

1-2-3 John, Part 12 – Assurance Before God

Assurance before God is the confidence that we have that we are not condemned. This is a test that examines personal heartfelt feelings. We want to examine what is necessary for believers to have this assurance and confidence before God.

1 John 3:18–20 NKJV My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth. And by this we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him. For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things.

Look at verse 19, “By this we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him.”

How can we reassure our hearts before God?

John is not saying we can work our way into assurance. It is not enough to keep confessing “I am right with God.” Something supernatural must take place that brings us into a right relationship with God and inspire a life of loving actions.

In the last lesson, John told us to practice righteousness.

He was teaching believers to live or manifest the basic nature of a child of God. When we are truly changed, we will begin demonstrating or manifesting our new life and connection with Christ. Since we have been made God’s children, it is natural for us to express the fruit of righteousness.

Now, John is talking about heart felt assurance before God.

This heart felt assurance gives us confidence toward God. John is talking about a heart that is without self-accusation, condemnation and guilt.

1 John 3:20-21 NKJV For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things. Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God.

This confidence is the heartfelt assurance that everything is right between us and God.

We must consider the depth of God’s wisdom and knowledge.

God is above all and greater than our conscience. He knows and understands everything.

Luke 8:17 NKJV For nothing is secret that will not be revealed, nor anything hidden that will not be known and come to light.

Jeremiah 16:17 NKJV For My eyes are on all their ways; they are not hidden from My face, nor is their iniquity hidden from My eyes.

Hebrews 4:13 NIV84 Nothing in all creation is hidden from God’s sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

Amos 5:12 NKJV For I know your manifold transgressions and your mighty sins.

God knows all of our actions and thoughts. He knows when we are good or bad. He knows every little thing that we do, feel, or think. There is nothing hidden from God. You cannot tell God, “My heart does not condemn me,” when it does. There is no cover of darkness from God. Closed doors cannot hide from God. There is no secret place where we hide from God. God knows every issue with your heart.

Since God knows everything about everyone, how can we have complete confidence, assurance, and boldness before Him?

This confidence, assurance, and boldness must come from abiding in Christ. Jesus Christ is our peace and has reconciled us to God through His cross and has taken away the accusation that was against us. Through Him we have been given bold access by the Spirit to the Father, (Ephesians 2:14-18).

When we receive God’s Son as our Savior, two wonderful things happen.

1. Jesus Christ removes the sense of guilt and condemnation and forgives and cleanses us from sin.
2. He places His love in us and that love changes the way we look at everything and everyone.

John 3:18 NKJV He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

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.

How would you describe a heart that has complete confidence, assurance and boldness before God?

Several things immediately come to my mind. To have complete assurance before God, we must have a level of righteousness that is absolute. We are without blemish, clean, and perfect before God.

This confidence or assurance can be addressed in two ways.

First, we may attempt to gain assurance before God based on personal righteous actions and obedience.

Performance based righteousness produces a confidence that is transient and often fails. Performance based confidence before God requires perfect adherence to God’s laws.

James 2:10 NIV84 For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it.

Matthew 5:48 NKJV Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

Ephesians 5:1 NKJV Therefore be imitators of God as dear children.

The flesh is too weak to accomplish this measure of righteous perfection on its own.

How can we become perfect and righteous before God?

Second, assurance before God is based on the righteous actions of Jesus Christ and our faith and trust in Him.

The only way to produce the fruit of righteousness is by full dependence on Christ. Romans 3:21-24 tells us — Righteousness apart from the law is revealed through Christ. The righteousness of God comes upon all who believe in Christ. Since Christ is the propitiation for our sins, His righteousness is imputed to us and we are reconciled to God.

When God considers our righteousness, He does not look at us in the same way our conscience does.

God takes into account everything that Christ's atoning work has accomplished. His atoning work makes it possible for believers to have assurance and confidence before God.

1 John 4:9 NKJV In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.

What is the benefit of having a conscience that does not accuse or condemn us?

1 John 3:21-22 NKJV Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God. And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.

1. *Our heart and conscience is assured or confident before God.*

A clean heart that is full of assurance knows that it is pleasing and acceptable to God. That person is not living in condemnation or guilt. Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and access by faith into this grace, (Romans 5:1).

2. *When we have confidence toward God, whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do what is pleasing in His sight.*

These things are closely interrelated. When we abide in Christ, we have confidence and receive whatever we ask from Him, because we keep His commandments. God wants to do you good. When you do good, God is able to reward you. He cannot reward unfaithfulness or disobedience.

Is it possible to keep God's commandments and do what is pleasing in His sight?

This is the problem with the flesh. The solution for the weakness of the flesh is Christ.

1 John 3:24 NKJV 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.

God has perfectly bound us together in love.

When we abide in Him, we keep His commandments. It is a matter of what happens on the inside of us. On the inside, the Holy Spirit is confirming our relationship with the

Father. “We know that He abides in us by the Spirit which He has given us.” Paul said we live and move and have our being in God. God is not only on the outside, He dwells in us. (Acts 17:28) He takes up residence in us, and lives and moves and has His being within us. God makes a home in our hearts.

How do we know this?

Romans 8:16–17 NKJV The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ.

The Holy Spirit is active on the inside.

He gives absolute assurance, boldness and confidence before God. The Holy Spirit lives, talks, shares, leads, and guides. The Holy Spirit is doing the same thing in us that Jesus does for us.