

Series intro: Today we are going to continue our series in 1 John called “Set the record straight”. The focus of this series is to gain a correct understanding of our relationships with God, and People through the lens of scripture.

- Today, we’ll begin part two called “Our Source of Confidence”

Last week, we talked about Our Assurance of faith from 1 John chapter 1. This week, we are going to build on that, by learning how we can have confidence in our walks with God.

When we think about confidence, it seems like something you’re either born with or not. Some people are just naturally confident, and...others..not so much. I remember, as a teenager, when I thought I was old enough to have a girlfriend. I remember spraying on WAAAAAY to much Axes body spray, and being WAAAAAY to concerned with my “outfit selection”, because you never know “who you’ll run into”. In all unsuccessful efforts, one thing became very obvious to me about the opposite sex...Girls like confidence. Not cockiness, but confidence...unfortunately, growing up I didn’t have either of these.

I remember one day, asking God, in my hormonal, teenage, frustration, “how can I become more confident in myself”? As I thought about this, it was like the Lord, spoke to my heart and said “confidence in Me will produce confidence in you”. Now, I’m not saying that God put this thought in my heart, so He could help me improve my “game”. But what God spoke to my heart was a deep truth. Confidence in our walk with Him, enables us to be confident in ourselves. As we become confident in our walks with God, something happens. We learn who we are in Him, and how big He is. As a result we can live this life with confidence, because were connected to our source of confidence.

I believe this message is important because, because before many of us got saved our source of confidence was what we had in the world, but now as believers that is no longer our source, its our relationship with Jesus, but sometimes we get this twisted. Today I want to set the record straight, showing us, believer or not, where our confidence comes from.

In 1 John chapter 2, the Apostle John addresses this, by giving 4 points to his readers Appreciate what He did, Apply His commands, Avoid the Fake, and Abide in truth.

Lets begin with our first point....

Appreciate what He Did

Read V1-2 - When we read 1 John chapter 1 it seems like John is coming down pretty hard on sin, in such a way, that you would develop a fear of sin, but like any good spiritual parent, John is simply giving them a warning. Like it says in 1 John 1:8 it's impossible to "not sin", but John is telling them to be on guard against their sin.

He knows that its impossible not to sin, so he gives us the solution

"This word Advocate means, "one called alongside". As our Advocate, Jesus comes alongside those who have fallen, and lifts them up. Satan the accuser wants to kick you when your down and keep you under condemnation. He wants to develop a victim mentality rather than a victorious one in Christ. John reveals an amazing truth to His readers, that Christ is our everlasting forgiveness!

Jesus is able to be our Advocate because he paid for our sins on the cross.

The word propitiation means to "appease to satisfaction". In ancient times people knew that if you wanted to appease the gods you needed to offer various gifts to satisfy them. However, God because of His love for the world provided His own sacrifice for His wrath by sending Jesus. **John 3:16 – For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.**

Mankind has forgiveness through the sacrifice of Jesus, but the truth is that not everyone in the world has accepted this forgiveness.

In Jesus, God has announced to our world that He has taken care of our sins, but not everyone will choose to accept it. It's a free gift to anyone, but we must accept it in order to take advantage of it. One biblical commentator once said - Sin need not be a barrier between God and man, if man will receive the propitiation God has provided in Jesus.

Transition: **Our source of confidence comes from appreciating what He's**

done for us. When we do this it puts a desire in us to apply His commands to our lives

Apply His Commands

Read V3-6 - Keeping His commands: Here John is again challenging what the Gnostics believe, that “head knowledge” is enough evidence to prove they know God. Looking back to 1 John 1, John is saying that if someone says that they “know” God but don’t keep His commands that they are lying and the truth of the gospel isn’t in them. Spurgeon once said - *It will never save a soul to know about Christ. The only saving knowledge is to know him, his very self, and to trust him, the living Savior, who is now at the right hand of God.*” The point John is making, is that even though the Gnostics claim to know God, if what they “know”, doesn’t translate into applying Gods commands to their lives, they are lying.

- Here John is saying that our maturity in Christ comes down to our obedience to His commands

He who says he abides should walk like Him: In the Greek, abide means to remain in Him. John is saying that our lives should look like the life Jesus lived, if we claim to know Him

- The test of our relationship with Jesus is whether or not it produces a reflection of the life of Jesus in our daily life. John is also saying that if it fails this basic test then our claim is false. In **John 13:15** Jesus said – **For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.**
 - How can our lives look like the life Jesus lived? It’s through the Holy Spirit. That is why it’s so important to know Gods word and follow the leading of the Holy Spirit. As we submit to the Spirits rule, He brings our actions into alignment with Jesus’.

