

1 John 3 Some Points from 1 John 2

- If we sin, we have an advocate along side of us.
- We can't say "I know Him" and not keep his commandments.
- If we say we remain in Him, we ought to walk just as He walked.
- A new, old commandment.
- Love your brother to remain in the light.
- Fathers, young men, children.
- Don't love the world or the things in the world – it is passing away.
- In these last times, antichrists have arisen, who deny the Father and the Son.
- Hold on to what you have heard from the beginning.
- Remember the promise of eternal life.
- We have an anointing from the Holy One.
- Because we have an anointing that teaches us, we don't need a new doctrine.
- Remain in Him so that there will be no shame at His coming.
- Everyone who practices righteousness has been born of Him.

1 John 3:1-2

- **1** See how great a love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God! For this cause the world doesn't know us, because it didn't know him. **2** Beloved, now we are children of God, and it is not yet revealed what we will be. But we know that when he is revealed, we will be like him; for we will see him just as he is.

Notes – Verses 1 & 2

- **1** See how great a love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God!
 - great (*potapos*) – what manner, kind, sort –suggests amazement, even

admiration. It belongs to another world. The literal meaning of the word *potapen* when it is translated “what manner” is “of what world.”

- Matt. 8:27 - ... “What kind of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?”
- love (*agape*)
- given (*didōmi*) – given, bestowed (freely).
- children (*teknon*) – offspring, son or daughter.
 - 1 John 2:29 - you know that everyone who practices righteousness has been born of him.
 - “John’s use of *teknon* (babe, or infant) also suggests the birth process.
- 1 ... For this cause the world doesn’t know us, because it didn’t know him.
 - cause (*dia touto*) – For this reason; therefore.
 - world doesn’t know us – does not acknowledge that we are children of God.
 - because (*hoti*) – conjunction giving reason.
 - not surprising that we are not acknowledged as children of God, because God is not acknowledged. **(Think of gnostic philosophy)**
- 2 Beloved, now we are children of God, and it is not yet revealed what we will be.
 - children (*teknon*) – sometimes used of infants, babes; other times use for all of God’s children.
 - revealed (*phaneroō*) – See notes at 1 John 1:2, 2:28. The phrase “not yet revealed” assures us that our future glory has not been made a matter of divine revelation.
- 2 ... But we know that when he is revealed, we will be like him; for we will see him just as he is.
 - It is divinely revealed to us that we will be like him.
 - 1 Cor. 15:50-54 - ... **53** For this perishable body must become imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. ...

- Phil. 3:20-21 - **20** For our citizenship is in heaven, from where we also wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; **21** who will change the body of our humiliation to be conformed to the body of his glory, according to the working by which he is able even to subject all things to himself.

1 John 3:3-4

- **3** Everyone who has this hope set on him purifies himself, even as he is pure.
- **4** Everyone who sins also commits lawlessness. Sin is lawlessness.

Notes – Verses 3-4

- **3** Everyone who has this hope set on him purifies himself, even as he is pure.
 - The hope is, that, when he is revealed, we will be like him.
 - hope (*elpis*) – expectation, anticipation.
 - purifies (*hagnizō*) – makes morally clean; not as the original purity through the blood of Christ, but by our manner of life (walk) from zeal and love, **a continuing practice**.
 - pure (*hagios*) – morally blameless, holy.
 - The standard of Jesus’ ethical purity is our (the Christian’s) model in life. True disciples desire to be sinless as a reasonable response to redemption.
 - Resisting temptation requires the denial of lusts and the suppression of fleshly desires.
 - 1 Pet. 4:1 - Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind; for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin; (*be willing to serve God even to the point of suffering*)
- **4** Everyone who sins also commits lawlessness. Sin is lawlessness.
 - who sins (*poieō hamartia*)- commits sin. *poieō* is a form of *prassō* and is a present active participle, meaning to **perform repeatedly or habitually**.
 - It is the opposite of **purifies** from verse 3.
 - **The choices are habitually purify or habitually sin.**
- **4** ... commits lawlessness. Sin is lawlessness.

