

1 John 3:19 - 4:6

Announcements:

- Dominican Republic: deadline is tomorrow, meeting after church, fundraiser, sponsorships

Please open to **1 John Chapter 3** (need a Bible? ...)

- Last Time: **John's Test**: Cain's Knife or Christ's Cross? Agapao: practically! (Deed/truth)
- This Time: Speaking of Truth... Inner and outer truth... (bellybotton, ha!) (Nautical parable)

Message Title: **Anchor and Compass**

- Assurance in the Harbor (verses 3:19-24)
- Discernment on the Seas (verses 4:1-6)

John identifies **two dangers** every believer faces:

- **Inside**: a condemning heart that questions whether you even know God (torturing for some)
- **Outside**: false teachers that distort the Gospel of Christ (so many shifting waters, who knows)

John cares a lot about people's salvation and assurance of their salvation. **He's trying to help!**

Assurance in the Harbor (verses 3:19-24)

Harbor Setup: walled protection, calm seas, repairing nets, rest... (we all need this regularly!)

V. 19 - And **by this we know** that we are **of the truth**

- **By this we 'know'** - **Doctrine of assurance** (John on repeat...) (not just "wishful" thinking...)
- **Of the Truth (link!)** - **belonging to the Kingdom of God.** (Jesus, = the way, the truth...)

V. 19 - And shall **assure our hearts** before Him.

- **Assure** - **Reassure (peitho)** - "to persuade, convince, bring to a settled state of confidence."
 - **Shalom to your dome and in your home!** Green pastures and still waters... (refresh)
- **Our hearts** = **Heart ("kardia" / Hebrew "lev")** - "inner life: will, emotion, conscience, moral judgment." (contextually = **conscience**) (dealing with **Prayer/Devotional life...**)
- **Before Him** - not just life in general, but **our spiritual life**. **How's your "inner spiritual life"?**

V. 20 - For if our **heart condemns us...**

- **Condemn (kataginosko)** - "to accuse, find fault, blame, declare guilty..."
- Happens all the time; the **devil loves that game** (the **accuser of the brethren...** (Rev. 12:10))
- There's a difference between **conviction and condemnation**. (drives us to, vs drives us away)
- This text is dealing with an **"inner courtroom"** so to speak... (especially in **times of prayer...**)
 - Look at you, **who do you think you are** to come before God? (**accusations**)
 - Or if wrestling with sin, will hide away from God **in shame** (like **Adam in the garden**)
 - I don't "**feel**" like God hears me/cares about me, therefore (or **why would He allow...?**)
 - **All struggle to a degree**, but some have **an overactive conscience!** (anxiety filled)
 - **Sometimes true (Peter denied!), sometimes false**, (commanding officer = **at ease!**)
- V. 20 - **God is greater** than our heart - **yeah! Let's go! HINGE!** His **truth trumps our feelings!**
 - He **outranks our hearts**. His **verdict overrules** (He is the **Supreme Judge**)

- V. 20 - And **knows all things**. Knows us better than we know ourselves (**Before I formed you!**)
 - Jeremiah 17:9-10 - "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; Who can know it? **I, the Lord, search the heart, I test the mind...**"
 - He knows everything about us, **concerning**, but intended as a **comfort**.
 - Psalms 103:14 - "**He knows our frame; he remembers that we are dust...**" (**Gideon!**)
 - Like **a shepherd knows His sheep** and their **tendencies to stray...** (**pastoral!**)

V. 21 - **Beloved**, - a **great word** for those struggling with *doubt, shame, guilt, condemnation, etc.*

- V. 21 - If our **heart does not condemn us...** meaning a **state of inner shalom...**
- V. 21 - We have **confidence toward God**. - yeah! **Isn't this what we all want?**
 - **Confidence (parresia)** - "bold, free access; 'the right of a free citizen to speak openly before a king.'"
- John is calling our hearts to **a deeper and true relationship**.
- You're **not a slave of a distant emperor**, or **an employee of a cold boss**, ...some seek God **as if relating to a government agency (DMV or IRS, transactional...)**
- **No!** John wants us to **picture a child bursting through** the back door of the house, **tracking mud**, yelling '**Dad!**' That's **parresia**. You're a child running to your father (**Agapetos (Abba)**)

