

Know What's Real - Conviction

1 John 3:19-24 (NKJV)

And by this we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him. 20 For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things. 21 Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God. 22 And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight. 23 And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment.

24 Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.

Last week we looked at how we are to love one another, even laying down our lives for other believers as Jesus laid down His life for us. But we don't "just love", it's not about what we say but by what we DO.

1 John 3:19-20 (NKJV)

And by this we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him. 20 For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things.

What's in your heart will eventually be produced through your hands. If we have this working faith, this love in action.....we know that we are of the truth.

We are all fighting a spiritual battle and the battlefield is right here....in your head. How many know what I'm talking about? It all takes place right here (head) and whichever side wins (sin or holiness) is manifested through our mouth or hands.

Are you outwardly loving people? Someone that is of the truth, a follower of Jesus, this is what they do! And if you are of the truth you shall assure your heart before Jesus.

To assure in the original Greek is the word peitho (pie-tho) - this means to persuade or be confident.

So when you have this battle in the mind....if you are a follower of Jesus....no matter what this battle is....you can persuade your heart before Jesus....you can have confidence in your heart before Jesus....

In other words...in the midst of the battle....If Jesus is involved....for you that means YOU involve Him (this is often our biggest challenge), but if YOU involve Jesus....you can persuade your heart to go His way and you can have confidence in His way. You can trust Jesus!

It all comes back to Jesus at the center of our lives.

This morning as I was getting out of the shower and went to dry off one foot I began to lose my balance. In that split second I pictured in my head, my foot being wrapped up in that towel, me starting to fall and not being able to regain my balance only to completely faceplant on the bathroom floor....probably getting injured and dealing with some pain for a few days. Yeah, it seemed like a 30 minute story in about 1/10 of a second.

Do you know how I regained balance? I quickly strengthened my core. And slowly straightened back up. I didn't even have to put that foot down to restart. I went to my core for strength and it supplied all that I needed to overcome that situation. I finished drying off.

It was in that moment that the Holy Spirit showed me that this is how our spiritual lives are....When we lose balance and begin to fall...most of us will put our foot down to try and reset and start over on our own. But then we try again, lose balance again. And we may repeat that over and over when all we need to do is go to our core, Jesus, because that is our strength....the strength we need to overcome the situation and keep drying off!

This is what happens when you persuade your heart and have confidence in your heart before Him.

John goes on to say:

“For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things.”

So here is the opposite of a heart that is assured, persuaded, confident before Jesus....and condemned heart.

Condemnation is never a good thing, spiritually speaking. The scripture affirms that here. If you heart condemns you, God is greater than your heart and He knows all things.

This is why we have confidence in Jesus.

1 Corinthians 4:4 (NKJV)

For I know of nothing against myself, yet I am not justified by this; but He who judges me is the Lord.

Don't trust what you think about yourself. We really either think much more or much less of ourselves than we ought to!

You are not justified (right with God) by what you know against yourself....you are justified by faith in Jesus....and it is Jesus who judges you. Which is a really good things since He knows all things. He knows the reality not the perception.

We all know John 3:16 but do you ever keep reading?

John 3:17 (NKJV)

For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

You know what this says....If Jesus did NOT come to condemn, BUT to save.....then condemnation never leads to salvation.

- **Condemn** - to find fault with, blame, to accuse - something done only in the mind causing shame

Who is our accuser? Satanhe's the accuser of the brethren (Revelation 12:10). He makes us feel like there is no way out as though we will never change, we are hopeless and it results in shame

- **Convict** - to find fault with, correct, to bring to the light, expose - something done in the mind and heart causing change

Who exposes things in the light? Holy Spirit (John 16:8). He reveals these things to us for the sole purpose of our soul. He reveals our faults so we can be aware of them and HE changes our heart, WE change our mind and turn away from the sin that was exposed (repentance).

Look at the account of the woman caught in adultery:

John 8:10-12 (NKJV)

When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, "Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?"

11 She said, "No one, Lord."

And Jesus said to her, "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more."

12 Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

Have you ever wondered why this story ends the way that it does? It's not just that Jesus shows grace....there was a work done here by the Holy Spirit. "Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more.".....this was not just another chance, it was not just a "don't do it again" moment.

