

# Joyful Life Bible Studies

## I John 3:19-24

Lesson 16

### FIRST DAY: Review and Overview

1. Review I John 3:11-18. *Love one another* is the message that we have heard from the beginning. We are to react as Christ reacted to others, not as Cain did. Cain's reaction resulted in murder. What was God's ultimate expression of His love?
  - a. In last week's lesson you were instructed to ask the Lord to reveal to you ways you could love others. What difference has choosing love made in your life and in the lives of others?
  - b. How will you continue to apply this command to *love one another*?
    - 1.) According to I John 3:14, what can we know if we are living a lifestyle of *loving one another*?
    - 2.) According to I John 3:17, what can we know if we are continually *shutting up our bowels of compassion* towards those in need when we have the ability to meet those needs?
2. In last week's study of I John 3:11-18, John wrote of a standard by which we might know that we have *passed from death unto life*. Evaluation of this standard will lead some to assurance of their salvation and others to doubt. John comforts and encourages the true children of God in the ensuing verses of I John 3:19-24. Summarize the thoughts of this paragraph division.
3. We live in a time of uncertainty. I John teaches us many things that we can be sure of. As believers, we do not need to doubt God's love for us. We do not have to wonder if we have passed from death unto life. We need not question the power of prayer. Consider the *confidence* that the believer has knowing these things. Write a prayer thanking God that He has not left you uncertain concerning spiritual essentials but has granted you the advantage of *confidence*. Ask Him to increase that *confidence* as you study this wonderful portion of His Word.

*Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith,  
having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience ...*

*Hebrews 10:22 NIV*

**SECOND DAY:**

Read I John 3:19

1. I John 3:19 states that we can know we *are of the truth*. The word *hereby* indicates that John is continuing his thoughts from the last paragraph division. We studied last week in I John 3:14 that we can *know that we have passed from death unto life*. Keeping this in mind, how can we *know we are of the truth*?
  - a. What does the phrase *we are of the truth* mean? See John 14:6.
2. What is the result of knowing *we are of the truth*?
  - a. Define the word *assure*.
  - b. How will loving others in deed and in truth (I John 3:18) *assure our hearts before Him*?
  - c. Why is it so important to have *assurance* in our walk with God?
3. *This then is how we know that we belong to the truth, and how we set our hearts at rest in His presence*. I John 3:19 NIV We can be confident in the very presence of God. What is the basis of our *confidence* according to the following scriptures:
  - a. Hebrews 10:19
  - b. I John 2:1
    - 1.) We have been granted free access to God through our faith in the shed blood of Jesus Christ. Share what it means to you to know you can come before His presence with an assured heart.

**THIRD DAY:**

Read I John 3:20

4. I John 3:20 begins with the reaction that many have when they reflect upon how they have not expressed love towards others. How does John describe that response of the heart?
  - a. The Greek word translated as *condemn* here is *kataginosko*. This is taken from two root words, *kata*, meaning against and *ginosko* which means *to know by experience*. Our hearts know us by experience, and many declare things against us. Many are aware that they don't love others as they should. They feel guilty and their hearts (consciences) accuse them. In examining I John 3:17, 18, if your heart condemns you, what should you do? Use the following scriptures to help you answer:
    - 1.) I John 1:9
    - 2.) I John 3:18
  - b. Often, when we have failed, our hearts persuade us that we are unworthy of coming before the Father. What is revealed in Jeremiah 17:9 about our heart?
    - 1.) Who also *accuses day and night*? Revelation 12:9, 10
    - 2.) I John 3:20 declares that God *is greater than our heart*. I John 4:4 reminds us that God is also *greater than he that is in the world*. How does this comfort you?

5. God not only sees our actions (or lack of them) but He knows our very hearts. Record what the following scriptures say about how well God knows us:
  - a. Psalm 69:5
  - b. Psalm 139:2
  - c. Hebrews 4:12, 13
    - 1.) Does this strike fear in your heart or does it bring comfort? What would make the difference in how we react to reading the above verses'?
6. A lack of love in our lives produces a conviction from our hearts, a sense of guilt. Satan amplifies that conviction through a condemnation that declares our unworthiness. God uses that conviction to drive us to Himself in repentance and give us a desire to change. How can you allow God's conviction to work in your life instead of succumbing to Satan's condemnation?
7. What do we know about God's heart towards us according to the following scriptures:
  - a. Psalm 34:18
  - b. Psalm 103:13 (use another version if you have one)
  - c. Jeremiah 31:3
    - 1.) How do these verses help you understand how God reacts when your *heart condemns* you?