Let's take a pause to **contrast and drive home "condemnation" vs "confidence"**

- "Sometimes our heart condemns us, but, in doing so, it gives a wrong verdict, and then we have the satisfaction of being able to **take the case into a higher court**, for 'God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.'" (Spurgeon) He **knows your frame**, and **His verdict still stands**.
 - **Romans 8 for any struggling**: no condemnation, who can be against us? God who justifies, more than conquerors, His Spirit bears witness with ours, What shall separate?
- **Goal of the passage = Assurance (peitho) & confidence (parresia) - Runs TO, not FROM!**
 - Hebrews 4:15-16 - "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in every way as we are, yet without sin. Therefore, **let us approach the throne of grace with boldness (parresia)**, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in time of need..."
 - Hebrews 10:19-22, NIV - "Therefore brothers and sisters, **since we have confidence (parresia)** to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body... let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings..."

V. 22 - And **whatever we ask we receive** from Him (God is **not a cosmic vending machine**) 1John 5:14

- God is **a wise father, not an indulgent one**. No father gives his children **everything** they ask for.
- V. 22 - **because...** pay attention, **important connector to prayer** here...
- V. 22 - We **keep His commandments - following His Word...**
- V. 22 - And **do those things that are pleasing in His sight**. - **Living out His will...**
- 1 Peter 3:7, NLT - "Husbands must give honor to your wives. Treat your wife with understanding as you live together. She may be weaker than you are, but she is your equal partner in God's gift of new life. Treat her as you should **so your prayers will not be hindered.**"
- John 15:7 - "**If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you**, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you." (**cultivating fruit in a garden**)

V. 23 - And **this is His commandment: (Faith & Love - Vertical / horizontal)**

- V. 23 - That we should **believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ**
 - **Believe** = **faith (vertical)** - not just general, but **specific faith!**
 - **Name** = embodies **all of that person's essence and being (name above all names!)**
 - **His Son** = **God incarnate** (Hypostatic Union...)
 - **Jesus** = He will **save us from our sins!** (Lesous, Yeshua, Joshua)
 - **Christ** - The **anointed one (Christos / Meshiach)**
- V. 23 - And **love one another**, as He gave us commandment. **love (horizontal)**
 - That's what we looked at last week. (Action: **Cain or Christ** = **taking or giving?**)

V. 24 - Now he who keeps His commandments (**faith & love**) **abides in Him, and He in him**.
 - = **rad relationship**. **Fellowship with God** & **Love for people**, **Confident hearts** before Him...

- V. 24 - And **by this we know that He abides** in us... John keeps giving **more ways to be assured!**
- V. 24 - **By the Spirit** whom He has given us. - **Indwelling of the Holy Spirit!** (first mention)
 - **Ephesians 1:13-14** - "In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, **you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee (down payment) of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.**" (temples!)
 - **Exodus 40** = **God's glory filling the tabernacle**. '**Shakan**' (to dwell, settle) = '**Shekinah**'!
 - What the **tabernacle foreshadowed**, the **Spirit fulfills** - **In you and I, the church!**

John has been **anchoring us in the harbor (inside)**, but now **prepares us with a compass (outside)**

Discernment on the Seas (verses 4:1-6)

Stormy Seas Setup: it can be "treacherous out there..."

