “...if our heart does not condemn us...” Paul is talking about the conscience and how it works as an “early warning system” informing a believer when he or she is tempted to think or act in disobedience to God’s commandments.

Go back and read 1 John 2:3-6 again. If people call themselves Christians but live in disobedience to God’s commandments, John says they are _____ and there is no _____ of God in them. For a person’s conscience (heart) to convict how they are thinking or acting in disobedience to God, their mind must have been regenerated to understand and believe the things of God (Romans 2:14-15). Then, and only then, does the conscience react to “condemn the heart” (1 Peter 1:23).

Q: In Romans 9:1 and Acts 23:1, Paul shows that he is in line with John on this subject of the conscience. With these scriptures in mind, how would you help a new believer to understand what John's meaning is in 1 John 3:20-21 relative to the heart (the conscience) and its role as an "early warning system" for the believer?

For God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything.

3. In verse 20, John tells us good news about God's grace and mercy when our hearts convict us that we are in sin. Our conscience may condemn that we are walking in disobedience to God, but far from walking away from us and leaving us to deal with our weakness alone, God loves us and is "greater" than the condemnation we feel in our hearts that we have sinned. What is the common theme running through the following scriptures and how do they give you joy about the love of God for you?

Ephesians 2:1-9

Hebrews 10:19-22

2 Timothy 1:12

Interpretation Discovering the meaning

4. Romans 8:33-37 is considered one of the most comforting passages of scripture in the New Testament. Paul gives born-again believers a tangible reason to have confidence in their salvation status, that it will not be revoked or taken away because nothing can separate you from the love of God. Obviously, Paul wanted believers to walk in the assurance that their faith in Christ was secure, even though they were "works in progress." The Apostle John wanted the same thing for believers. He wanted Christians to know that when their hearts condemned them of sin, all is not lost. The conscience that knows God and His commandments is a valuable "early warning system," and God is greater than their occasional "falling short of the mark."

In this sense, this week's study in John 3 is very, very uplifting and encouraging. But the Bible also warns us that not every person who calls themselves a Christian can walk in the assurance of eternal security. Not every person's conscience is reacting to their knowledge and believes in God's holy Word and His Son, Jesus Christ.

Q: In your own words, what is the warning in each of the scriptures below?

Ephesians 4:17-19

1 Timothy 4:1-3

Jeremiah 17:9-10

Core Truths Discovering Biblical truth

In your own words, share at least one core truth God has shown you in this week's study and why it is timely or significant for you.

Practice Makes Progress Putting knowledge into practice

What action is the Lord prompting you to take this week as a result of being in His Word?

Worth Memorizing

Scripture: *Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God, and God in him. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us.* 1 John 3:24

Prayer Time

How can your Life Group pray for you this week?

Praise Time

How has God blessed you and answered prayer this week?