- commits lawlessness (*poieō kai anomia*)- also a present active participle, meaning to **perform repeatedly or habitually**.
- lawlessness (*anomia*) - illegality, violation of law, wickedness, unrighteousness. A compound Greek word (*a* = anti + *nomos* = law + *ia* = practice).
- (As close as it gets to the word *antinomianism*.)
- The practicing sinner is either wanton in his disdain for ethical standards, or else he defiantly holds a theology that rejects the existence of moral rules.
- Rom. 2:14-15 - **14** (for when Gentiles who don't have the law do by nature the things of the law, these, not having the law, are a law to themselves, **15** in that they show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience testifying with them, and their thoughts among themselves accusing or else excusing them)

1 John 3:5-6

- **5** You know that he was revealed to take away our sins, and in him is no sin.
- **6** Whoever remains in him doesn't sin. Whoever sins hasn't seen him and doesn't know him.

Notes – Verses 5-6

- **5** You know that he was revealed to take away our sins, and in him is no sin.
 - If sin makes no difference in a man's relationship with God, then why did Jesus "appear so that he might take away our sins"?
 - revealed (*phaneroō*) – op. cit. 1:2, 2:28, 3:2
 - revealed - A one time for all time event
 - Heb. 7:27 - who doesn't need, ... to offer up sacrifices daily, ... For he did this once for all, when he offered up himself.
 - 2 Cor. 5:21 - For him who knew no sin he made to be sin on our behalf; so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.
- **6** Whoever remains in him doesn't sin. Whoever sins hasn't seen him and doesn't know him.
 - remains (*menō*) – op. cit. 2:6, 14, 24, 27

- remains in him – a present participle – continuing state or action.
- doesn't sin – does not make a career of sin.
- 1 John 1:7 - But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanses us from all sin.
- This fellowship with God can *never* exist where there is a present practice of sin.
- 1 John 1:6 - If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in the darkness, we lie, and don't tell the truth.
 - Walking in darkness negates the possibility of remaining in him.
- 6 ... Whoever sins hasn't seen him and doesn't know him.
 - Whoever sins – remember the present active participle of 3:4 – some use the term “career sinner”.
 - hasn't seen (*horaō*) – more than an image formed on the retina and transmitted to our brain, it is to discern clearly, give attention to, or take heed.
 - doesn't know (*ginōskō*) – not just fact, but understanding through experience, fellowship.
 - In combination, blindness and ignorance continuing from the past into the present.
 - Outright denial and refusal might describe this person.

1 John 3:7-10

- 7 Little children, let no one lead you astray. He who does righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. 8 He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. To this end the Son of God was revealed: that he might destroy the works of the devil. 9 Whoever is born of God doesn't commit sin, because his seed remains in him; and he can't sin, because he is born of God. 10 In this the children of God are revealed, and the children of the devil. Whoever doesn't do righteousness is not of God, neither is he who doesn't love his brother.

Notes – Verses 7-10

- 7 Little children, let no one lead you astray.
 - lead you astray (*planaō*) – deceive, seduce, to wander from safety.
 - Jude 13 – wandering stars (*planētēs astēr*) - a rover (“ planet”). Figuratively, an erratic teacher.
 - Stars have long been used for celestial navigation, dependable references from which to plot a sure course. Some planets were visible to the naked eye which were not dependable like stars – hence the term *wandering stars*. Cannot follow them.
 - Deceivers were abundant in John’s day, so believers needed to be alerted to the dangers of deception.
 - Such was an empty claim to righteousness that was not confirmed by an evident practice of right living.
 - Deception today may take different forms, such as a *new hermeneutic*, a *new morality*, a *new normal*.
 - Matt. 15:9 - And in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrine rules made by men.

- 7 ... He who does righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.
 - does righteousness (*poieō dikaiosunē*) – Remember the present active participle from 3:4, meaning to **perform repeatedly or habitually**, and modify that to righteousness instead of sin.
 - God’s righteousness is absolute – there is no darkness at all to degrade His character.
 - The idea is too wonderful for comprehension, that, through the blood of Jesus, we are considered just as righteous.
 - I have a desire to do righteousness, and I wish to be always righteous, **BUT** ...
 - *When I make a mistake, everybody notices.*
 - *When I do right, nobody notices.*

- 8 He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. To this end the Son of God was revealed: that he might destroy the works of the devil.