Read V7-11 - The New Commandment: The commandment that John is giving here, was at the same time, both old (in the sense that the believers already knew about it), and new in the sense that its still relevant today. This comes from **John 13:34** – Jesus said – **A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one**

another. Here John makes sense of the “old yet new” meaning. For us today, the commandment to love one another is something we’ve heard before, but it’s new in the fact that the kind of love Jesus is talking about is foreign to most of the world.

- It is important to know that Jesus modeled this for us when he lived on earth. Jesus was known for displaying a kind of love that was sacrificial, something that up until the cross, the world had never seen.
 - The reference to the true light is already shining: is talking about the finished work of Jesus, and how it is impacting the world through the lives of people.

He who says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness until now: John examines our walk with God based on our love for other believers. Many times we don’t think about this. We think that our relationship with God is measured by the commandments we keep, but it’s also measured by our love for other believers. Therefore, John is saying if we claim to know God but hate our brother, our claim is hollow.

- John is characterizing the false Gnostic believers, of that time, who claimed to know God, but were known for their hostility towards other believers. John is saying here that their lack of love is evidence of their false claim to know God. Jesus said in John 13:15 – **By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.**

Unfortunately, in the church, many times we are not known for this. There have been many people who refuse to go to church anymore, because of the wounds that they have received from people in the church.

- In her book, “Wounded” Ann Graham Lotz writes that when we experience hurt in the church our next response is critical. She gives two examples of two responses we can have after we’ve experience hurt in the church
 - We can respond in Prayer – In the book of 1 Samuel, Hannah was wounded, because she couldn’t have children. Her response was to pray. **1 Samuel 1:10 She prayed to the Lord and wept in anguish.** The Lord would later grant her prayer request and she had many children, one being the prophet Samuel.
 - We can respond by taking control or lashing out – In Genesis 16, Sarah Abrahams wife was wounded because she too wasn’t able to have children, but instead of taking her wound to the Lord she took control and lashed out at people, and ultimately, God

promise of her son Isaac was delayed.

- Which one are we? Do we take things into our own hands and lash out? Or do we go to God in prayer. To quote from her book, Ann Graham Lotz says “Prayer puts wounding in perspective. Prayer can help heal your hurt and take the sting away. When I focus on God and who he is, my wounding don’t seem so intimidating and my hurt becomes smaller

Does not stumble: **But what about the person who offends people?**

In verse 10 from the (NLT) it says - **Anyone who loves a fellow believer is living in the light and does not cause others to stumble.** This basically means that those who are walking in the Light don’t cause others to stumble. Meaning that they don’t have a habit of offending people in the church.

Transition: **When we apply His commands into our lives keep His commands we grow spiritually, and when we grow spiritually we learn to recognize what’s real and avoid the fake.**

Avoid the fake

Read V12-14 - In these verses John is speaking to the different levels of spiritual maturity, and is making the point that while everyone is at a different level spiritually; we are all called to continually grow in our walk with the Lord. It is this continued growth, in the Lord, that enables us to identify what’s real in this world.

John then goes the benefit of growing spiritually, that it helps us recognize what’s real

Read V15-17 - Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. Here John isn’t talking about the physical earth, or humanity, because God loves those things (John 3:16), but He is talking about the rebellious spirit of the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him: Simply, love for the world is incompatible with love for the Father. Therefore if one claims to love God and yet loves the world, there is something wrong with what he’s saying. Kind of like saying, “I’m standing in a pool, but my clothes aren’t

wet". It just doesn't make sense"._

- Through the centuries, Christians have struggled with this idea of being in the world, but not loving it. At one time it was thought that if you were a really committed Christian, and really wanted to love God instead of the world, you would leave human society and live as a monk or a nun out in a desolate monastery. This approach, and other approaches that seek to take us out of the world, have two problems.
 - The first problem is that we bring the world with us into our monastery.
 - The second problem is that Jesus intended us to be in the world but not of the world.

When John is talking about not loving the world, he's not saying that everything in the world is evil, obviously we can find things in our world that are good, but what he is talking about who we're living our lives for, because that exposes what we love.

- The world promotes worldly living by encouraging people to live for themselves based on three things the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. These lusts seek to draw us into sin and the world's way of living. These things are inherently selfish and promote a "me first mentality".
 - John makes it clear that living for these things are not of the Father but is of the world: Meaning that these things are out of step with how God has called us to live life, but even if we did we would be wasting out time because they are passing away.

