

# Sermon Handout

## Confidence in our Faith

### I John 3:17-24

#### I. A Key Theme of John's Letter

- a. Christians are moving toward sinlessness 3:2  
God's goal is to move us into a sinless state; but not immediately.
- b. It is our duty, therefore, to strive against sin 3:3 *cf.* 1:6-10
  - i. The one remaining (abiding) in Jesus does not sin 3:1, 5-6
  - ii. The one born of God does not practice sin 3:9 *cf.* 2:6
- c. God gives us confidence in our conversion 3:16
  - i. Confession of sins 1:9
  - ii. Sanctification 2:3-5, 24-25
  - iii. Brotherly love 2:7-11; 4:20 (Lev 19:18; Rom 13:8-10)

#### II. John Expands on his Central Theme

- a. Loving our neighbor vv. 17-21
  - i. Laying down our lives (as Jesus did) v. 16  
But here it is sharing needed goods v. 17 *cf.* Acts 4:34-35
  - ii. Love in "deed and truth" not merely in speech *cf.* Jas 2:14-17
  - iii. Lack of compassion signals no love of God  
*cf.* Rom 5:5; Jn 15:9; 13:34 (God's love in us)
  - iv. Readiness to share gives us confidence vv. 19-20
    1. Our obedience demonstrates God's presence with us v. 19
    2. God overrules our doubting hearts v. 20
- b. An effective prayer life vv. 21-22
  - i. With the confidence of our corrected conscience, we pray.
  - ii. In harmony with Jesus our prayers are effective v. 22 *cf.* Jn 15:7  
*See* Jas 5:16-18 (*cf.* I Kg 17-18); Rom 8:26-27
- c. Honoring the Ten Words vv. 23-24
  - i. The new/old commandment reiterated *cf.* 2:7-8
  - ii. Love God: "Believe in Jesus" Jn 10:30; 14:10-11, 21, 23; Dt 6:4
  - iii. Love your neighbor: "love one another" *cf.* 1:7; 2:10; Lev 19:18
  - iv. He that keeps these commandments abides in Jesus and has the Spirit dwelling within him. *See* 3:1, 5-6; Jn 15:4

#### III. The Lesson for Believers

- a. No Christian is exempt from the tendency to fall into sinful behavior.
- b. Yet God provides a means to give us confidence in our faith.