- He who sins – present active participle again (3:4, 7).
- of the devil - a genitive prepositional phrase that establishes the father/child relationship.
 - In English, we add an apostrophe to show ownership – the devil’s child.
- The devil is a career sinner, from the beginning and continuing now.
- John 8:44 - You are of your father, the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and doesn’t stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks on his own; for he is a liar, and the father of lies.
- He starts by planting a seed of doubt.
- Gen. 3:1 - ... “Has God really said, ‘You shall not eat of any tree of the garden?’”
- Luke 4:3 - ... “If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread.”
- Luke 4:13 - When the devil had finished every temptation, he left Him until an opportune time.
- 8 ... To this end the Son of God was revealed: that he might destroy the works of the devil.
 - end (*touto*) – end, purpose, reason.
 - revealed (*phaneroō*) – op. cit. (manifested)
 - destroy (*luō*) – break up, destroy, dissolve.
 - Heb. 2:14 - Since then the children have shared in flesh and blood, he also himself in the same way partook of the same, that through death he might bring to nothing him who had the power of death, that is, the devil,
 - works (*ergon*) –
 - devil (*diabolos*) - false accuser, devil, slanderer.
- 9 Whoever is born of God doesn’t commit sin, because his seed remains in him; and he can’t sin, because he is born of God.

- is born of God – Our parents never cease being our parents, not when we leave the womb, not when we leave to establish our own home, not even when our parents de cease. It will always be true that we were born of mother and father.
- John is not discussing someone who was “born” in the past without any definition of his present practice. He is dealing only with the man who “is born of God,” who presently has a standing new birth.
- 1 John 3:9 - doesn't commit sin (career)
- 1 John 4:7 – loves, knows God
- 1 John 5:1 - believes that Jesus is the Christ, loves
- 1 John 5:4 - overcomes the world, faith
- 1 John 5:18 - doesn't sin (career), keeps himself, the evil one doesn't touch him.
- John is the only writer who uses “born of God”
- John 1:12-13 - **12** But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become **God's children**, to those who believe in his name: **13** who were **born** not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but **of God**.
 - **God's children = born of God**
- John 3:3 - Jesus answered him, “Most certainly, I tell you, unless one is **born anew**, he can't see God's Kingdom.”
 - anew (*anōthen*) – again, from above, from the top, from the beginning.
 - James 1:17-18 – **17** Every good gift and every perfect gift is **from above** (*anōthen*), coming down from the Father of lights, with whom can be no variation, nor turning shadow. **18** Of his own will he gave **birth** to us by the **word of truth**, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures.
- Galatians 3:26-27 - **26** For you are all **children of God**, through faith in Christ Jesus. **27** For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.
 - for (*gar*) – assigns a reason, by reason of.

- It is not a filler word or inconsequential word; it means that a reason is being given for the previous statement.
- 9 ... doesn't commit sin, because his seed remains in him; and he can't sin, because he is born of God.
 - doesn't commit sin (*ou' poieō hamartia*) – present active participle again, as in 3:4, 6, 7. *Will not continue to sin.*
 - *No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God (1 John 3:9, NIV '84).*
 - seed – the seed is the word of God.
 - 1 Pet. 1:23 - having been born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God, which lives and remains forever.
 - Luke 8:11 - Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.
 - seed – the seed is the word of God.
 - 1 John 2:14 - I have written to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and **the word of God** remains in you, and you have overcome the evil one.
 - seed – the seed is the word of God.
 - John 8:31-32 - **31** Jesus therefore said to those Jews who had believed him, "If you remain in my word, then you are truly my disciples. **32** You will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."
 - NIV '84 ... "If you hold to my teaching, ...
 - can't sin (*dunamai ou hamartanō*) – present active infinitive. be able, not, to sin.
 - An infinitive is a verb that can function as a noun, usually coupled with "to" in English.
 - Psalm 119:11 - I have hidden your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.

- 9 ... because his seed remains in him; and he can't sin, because he is born of God.