This was a conviction moment....the very next thing He said was "I am the light of the world"

Her sin was exposed not by the men wanting to stone her but by the conviction of the Spirit and change took place in her heart and her mind, she repented! She made a decision to follow Jesus....how do we know? Look at what Jesus said:

“He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.”

This woman was set free by conviction not bound by condemnation.

Romans 8:1 (NKJV)

There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

“If our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things.”

Here is what we have to remember: Jesus already took your beating so don't have to beat yourself up.

When your heart condemns you, He is greater than your heart:
He speaks love, forgiveness, life, hope to your heart.

God is more merciful to you than you are to yourself.

Now this is not giving permission to sin. God still hates sin. But Jesus is a God of mercy and grace. He is a God that forgives....every....time....

So what keeps you from sinning? The love of God and joy of the Holy Spirit.

This is why Satan tries to rob you of your joy and give you reasons to hate. And one of the first places he attacks is your self worth.

And this is why, what you feel about yourself needs to be submitted to God's Word.

When God says that you are forgiven, you're forgiven
When God says that you are loved, you're loved
When God says that you are accepted, you're forgiven

“For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things.”

1 John 3:21-22 (NKJV)

Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God. 22 And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.

Hallelujah, this is what we want right?

He says Beloved.....this speaks of your condition in Christ. You know even though your heart might condemn you.....God calls you beloved!

Beloved - esteemed.....dear.....favorite.....worthy of love!

Someone needs to hear that today.....no matter what you think of yourself. No matter what others might say. Jesus says you are beloved.....esteemed.....dear.....favorite.....worthy of love!

And if your heart doesn't condemn you, you have confidence toward God.

Church.....this is SO important. If you are not bound by that guilt and shame of what you have done....you have confidence toward God.

This does not say confidence IN God....but toward Him.

The Greek word used here for confidence is *parresia* (par-rey-see-ya) meaning freedom in speaking, open and frank, without concealment

See condemnation hinders your prayer life....because it causes shame, it causes concealment. You try to hide things from Jesus or maybe you try to hide altogether from Jesus.

When there is no condemnation.....you have freedom in speaking to God, nothing to hide! This allows us to be **BOLD** in our prayers!

“And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.”

This pretty simply says when we are living for Jesus and the purpose He has for our lives, we won't ask for selfish things, we won't ask from our deceitful heart (you know that one that condemns us), but we'll ask from God's renewed heart within us....the one that is lead by the Holy Spirit....and we'll be asking for God's will to be done.....

When we pray in the will of God, we can be confident that the Father will always answer “Yes!” Those things you are assured to receive!

1 John 3:23-24 (NKJV)

And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment.

24 Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.

The Father has a command for you.....believe on the name of Jesus.....believing on the name is believing in the person in totality and work - this is knowing that Jesus is the Messiah, that He did come from heaven, live a sinless life, die for your sin, rise from the dead - vertical relationship

Love one another (the church) - horizontal relationship

Whoever keeps these commandments abides in Christ! If you love Jesus and His bride, you are in Him. Let me tell you, you want to be in Jesus because the word says you are hidden in Christ. It's the safest place to be.

It doesn't matter what trouble comes looking for you, it has to go through Jesus to get to you. He is defender, He is your shield, He is your fortress

That's you in Christ....Here's Christ in you....

"We know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us." - The only reason we can do any of this is by the Holy Spirit IN us....

You can't look at all of this as a list of things you have to do , but instead as something that God does in you and through you because of what Jesus has done for you!

See if you make this all as a list of "to do's" , what will happen is you will end up back at the beginning of this text with a heart that condemns you....because you can't even keep your own list, let alone God's list!

"We know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us."

Here's the thing about the Holy Spirit.....He testifies of Jesus! He points us to Jesus! He glorifies Jesus!

The Holy Spirit always convicts.....never condemns.....

He doesn't blame and accuse causing shame but He corrects, brings to the light, causing change in the mind and heart.

Today, if the Spirit is convicting you of something, if there is an issue that you just can't shake, He's bringing it to your attention for a reason. He's exposing it because He wants you to deal with it. He wants to deal with it.

Will you let Him?