Read V18-23 - The Anti-Christ refers to the coming final world ruler who will be empowered by satan and seek to oppose Christ. The language implies that John's readers had been taught to expect an antichrist in connection with the closing days of the world. However John doesn't apply this word to the literal Anti-Christ, but anyone that denies Christ.

- Little children, it is the last hour: John lived in the constant expectancy of Jesus' return, regarding his time as the last hour. This indicates that John expected that the presence of many antichrists. One biblical commentator said - **This is an expectancy that we should also have, knowing that the Lord's return can come at any time. Seeing the nature of our times and what the Bible says about the end times, we should regard ourselves as being in the last few minutes.**

- Some might think, “why hasn’t Jesus returned yet”? I don’t know, but what I can tell you for sure is that He promised He would. [Revelation 22:12](#) Jesus says – [And behold I am coming quickly, and my reward is with me, to give to everyone according to his work.](#) [2 Peter 3:8-10](#) also tells us that Gods not taking a nap, but allowing more and more people to come to know Him.

John goes on to talk about the antichrist leaving the church in Ephesus

They went out from us: This shows that many of these antichrists at one time or another identified themselves with Christian communities. The fact that they left the body of Christ demonstrated that they were not of us to begin with.

- John wasn’t talking about someone who leaves one church to begin attending another good church. He meant those who leave the community of God’s people all together. This reveals that they were never really part of God’s people to begin with.
 - John is writing this letter is because the Gnostics may have separated themselves, but they were promoting their twisted religion by telling people that their beliefs were rooted in Christianity. This was a clear misrepresentation of what Christianity is, so John is clarifying that they aren’t connected with the church.

In light of this danger, John tells the believers how they can avoid the fake

You have an anointing: Here John referred to a common anointing, belonging to all believers. This anointing marks those that are true believers verses the anti-Christ. Anointing has the idea of being filled with and blessed by the Holy Spirit. This is something that is the common for all Christians. And you know all things: Because of the anointing of the Holy Spirit given to all believers, they possess the resources for knowing the truth. This isn’t to say that teachers are unnecessary, because John is teaching them, but He is also showing them that they don’t need the “higher knowledge” the Gnostics boasted about.

John goes on to teach them that..

Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? The context makes it clear that to affirm that Jesus is the Christ has to do with more than just saying, "He is the Christ." It has to do with understanding the relationship between Jesus and God the Father:

- John here repeated an idea that Jesus expressed often, as recorded in the Gospel of John. Jesus said, **He who believes in Me, believes not in Me but in Him who sent Me. And he who sees Me sees Him who sent Me (John 12:44-45). He who receives Me receives Him**
 - The point being that you cant have Jesus without the Father and vice versa

Transition: **When we know how to avoid what's fake we can abide in the truth.**

Abide in the Truth

Read V24-27 - That which you have heard from the beginning: John is saying here, that the best way for his readers to protect themselves against the false teachings of the antichrists is to stick to the original gospel message that was given to them by the Apostles.

It is amazing how the simplicity of the Gospel message can keep someone from the error of false teaching. As human begins we are naturally attracted to what's new, we think that because it "new" that means its better, but when it comes to truth new is not better, the original is always better.

- The apostle Paul communicated the same idea in Galatians 1:6-9, where he warns against going after a new gospel and emphasizes the importance of continuing on in the original gospel that Paul taught.
 - For us as believers, we abide in the original message of the gospel when we stay in Gods word. Its not that we cant read other books but, the scriptures have to be the central thing we are taking in, otherwise we can get lost in the "new ideas", that lead us from the original message of the gospel. This is important because eternal life is only found in the original message of the gospel

When we abide in the original message of the gospel we can be confident when Jesus does return

Read V28-29 - that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed: Abiding in Jesus means that we need not be afraid or ashamed when Jesus returns. This is because we have intimately known Him, and therefore we can have confidence at His coming.

- John brings up so that believers won't be ashamed when Jesus returns. To be ashamed at His return, is to see His face to face and realize that we never lived for Him, or sought to accomplish His calling on our lives.
 - When you abide in Him, you are ready for Jesus to come at any time. What does John mean by abide in Him? He is talking about remaining in Him.

In conclusion:

TO SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT on Our Source of confidence, we need to remember that being confident in Him produces lasting confidence in us. This happens as we Appreciate what Jesus did, Apply His commands to our lives, Avoid the fake, and Abide in truth.

Altar call

Pastors and prayer team come forward.