Some Things Cannot Co-Exist		
Light	Darkness	
Fellowship with God	Walk in darkness	1 John 1:6
Have his word in us	Sin	1 John 1:10
Know him	Not keep his commandments	1 John 2:4
Be in the light	Hate your brother	1 John 2:9
Have the Father's love	Love the world	1 John 2:15
Abide in him	Go on sinning	1 John 3:6
Born of God	Go on sinning	1 John 3:9
Be of God	Not do righteousness Not love your brother	1 John 3:10
Have eternal life	Hate your brother	1 John 3:15
Have the love of God	Not have compassion ...	1 John 3:17

- born of God (*gennaō ek theos*) –
- 1 John 3:1a - See how great a love the Father has given to us, that we should be called **children of God!**
- As long as the seed which caused our birth remains, then we are children of God.
- Rom. 8:16-17 - ...[17](#) and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; ...

- 10 In this the children of God are revealed, and the children of the devil. Whoever doesn't do righteousness is not of God, neither is he who doesn't love his brother.
 - Those “born of God” are “children of God.” As for those who are called “children of the devil,” John does not discuss a birth process. The devil never created anyone nor generated life in any creature, but he who lives in sin like the devil is as much a “child of the devil” as if Satan had actually created him!
 - John 8:44 – You are of your father, the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. ...
 - There is **no neutral ground**. Our practice identifies our parentage.
 - Do righteousness, love our brother; otherwise, we are not children of God.
- Some modern theologians attribute John's words in this context to the idea of the “perseverance of the elect” (otherwise known as the doctrine of “once saved always saved” or “security of the believer”).
- “Whosoever **is** born of God,” is not the same as saying, “whosoever **was** born of God.” The “is born” defines what now exists as a present, remaining result of the past new birth process.
- The present result can remain only as long as there is a present, settled practice of “righteousness.”
- “**Was** born” defines an event that occurred in the past, but it does not indicate whether or not that past birth is still intact. A standing new birth can exist only where there is a concurrent standing practice of righteousness. And where there is a standing practice of sin, there can be no standing new birth relationship with God. It is impossible to continue the practice of sin because it cancels the new birth standing. Christians must remember that salvation is not an isolated event from the past.
- The mission of Christ was not only to remove the guilt of sin for believers, but also to eradicate the practice of sin from their lives.
- Rev. 2:10b – Be faithful to death, and I will give you the crown of life.
- Rev. 2:25a - Nevertheless, hold that which you have firmly until I come.

- **A growing list of “how can we know”:**
 - Walk in the **light**, not in darkness (1 John 1:6-7)
 - Admit, **confess** our sin (1 John 1:8-9)
 - Keep His **commandments** (1 John 2:3-4)
 - **Walk** as He walked (1 John 2:5-6)
 - **Love** your brother (1 John 2:10)
 - **Anointing** – from the Holy One, through apostles
 - **Abide** in Him (1 John 2:24, 27)
 - **Practice righteousness** (1 John 2:29)
 - **Purifies** himself (1 John 3:3)
 - Not led **astray**, do **righteousness** (1 John 3:7)
 - Does **not go on sinning** (1 John 3:9)
 - Do **righteousness, love** brother (1 John 3:10)
 - *To be continued ...*

1 John 3:11-24

- This whole section of 1 John 3:11-24 can be described as “**Fellowship is rooted in the practice of love**”.
 - John transitioned into it in the end of verse 10: “Whoever doesn’t do righteousness is not of God, **neither is he who doesn’t love his brother.**”
 - I choose to break it into smaller parts; otherwise, I may never finish

1 John 3:11-15

- **11** For this is the message which you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another; **12** unlike Cain, who was of the evil one, and killed his brother. Why did he kill him? Because his deeds were evil, and his brother’s righteous. **13** Don’t be surprised, my brothers, if the world hates you. **14** We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. He who doesn’t love his brother remains in death. **15** Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life remaining in him.

Notes – Verses 11-15

- **11** For this is the message which you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another;
 - beginning (*archē*) – origin, first, principal.
 - John uses beginning 9 times in 1 John.
 - From the beginning of creation (1:1; 2:13-14; 3:8)
 - From the beginning of the gospel (2:7, 24; **3:11**), the time when they first heard and believed.
 - John may have in mind the beginning of Jesus’ ministry. (Luke 6:13-14 - ... apostles: ... John;
 - John 13:34 - A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also love one another.
 - love (*agapaō*) –
 - To seek the other person’s highest good.
 - To do so regardless of how much sacrifice it may cost the lover, even to the

point of death.