*My flesh and my heart faileth;  
But God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever.  
... it is good for me to draw near to God ...*

*Psalm 73:26, 28a*

**FOURTH DAY:** Read I John 3:21, 22

1. According to I John 3:21, what can we have *if our hearts condemn us not*?
  - a. Record some synonyms for the word *confidence*.
    - 1.) The words *if our heart condemn us not* do not claim sinless perfection, but represent the heart attitude of a believer that, so far as he knows, has no unconfessed sin in his life. The opposite result of a *condemning heart* is *confidence*. When we have been released from a sense of guilt, we feel the freedom to approach God as His beloved children. How does a child who is aware of how loved he is approach his father?
    - 2.) From the following verses how is our access to the father described:
      - (a.) Ephesians 3:12
      - (b.) Hebrews 4:16

2. Having a *confidence toward God* is one result of being able to *assure our hearts before Him* and of *our hearts condemning us not*. According to I John 3:22a what is another amazing benefit?
  - a. What does I John 3.22b reveal are the conditions for receiving that which we have asked of Him?
    - 1.) What do the following verses add to this:
      - (a.) Psalm 66:18
      - (b.) John 9:31
      - (c.) John 15:7
    - 2.) From the following verses what further requirements does God have for responding to our prayers:
      - (a.) Mark 11:24, 25
      - (b.) John 16:23
    - 3.) Summarize these conditions that God has placed on answering prayer.
      - (a.) Which one(s) is most difficult for you to do and why?
      - (b.) If you feel you have met these conditions, yet have not received the answer you desired, what could be some of the reasons for this?
3. Doing *those things that are pleasing in His sight* (I John 3:22c) bends the ear of our Father towards us and gives us confidence in prayer. What are some things you can do that are *pleasing in His sight*?

*When our delight is in the love of God,  
Our desires will be in the will of God.*

*Warren Wiersbe*

**FIFTH DAY:**

Read I John 3:23, 24

1. I John 3:22 states two conditions of prayer as *keeping His commandments* and *doing those things that are pleasing in His sight*. The full commandment of God is not simply loving the brethren. From I John 3:23 what else are commanded to do?
  - a. What are we believing when we *believe in the name of His Son, Jesus Christ*?
    - 1.) Why is this essential to answered prayer?

2. Compare the commandment in I John 3:23b from Jesus' conversation with the lawyer as recorded in Matthew 22:35-40.

Challenge: Why do *all the law and the prophets hang on these two commandments*?

3. What does I John 3:24a declare is the prerequisite for dwelling in Christ and He dwelling in us?
  - a. What does Jesus say in John 14:15 is proof of our *love* for Him?
    - 1.) Ponder the privilege of expressing your love for Jesus through obeying His commandments. Why should obedience not be a grievous burden to us?
  - a. Explain as you would to a new believer what it means to dwell in Him and He in you.

Challenge: Record what Psalm 91 and John 15 tell us about the relationship of *abiding* (dwelling).

4. We have studied in the past two chapters the importance of *keeping His commandments* and *loving others* as determining factors in our relationship with God. Now, John concludes chapter 3 with yet another evidence of *abiding*. According to I John 3:24b, how can we know that *He abideth in us*?
  - a. How do we know we have the Holy Spirit residing in us according to:
    - 1.) I Corinthians 3:16
    - 2.) Galatians 4:6
  - b. Think about this gift. What an awesome difference this makes in our lives. This makes us unlike all others who do not believe in Jesus Christ. We have the Holy Spirit living in us! Share the delight this brings to your heart.
  - c. In what ways has the Holy Spirit manifested Himself in your life that assure you that you truly belong to God?

*For you did not receive a spirit that makes you  
A slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship.  
And by Him we cry, "Abba Father."  
The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.  
Romans 8:15, 16 NIV*

**SIXTH DAY:**

Review I John 3:19-24

1. John begins and ends this paragraph division with the phrase *and hereby we know*. What are some of the assuring statements in this portion?
  - a. What are they conditioned upon?
  
2. What condemnation or conviction might some be experiencing after reading I John 3:11-18?
  - a. Consider the saying, "Feelings make great passengers, but they make poor drivers". Often, we can say the same thing about our hearts or consciences. What should be our response when *our heart condemns us*?

Personal: Meditate on the joy of having *confidence toward God*. Is there anything in your life that is hindering you from having that confidence? If so, take a moment to confess it to the Lord and express your desire to change and to walk in obedience.

3. If you are keeping the commandments in I John 3:23 and you still feel condemned, what can you know about this kind of condemnation and what will you do about it?
  
4. How has this study spoken to you about having confidence towards God?
  
5. *And hereby we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us ... The fruit of the Spirit is love ... By this all men know that ye are my disciples, if we have love one to another.* (I John 3:24b, Galatians 5:22a, John 13:35) Love is the evidence to believers and to the world of the reality of Jesus Christ. Make the following your prayer as you choose to do those things that are pleasing in His sight.

*Holy Spirit glorify Jesus through me.  
Just take my life and make it all Thine.  
Glorify Jesus through me all the time.  
May they see You, God, so pure and so kind.  
When they look at my life,  
May it be You that they find.  
May it be You that they see.  
Glorify Jesus through me.*

TBD