

## Lesson for October 30, 2005

### Book of I John

#### Chapter 3:19-24

##### Verse 19

“And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him.”

*Know* is the Greek word “ginosko” and means to perceive or to understand. *The truth* is an obvious reference to Bible doctrine as the mind of Christ (the Truth). *Assure* is the Greek word “peitho” and means to persuade or to have confidence.

John continues his thought of demonstrating our love for others by our deeds. By so doing, we can perceive or understand that we are properly applying the Bible doctrine resident in our soul. And a further benefit will be that our hearts (mentality of the soul) will be persuaded of this fact before (face to face with) God. It is God Who searches the heart of man and knows us better than we know ourselves.

##### Verse 20

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

The Greek word for *heart* is “kardia” and is a reference to the mentality of the soul (the mind). *Condemn* is the Greek word “kataginosko” and means to know something against or to think ill of. This verse is referring to self-condemnation of the believer who knows to do divine good and fails to do it. The advancing believer should have enough doctrine in his soul to recognize when he is out of step with God’s plan, purpose and will.

Self-condemnation should be a reflection of divine condemnation. Since God is greater than our heart and is omniscient, His policy regarding the out-of-fellowship believer who is not able to produce divine good is said to be condemnation. The believer can never be eternally condemned, but his mental attitude and resultant lack of divine production can be.

##### Verse 21

“Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God.”

If a believer is in fellowship with God and living in God's power system, there will be no self-condemnation (no necessity for Rebound). The result of being in fellowship is confidence toward God. The Greek word for *confidence* is "parrhesia" and means boldness. This means that the believer who is residing in God's power system can place his complete confidence in God. Though it is often folly to place your confidence in another person or even in yourself, God is always completely trustworthy. Placing your confidence in God is the only logical choice for the believer. Since we all possess a sin nature, and we are constantly being influenced by it, our best course of action is to put all our confidence in God.

#### Verse 22

"And whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight."

Inside God's power system is where God wants the believer to reside. Inside this system is where spiritual growth occurs. Spiritual growth includes increased capacity to receive the blessings of God. Therefore, if a believer is in fellowship with God and filled with the Holy Spirit as a result, he will be keeping God's mandates, which are "pleasing in His sight." Inside God's power system the believer is able to properly pray according to the will of God. God has a system for prayer that must be followed if you want your requests to be answered. The believer who is not keeping God's commandments and is not doing those things that are pleasing to God is out of fellowship and controlled by his sin nature. This believer's prayers will not be heard, unless it is a prayer of Rebound (confession of sin).

Prayer is the grace system of communication with God for the believer. The purpose of prayer is to communicate with our Heavenly Father. God communicates with us through His Word. We communicate with God through prayer. God, therefore, expects all believers to use prayer. We are actually commanded to pray without ceasing, which means *to have a consistent prayer life*. Prayer can be a powerful weapon in the hands of a believer who knows how to use it. There are correct principles and procedures for praying, and it is important that we learn and use these principles and procedures. (I Thessalonians 5:17; Ephesians 6:18; Philippians 4:6; Hebrews 4:16)

### The Principles and Procedures of Prayer

*Prayer is for believers only.* In order for a person to address God as father, they must first have a family relationship with Him. This relationship is possible only by placing your faith in Jesus Christ as Savior. Once this relationship exists, the believer has every right to

communicate with their Heavenly Father. This, of course, is what God wants us to do. (Galatians 3:26; John 1:12)

*All prayer is to be directed to the Father, in the name of the Son and in the power of the Holy Spirit.* Both Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit are praying and making intercession for us, therefore, we direct our prayer to the Father. Jesus taught His disciples to direct their prayers to God the Father. Praying “in the name of Jesus Christ” means we are acknowledging that it is only through His salvation work that we as believers have the right to pray. (Matthew 6:9; John 14:13-14; Ephesians 6:18; Hebrews 7:25; Romans 8:26-27)

*Long prayers are to be done in private.* Public prayer should be short and to the point. The Pharisees were fond of lengthy prayers so that men would see and hear them being “holy”. The Bible says that they already had their reward (being seen of men). When we pray, it should be done in private to God. (Matthew 6:5-7)

*There is an order for prayer.* The first item of our prayer should always be to *name or admit our sins*, if necessary, using the Rebound Technique. This restores the control of the Holy Spirit and fellowship with God. The believer is now in a position to be heard by God. This should be another encouragement to keep “short accounts” (name your sins immediately) with God. (I John 1:9; Psalm 66:18)

Secondly, we should *give thanks* for the spiritual and material blessings that God has graciously given to us. This includes divine discipline and divine guidance. We should then *pray for others - intercessory prayer*. This means we must know the needs of others, which would necessitate an up-to-date prayer list. Prayer for the unbeliever is primarily for their salvation. Since God does not force a person to believe in Christ, our prayer should be that they will hear a clear Gospel message. We could also pray that God would provide us the opportunity to present the Gospel. (Matthew 5:44; Luke 6:28; Ephesians 6:18; James 5:15-16)

Finally, you should *pray for your own needs - petition*. Remember that there are some things you don't have to pray about. For example, we are commanded to be filled with (controlled by) the Holy Spirit. We are controlled by the Holy Spirit when we have used the Rebound Technique of naming or admitting our sins to God.

So we don't have to pray, “Fill me with your Holy Spirit”, which would show our lack of knowledge of God's Word and is an insult to God. If there is not a direct solution to your need in the Scriptures, then take it to God in prayer. (Philippians 4:6)

Verse 23

“And this is the commandment, That we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.”

John, the Apostle of Love is describing the Christian Way of Life in this one verse. Phase One – trust Christ as your Savior. Phase Two – obey God’s mandates (love one another). Phase One – your relationship with God. Phase two – your relationship with others. God is not willing that anyone should spend eternity separated from Him. For this reason and to resolve the Angelic Conflict, Jesus Christ came into this world as a man and paid the penalty for sin.

Believing on the name of His Son Jesus Christ means to believe in what His name entails. The name *Jesus* for example means *deliverer* or *savior*. The name *Christ* means *anointed one* or *Messiah*. Jesus Christ (Jehovah in the Old Testament) is the one anointed by God to be the Savior of the world. This means that everyone can appropriate the gift of eternal life by faith in His name (His person).

Verse 24

“And he that keepeth His commandments dwelleth in Him, and He in him. And hereby we know that He abideth in us by the Spirit which He hath given us.”

The Greek word for *keepeth* is “tereo” and means to observe or to heed. The word in Greek for *dwelleth* is “meno” which means to abide, to be at home with or to reside. Only a believer who is abiding in Christ (in fellowship with Him) can keep the mandates of God. It is the indwelling of the Trinity that enables the believer to execute the Christian Way of Life.

The indwelling of God the Holy Spirit begins immediately at salvation and is permanent. This ministry is unique to the Church Age in which we live. It is this ministry that assures our royal status, since all believers regardless of their spiritual health, are equally indwelt by the Holy Spirit. This ministry also creates a temple in the body of each believer for the indwelling of Christ, the Shekinah Glory. “Shekinah” literally means “dwelling”. It is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit that sets up *the potential* for the believer to understand spiritual truth, to glorify Christ, to be comforted, to be guided through life and to witness for Christ. It is still up to the individual believer to use his volition (free will) to *choose* to allow God the Holy Spirit to control his life. (Galatians 3:2-3; 4:6; Acts 1:8; Romans 8:9; I Corinthians 2:12; 3:16-17; 6:19-20; John 14:16-20; Colossians 1:27)