- To love whether the one loved deserves it or not.
- To love whether the one loved asks for it or not. Love always volunteers and is alert to opportunities for service.
- To love regardless of how many times a loving act may need to be repeated.
- 12 unlike Cain, who was of the evil one, and killed his brother.
 - Heb. 11:4 - By faith, Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he had testimony given to him that he was righteous, God testifying with respect to his gifts; and through it he, being dead, still speaks.
 - Heb. 12:24 - to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better than that of Abel.
 - The Scriptures do not expressly state that Abel was intended to be typical of Christ: nevertheless, the analogies are striking, as follows:
 - Abel chose the occupation of a shepherd. Christ is the Good Shepherd.
 - Abel brought the best of his flock, and the fat thereof, to the Lord. So our Christ offered Himself freely for the sin of the world.
 - Abel was murdered by his own brother. The Lord's Anointed was put to death at the hands of His own people, and especially of their ecclesiastical leaders.
 - Cain was branded and sent out into the land of "wandering". The Jewish nation has never had a flag it could call its own: even today, despite an Israeli nation, the Jewish people remain scattered among all nations.
- 12 unlike Cain, who was of the evil one, and killed his brother. Why did he kill him? Because his deeds were evil, and his brother's righteous.
 - 1 John 4:7 - Beloved, let's love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves has been born of God, and knows God.
 - of the evil one (*ponēros*) – hurtful, painful, evil. (*diabolos* in v. 10); nothing but pain and evil from the beginning 3:8).
 - Contrast between brotherly love and Cain.

- kill (*sphazō*) – slay, butcher, slaughter. Instead of slaughtering a lamb, he slaughtered his brother.
- Why? Envy, jealousy; of the devil rather than of God.
- 13 Don't be surprised, my brothers, if the world hates you.
 - be surprised (*thaumazō*) – wonder, marvel.
 - world (*kosmos*) – orderly arrangement.
 - hates (*miseō*) - to detest (especially to persecute).
 - From 600 BC the Greeks had a word for all that they could observe in the universe – kosmos, order. All that they observed followed an orderly pattern. That is not the world John has in mind, but rather a sphere influenced by evil.
 - John 3:19-21 - 19 This is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their works were evil. 20 For everyone who does evil hates the light, and doesn't come to the light, lest his works would be exposed. 21 But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his works may be revealed, that they have been done in God.”
- 14 We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. He who doesn't love his brother remains in death.
 - The world may hate us, but we know ...
 - passed out of (*metabainō*) - to pass over from one place to another, to remove, depart.
 - To “pass ... from death to life” describes what happens when one is “born again”.
 - Evidence for what we know is “we love the brothers”. (Recall 1 John 3:10 – of God)
 - All kinds of things wrong with not loving our brother
 - Remains in death – has not passed out of death into life.
 - 1 John 3:10 – not of God.
 - 1 John 4:8 – do not know God.

- 1 John 4:20 – cannot say “I love God”.
- 1 John 4:16 – God is love. We are made in His image.
- 15 ... and you know that no murderer has eternal life remaining in him.
 - hates (*miseō*) - detests. Love less is **NOT** the usage here.
 - Cain (v. 12) destroyed two lives:
 - the *physical* life of his brother
 - his own *spiritual* life .
 - murderer (*anthrōpoktonos*) - Even before the deed was done, God told Cain that “sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it” (Gen. 4:7).

1 John 3:16-20

- 16 By this we know love, because he laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. 17 But whoever has the world’s goods, and sees his brother in need, and closes his heart of compassion against him, how does God’s love remain in him? 18 My little children, let’s not love in word only, or with the tongue only, but in deed and truth. 19 And by this we know that we are of the truth, and persuade our hearts before him, 20 because if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things.

Notes – Verses 16-20

- 16 By this we know love, because he laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers.
 - By this (*en touto*) - *en* - relation of rest, instrumentality; *touto* - in, with or by; hereby. (2:3, 4, 5; 3:10, 16, 19, 24; 4:2, 9, 10, 13, 17; 5:2)
 - Thirteen times John echoes “hereby” this) to us evidence about things “we know” to be true, often to reassure us of our standing before God. In this verse, “hereby” points to the practical definition of “love.”
 - Transition from “hate” to “love” (*agapē*). instrumentality; *touto* - in, with or by; hereby. (2:3, 4, 5; 3:10, 16, 19, 24; 4:2, 9, 10, 13, 17; 5:2)
 - Thirteen times John echoes “hereby” this) to us evidence about things “we

know” to be true, often to reassure us of our standing before God. In this verse, “hereby” points to the practical definition of “love.”