- **Ephesians 4:14** - "...no longer be children, **tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting...**"

V. 1 - **Beloved** - Yes! **Identity** and **Pastoral**

- V. 1 - **Do not believe** every spirit - (**Spiritual warfare alert!**) "**every 'spirit'**" (present tense)
 - **Sadly, many are gullible...** (if someone **seems nice...** Or **uses the name Jesus...**)
- **Unbelief** - can be **as much a mark of spiritual maturity** as belief... ("**Doctrine divides?**" nah!)
- V. 1 - **But test the spirits**. - **Test (dokimazo)** - "to examine, prove, scrutinize (whether a thing is genuine or not), as metals; to approve or deem worthy" - **careful examination, frauds exist...**
 - This is **the responsibility of every Christian**, but **especially of church eldership**.
 - **Okay, so how to test?** By the **Word, Spirit, Church**. **How to spot a counterfeit?**
 - **Treasury agents** study the **real thing on repeat (but also aware of common frauds)**
- V. 1 - **Whether they are of God** - This is **the big Q**. Which "**spirit**" is behind the message...?

V. 1 - Because **many false prophets** have gone out into the world... (rough seas...) **Pirates out there!**

- **Pseudoprophets**. Sadly, "**Many...**"
 - **Matthew 7:15** - "Beware of false prophets, **who come in sheep's clothing** but inwardly are ravenous wolves..."
 - **2 Cor. 11:13-15, NLT** - "These people are false apostles. **They are deceitful workers who disguise themselves as apostles of Christ**. But I am not surprised! Even Satan

disguises himself as an angel of light. So it is no wonder that his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness..."

- V. 2 - **By this you know** the Spirit of God - great, **another test!** (thankful for them ("gauges" help!))
- V. 2 - Every spirit that **confesses** that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God...
 - V. 3 - Every spirit that **does not confess** that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God...
 - **Main issue** = **Christology**. Specifically, **The Doctrine of the Incarnation**. (**God in the flesh**)
 - **His true deity** (**Christ, Son**)
 - **His true humanity** (**in the flesh**)
 - **Come in the flesh** (**perfect tense**) = a **past action** with **permanent significance**.
 - Jesus **has come in the flesh** and **never laid it aside**. **Combats Docetism** (only "**appeared**" to)
 - **If Jesus did not** truly **come in the flesh**, then: **He did not suffer, die, resurrect bodily, atone!**
 - **The incarnation is the "hinge" on which everything swings!**
 - **John 1:1,14** - "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and **the Word was God... and the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory...**"
 - **Col 2:9, CSB** - "For the **entire fullness of God's nature dwells bodily in Christ**"
 - **Confesses vs does not confess** - **which camp are you?**
 - **Confess** (**homo**" (same) + "**logeo**" (to say)) = "to speak the same word or say the same thing." - to agree with and **acknowledge**. **But it's more than just intellectual...**
 - **Demons, admit, but don't submit** (**James 2, Mark 3, Matthew 8**)
 - **Who do you say that I am?** (**gnosticism, J-Dubs, Mormonism, Islam, Gandhi, Christian Science (mere man who spirit enabled), liberal progressivism, post modernism, others...**)
 - **Galatians 1:6-9** - "I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you to live in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—which is really no gospel at all. **Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let them be under God's curse! As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let them be under God's curse!**"
 - **Some of you are easily impressed** by **confident, enthusiastic, charismatic** people (**influencers**)
 - **John is warning the church to be careful...**
- V. 3 - And this is **the spirit of the Antichrist** - **Remember? Anti-Christos** ("against" or "in lieu of")
- V. 3 - Which you have **heard was coming** - **Many warnings; On repeat; until final culmination.**
 - V. 3 - And is **now already in the world**. - Ever **since Christ came**, and **still to this day...** (**\$3 bill**)
- V. 4 - **You are of God**, little children - love it. **Identity of the church!** ("**You**" is **empathic!**)
- V. 4 - And **have overcome** them, **Aint no stoppin what Jesus be drooppin!**
 - **Overcome** (**nikao** = **perfect tense**) - **completed action with ongoing effects.**
 - **Disarmed, public spectacle, crushed head, triumphed over! Victory has been won.**
 - **John 16:33** - "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, **I have overcome the world.**"
 - **We have overcome, because Christ has overcome!**
 - V. 4 - **He who is in you is greater** than he who is in the world. - **Let's gooooo!!!!**
 - **Do you believe that?** I hope you do... **He vs he** - **Spirit of Christ vs the antichrist.**
 - And **Christ is greater** than **anything you will face!** (**David vs Goliath, people!**)

