

First John 4:17-19

- 1) Positive argument: the presence of love enables confidence concerning future evaluation—4:17 <sup>17</sup> *By this* [ἐν οὗτος] (cf. 4:16b?) *the love* [ἀγάπη] *has been perfected* [pf. pass. ind. τελειόω] (brought to its intended conclusion; cf. 4:12) *with* [μετά] *us* (i.e. in our case),
  - a) To what end? *so that* [ἵνα] *we may have* [pres. act. subj. ἔχω] *confidence* [παρρησία] *in the day of the judgment* [κρίσις];
    - i) Love for one another brings confidence concerning future evaluation
  - b) Why do we have such confidence? Because we stand approved by God, just like Christ—*because* [ὅτι] *just as That One* (Jesus; cf. 2:6; 3:3, 5, 7, 16) *is* [pres. act. ind. εἰμί], **we** (emphatic) *also are* [pres. act. ind. εἰμί] *in this world*.
    - i) By loving one another, we are acting like Christ did while He was on earth.
- 2) Negative argument: the presence of love enables the expulsion of fear concerning future evaluation—4:18 <sup>18</sup> *There is* [pres. act. ind. εἰμί] *no dread* [φόβος] *in love* [ἀγάπη],
  - a) Strong contrast—**but** [ἀλλά] (emphatic) *perfect* [τέλειος] *love* [ἀγάπη] *casts out* [pres. act. ind. βάλλω] *dread* [φόβος] (concerning future evaluation; cf. John 5:24),
    - i) “Fear is part of a relationship based on performance, with punishment for failure. A mutual relationship of love not based on performance eliminates all fear.” (Magill)
    - ii) As love increases, fear decreases. As fear increases, love decreases.
  - b) Why?
    - i) The reality of hell—*because* [ὅτι] *dread* [φόβος] *has* [pres. act. ind. ἔχω] (eternal) *punishment* [κόλασις],  
(1) cf. Matthew 25:46)
    - ii) The reality of the unbeliever—and *the one characterized by dreading* [pres. dep. ptc. φοβέω] (punishment) *is not perfected* [pf. pass. ind. τελειόω] *in* [ἐν] *love* [ἀγάπη].
  - c) No amount of human faithfulness can counteract the judgment that human faithlessness calls forth. (Yarbrough)
- 3) Positive argument: God’s love enables our love which produces confidence concerning future evaluation—4:19 <sup>19</sup> **We** (emphatic) *love* [pres. act. subj. ἀγαπάω] *Him*
  - a) Textual note:
    - i) CT omits “Him”; the context is about loving one another
    - ii) MT includes “Him”; the next verse addresses love for God
  - b) Why? *because* [ὅτι] **He** (emphatic) *loved* [aor. act. ind. ἀγαπάω] *us first*.
    - i) His love enables our love.
  - c) “Our love is a result of the relationship, not a cause of it. It is the visible results of our relationship with the invisible God.” (Magill)
  - d) “The glory of God is seen in the way that God loves people such that they come to love the same way He does.” (Hamilton)