

First John 3:21-24
The Struggle of an Accusing Conscience

- 1) How does John address his readers?—3:21 ²¹ *Beloved^{pl}*,
- 2) The importance of a clear conscience in matters of prayer—3:21-22
 - a) What are two benefits of having a clear conscience before God?
 - i) Confident access to God—*if* [3rd class condition] *our heart should not be condemning* [pres. act. subj. καταγινώσκω] *us*, (then) *we are having* [pres. act. ind. ἔχω] *boldness* [παρρησία] *before* [πρός] *God* (the Father),
 - (1) Doing righteousness (3:1-9) and loving other believers (3:10-20) gives us boldness because it demonstrates that our faith is genuine. When a Christian recognizes the manifestation of love in deeds and actions in his life, it results in confidence about his relationship with God.
 - (2) Christlike love banishes self-condemning insecurity and in its place leaves confidence toward God.
 - ii) Answered prayer—²² *and whatever* (if) [3rd class condition] *we may be asking* [pres. act. subj. αἰτέω] (then) *we are receiving* [pres. act. ind. λαμβάνω] *from Him* (the Father),
 - b) What are the conditions for God to answer my prayers?—3:22b *Because* [ὅτι] ...
 - i) Embrace the Father's word—*we are keeping* [pres. act. ind. τηρέω] *His* (the Father's) *commandments* [ἐντολή]
 - ii) Please the Father—*and we are doing* [pres. act. ind. ποιέω] *the things pleasing* [ἀρεστός] *in His* (the Father's) *presence* [ἐνώπιον].
- 3) What is the 2-fold command of the Father?—3:23 ²³ *And this is His* (the Father's) *commandment* [ἐντολή], *that* [ἵνα] ...
 - a) Godward—*we should trust* [aor. act. subj. πιστεύω] *in the name of His Son, Jesus Christ*,
 - b) Manward—*and that we should be loving* [pres. act. subj. ἀγαπάω] *one another, just as He* (the Father) *gave* [aor. act. ind. δίδωμι] *a command* [ἐντολή]. (cf. 2nd John 1:4-5)
- 4) We can know the reality of God's indwelling presence—3:24
 - a) Mutual indwelling—²⁴ *And the one who is characterized by keeping* [pres. act. ptc. τηρέω] *His* (the Father's) *commandments* [ἐντολή] *is residing* [pres. act. ind. μένω] *in Him* (the Father), *and He* (the Father) *in him*.
 - b) This knowledge comes from the Holy Spirit—*And by this we are knowing* [pres. act. ind. γινώσκω] *that* [ὅτι] *He* (the Father) *is residing* [pres. act. ind. μένω] *in us*, *by* [ἐκ] *the Spirit whom He* (the Father) *gave* [aor. act. ind. δίδωμι] *to us* (at Pentecost and now at salvation).
 - i) Just as Jesus promised in: John 14:16-17, 23-26; 15:26; 16:13-15