# 1 John Lesson 18

1 John 3:19-24

“If our Heart Condemn Us”

Introduction: Remember the three-fold test of assurance of salvation that John has written about back in chapter 2: The first is evidenced by obedience in righteousness. Last week we talked about the second test, which is a love for truth. God gets to decide what truth is. (We know that we sin, but there will be evidence of right acts toward God in our lives). God who is love moves into us by the Holy Spirit which is shed abroad in our heart. If He is in us, then His love will come out of us. John is presenting us with a challenge that can be encouraging to us about the matter of assurance.

**I. When Our Heart Condemns Us**

 A. Even while we are doing the best we can.

 1. To obey and live by Biblical principles

 a. our heart reveals that we are less than we could be

 b. our tells us that we are weak

 c. our heart says, “You have failed!”

 2. To exercise brotherly love.

 a. Our heart ask, “What about that brother?”

 b. Our heart brings to light that we love one Christian brother more than another.

 c. Do we work harder to love one brother more than another?

 B. Like being introduced to someone you do not know.

 1. When we hear flattering words

 a. If we are honest, we begin to wonder who that person is

 b. Our heart knows the true self, and knows that we are not all that others may say we are.

 2. Although some of the things may be true.

 a. Our heart knows what we are really like

 b. The good things do not sound like what our heart know to be true.

 C. This condemnation from our heart is a good thing.

 1. Else we would think more highly of ourselves than we ought.

 2. The truth about our own sinfulness comes out from our heart

 a. We are not all that could be

 b. We are not all that we can seem to be

 c. We are not all that ought to be

 3. Just as when Isaiah saw the vision of the Lord on the throne.

 a. He saw the throne and sees God high and lifted up.

 b. He saw the holiness, majesty, power & perfection of God.

 c. When exposed to this experience of seeing God, Isaiah said, “Woe is me, I am undone!”

 d. He was closer to God than he had ever been.

 4. The closer we get to God, the more evident our sinfulness becomes.

 a. The more light that is shed, the more that is revealed.

 b. The heart condemns self as it acknowledges His holiness.

**II. When Our Heart Condemns Us, God is Greater**

 A. God is greater than our heart and He knows everything.

 1. Based upon what we know in our limited understanding.

 a. He knows those inner motives than we deceive ourselves about.

 b. Those secret thoughts that we justify in our minds

 2. While our heart is not the best gauge for absolute matters

 a. Emotions within each of change on a day to day and sometimes on a moment by moment basis

b. We can even see the same individual react differently in identical situations based on the things that have influenced their emotions on a given day.

 3. If you rely on your heart to direct how secure you feel get ready for a rollercoaster ride

 B. He addresses us as His “Beloved”

 1. We are the object of His love.

 a. God knows our heart better than we know our heart.

 b. God knows us and where we are,

 2. Our standing before Him as His beloved does not depend on our performance.

 a. We are weak and frail.

 b. Being His beloved depends upon His unfailing Word.

 3. We can say that we know that we are His child because He promises us in His Word that we are secure in Him.

 4. Our salvation does not come to us by our performance, and neither does the maintenance of our standing.

 5. It depends upon His power.

 C. We have a responsibility to keep His commandments.

 1. Our access to Him in prayer does not depend upon our performance in that responsibility.

 2. Our confidence in God comes from of our faith in Him and not in ourselves.

 3. It is not in us, but is ALL in Him.

**III. Pleasing in His Sight.**

 A. He delights to bless the humble, upright, and sincere soul.

 1. Keeping His commandments is not the cause and condition of receiving His blessings.

 2. They are not the cause and condition of men's acceptance with God neither.

 a. But God approves of those who keep His commandments.

 b. when done in faith, from a principle of love, and with a view to his glory.

 c. For the love of God is prior to anything else.

 A. Love is the very soul and principle of obedience

 1. He hears those who are worshippers of Him, and do His will.

 a. He has promised good things to them

 b. This is a reason strengthening their confidence in Him

 2. Because He is pleased, what they ask they shall receive.

Conclusion: The matter of self-evaluation in the Christian life is one of great importance. We are not encouraged to test ourselves so that we can be reminded of how wicked we are. God offers us an unshakeable security by the many evidences He has afforded to us in these verses. Because you are not perfect that can lead you to feel that you are not worthy of His love, that is true, but He has bestowed it in spite of that. Your faith in Christ alone is what has brought you into His fold and nothing can take that away. Friend we have much reason for rejoicing because of the many tests He has left us that show we are safe. We pass the tests through His promised work in us.