- John 10:27-30 - "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, **is greater than all**; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand. I and My Father are one."
- **Picture a child walking beside his father** through a dangerous neighborhood... The confidence is **not in the child. It's in the father**. (And, **he's packing! ha!**)
- 2 Kings 6:15-17, NLT - "When the servant of the man of God got up early the next morning and went outside, there were troops, horses, and chariots everywhere. 'Oh, sir, what will we do now?' the young man cried to Elisha. 'Don't be afraid!' Elisha told him. '**For there are more on our side than on theirs!**' Then Elisha prayed, 'O Lord, open his eyes and let him see!' **The Lord opened the young man's eyes**, and when he looked up, he saw that the hillside around Elisha was filled with horses and chariots of fire."
- The goal of all this is **not to make you paranoid, but prepared** (with **a working compass!**)
- **Deep sea fish**: Pressure on the inside is **equal/greater** than pressure of the water around them.

Connect some dots here...

- V. 20 - "God is **greater than our heart**"
- V. 4 - "He who is in you is **greater than he who is in the world**"
- **John's answer to both threats**: **internal & external**, is the same... **God is greater!**

Some **final perspective** here from the Apostle John (and another "test" of sorts...) **(divide!)**

- V. 5 - **They are of the world**. ("**they**" is **emphasized** = "**false prophets**" (influenced by "**sprits**")
- V. 5 - Therefore **they speak as of the world** (*kosmos*), the **world system that is against God**.
 - Jeremiah 23:16-22, ESV - "Thus says the Lord of hosts: '**Do not listen to the words of the prophets who prophesy to you**, filling you with vain hopes. They speak visions of their own minds, not from the mouth of the Lord. They say continually to those who despise the word of the Lord, 'It shall be well with you'; and to everyone who stubbornly follows his own heart, they say, 'No disaster shall come upon you.'" For who among them has stood in the council of the Lord to see and to hear his word... I did not send the prophets, yet they ran; I did not speak to them, yet they prophesied. But if they had stood in my council, then they would have proclaimed my words to my people, and they would have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their deeds."
 - False teaching is **shaped by the surrounding culture's values**.
 - Often, it will **not require repentance**. It will **not name sin**. It will **appease pleasure**...
 - It **may even sound reasonable**, and be **broadly appealing**.
 - V. 5 - And **the world hears them**. Road is **broad** that leads to destruction and **many are on it**"
- V. 6 - **We are of God** - **Contrast "emphasis" again ...of kingdoms / identities / families...**
- V. 6 - He who **knows God hears us** - **Us/we** = "**apostolic authority**" (**direct antithesis**)
 - For us: **the Scriptures**. It may **not always be popular or affirming**, but it is **true north!**
 - V. 6 - He who is **not of God** does not hear us. Makes sense. **Not of God, not follow God's ways**.
 - **The Church** will "hear" (**shema**); **the world** will not... "**he who has an ear to hear...**"
- V. 6 - **By this we know** - All of this circles back to the **Doctrine of Assurance**. **Confidence. peace**.
- V. 6 - The **spirit of truth** and the **spirit of error**. - **all rests on the person of Jesus**.

- “When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth” (John 16:13)

Practical compass to carry home: (skip if low on time...)

- **The Christological Test:** Does this teaching give the real Jesus — fully God, fully man?
- **The Source Test:** Is this rooted in Scripture or misused in Scripture but sourced in culture?
- **Error (plane):** same root as 'planet,' a wandering star. The spirit of error wanders...

Closing:

God cares about the truth “in here” and “out there”

- **The same Spirit** who gives you assurance in the harbor gives you discernment on the seas.
- Ship returning to harbor (church!), repairs, refuels, rests, then sails again with compass ready.
- A **clear course charted through the fog and waves** (aircraft carriers, not jetskies!)

Call to action...

PRAY