- What Jesus did was voluntary, without coercion, unless you consider the desire to do his Father’s will to be coercion. Three times he prayed “if it be possible let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not my will but your will be done.”
- No greater example of love could be given with the possible exception of the Father’s love in giving his only son.
- John 10:17-18 - **17** Therefore the Father loves me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again. **18** No one takes it away from me, but I lay it down by myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. I received this commandment from my Father.”
- John 15:12-14 - **12** “This is my commandment, that you love one another, even as I have loved you. **13** Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. **14** You are my friends, if you do whatever I command you.
- ought (*opheilō*) – to be under obligation, indebted.
- Every Christian who has been redeemed is under the moral duty to “lay down our lives” for other Christians. The last full measure of devotion is what the new commandment demands of us all. We may not feel that “our brothers” deserve our sacrifice, but neither did we deserve the sacrifice of Jesus. Any brother or sister in Christ who was on Jesus’ love-list when He went to the cross must also be on our love-list!
- Romans 5:6-8 - **6** For while we were yet weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. **7** For one will hardly die for a righteous man. Yet perhaps for a righteous person someone would even dare to die. **8** But God commends his own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.
- **17** But whoever has the world’s goods, and sees his brother in need, and closes his heart of compassion against him, how does God’s love remain in him?
 - world’s goods (*kosmos bios*) - the necessities for life in this world.
 - **Here is an absurdity!** One who is indebted for life closes his heart to a brother who does not have the necessities for life.
 - How does God’s love remain in him? It is an absurd impossibility.

- closes his heart of compassion (*kleiō splagchnon*) literally: shuts bowels (tender mercy). Do you ever ache inside? Feel it in your guts? (*pardon the crude expression*)
- Rom. 12:15 - Rejoice with those who rejoice. Weep with those who weep.
- **18** My little children, let's not love in word only, or with the tongue only, but in deed and truth.
 - James 2:15-16 - **15** And if a brother or sister is naked and in lack of daily food, **16** and one of you tells them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled;" and yet you didn't give them the things the body needs, what good is it?
 - *No way to improve upon James' words.*
- **19** And by this we know that we are of the truth, and persuade our hearts before him, **20** because if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things. **21** Beloved, if our hearts don't condemn us, we have boldness toward God;
 - persuade (*peithō*) – assure, have confidence.
 - heart(s) (*kardia*) – literally, the vital organ which pumps blood. Figuratively, the residence of thoughts, feelings, mind. Or conscience, which John does not use (except John 8:9). (4x3v)
 - When it says, "we know that we are of the truth", it indicates that what follows is intended for consolation.
 - However much we want to be always in compliance with God's will, we know that we are not always faultless.
 - This is an awful thought for the impenitent, a blessed and encouraging thought for the penitent. God knows our sins, but he also knows our temptations, our struggles, our sorrow, and our love.
 - When it says, "if our hearts don't condemn us", it indicates that what precedes is intended for our admonition.
 - We need to examine our hearts and correct what is amiss to continue in fellowship with God.
 - We may not excuse ourselves, but since we are God's children, He knows us and loves us anyway, which should inspire **awe** as well as **consolation**.

- If we know that our hearts are rebellious, God knows that too, which is no consolation at all.

1 John 3:21-24

- 21 Beloved, if our hearts don't condemn us, we have boldness toward God; 22 and whatever we ask, we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do the things that are pleasing in his sight. 23 This is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and love one another, even as he commanded. 24 He who keeps his commandments remains in him, and he in him. By this we know that he remains in us, by the Spirit which he gave us.

Notes – Verses 21-24

- 21 Beloved, if our hearts don't condemn us, we have boldness toward God;
 - condemn (*kataginōskō*) – *kata* – preposition with many varied meanings, including against. *ginōskō* - know or knowledge. Literally, if our hearts know something against us, which can be more concisely translated as condemn or find fault.
 - boldness (*parrhēsia*) – assurance, confidence.
 - Heb. 10:19-23 - Having ... boldness ... draw near ... true heart ... faith ... hearts ... evil conscience
- 22 and whatever we ask, we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do the things that are pleasing in his sight.
 - Two conditions – keep his commandments, do the things that are pleasing in his sight.
 - 1 John 5:14-15 - 14 This is the boldness which we have toward him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he listens to us. 15 And if we know that he listens to us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions which we have asked of him.
 - Luke 22:42 - “Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done.”
 - The phrase “according to his will” does not diminish the “anything” that may be included in our prayers. “According to his will” is an adverbial phrase that relates to the asking and does not limit the “anything” we may ask for. It defines the attitude with which we ask.

- There is deep trust in God’s “will” for our lives expressed in the phrase. We are encouraged to ask God to grant our request “according to his will” and not ours! This kind of attitude protects us from selfish ambitions and personal greed.
- Even Jesus confronted some of His most urgent feelings and desires experienced in the Garden of Gethsemane with the surrender of His own will. If we can learn to be comfortable with God’s “will” in our lives, then our prayers will be filled with greater boldness and God’s answers to us will be more responsive and helpful.
- **23** This is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and love one another, even as he commanded.
 - Is belief is a personal conviction, or is it a response to verifiable evidence?
 - Rom. 1:20 - For the invisible things of him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even his everlasting power and divinity; that they may be without excuse.
 - Heb. 11:1-3 - **1** Now faith is assurance of things hoped for, proof of things not seen. **2** For by this, the elders obtained testimony. **3** By faith, we understand that the universe has been framed by the word of God, so that what is seen has not been made out of things which are visible. (**Not a blind faith. Has He not told us? Given us evidence?**)
 - 1 John 1:1, 3 – **1** That which was from the beginning, that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our eyes, that which we saw, and our hands touched, concerning the Word of life ... **3** that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us. ...
 - Can God command that we believe?
 - He gives evidence that leaves us without excuse, but the response is a decision that we make of our own free will.
 - Can God command that we love? (**He already has!**)
 - God can command “love” because it is a response to the captivating love of God that was demonstrated in creation and in recreation.
 - 1 John 4:19 –We love him, because he first loved us.
 - “Love” is a verb, God can command the action that manifests it. (**Our**

response is of our own free-will).

- 1 John 3:17 - But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and closes his heart of compassion against him, how does God's love remain in him? **(Action)**
- **Love is a decision!**
- 1 John 4:9-11 – **9** By this God's love was revealed in us, that God has sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. **10** In this is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son as the atoning sacrifice for our sins. **11** Beloved, if God loved us in this way, we also ought to love one another. **(God took action!)**
- **24** He who keeps his commandments remains in him, and he in him. By this we know that he remains in us, by the Spirit which he gave us.
 - Acts 5:32 - We are His witnesses of these things; and so also is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.” (See also Acts 2:27-28)
 - Rom. 8:16-17 - **16** The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God; **17** and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if indeed we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified with him.
 - Eph. 1:13-14 - **13** In him you also, having heard the word of the truth, the Good News of your salvation—in whom, having also believed, you were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, **14** who is a pledge of our inheritance, to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of his glory.
 - 1 John 4:13 - By this we know that we remain in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.
 - Luke 6:43-44 – **43** For there is no good tree that produces rotten fruit; nor again a rotten tree that produces good fruit. **44** For each tree is known by its own fruit. ...

1 John 3 - Review Questions

- What are two things John states concerning what we are as children of God (3:1)?
- How are we purified (3:3)?
- How would you explain the words “doesn’t sin” to a friend (3:6)?
- How are people shown to be either of God or of the devil (3:8-10)?
- How is it that one born of God does not practice a life of sin (3:9)?
- How are those who are born of God made known (3:10)?
- What two things are true of those who are “of God” in verse 10 (3:10)?
- What is the supreme example of love that you would tell a friend about (3:16)?
- What is the likely meaning of “brother in need” (3:17)?
- Where else in the N. T. is a statement similar to 1 John 3:18 made?
- Does the phrase “whatever we ask, we receive from him” need further understanding or explanation? If so, how would you explain (3:22)?
- How would you explain a commandment “to believe (3:23)?
- How would you explain 1 John 3:24 to a friend?