



## Pray

What personal condemnations do you need to replace with God's promises of love and grace? Take time in prayer to rest in God's love for you.

Follow verses 21-22 and pray in confidence before God.  
What can you ask from Him that is in keeping with His will?

Pray a prayer of thanksgiving and praise to God the Holy Spirit for His reassuring presence in your life (24).



**Help for Hurting Heart | 1 John 3:18-24**

Study Guide 10 for sermon on 3/07/2021



## Introduction

Once upon a time, we sold our house. We had fixed and replaced every visible problem. Then we found termites. Our biggest problem was internal and unseen. It's interesting how the human heart can resemble a house with termites. We protect ourselves from so many outward threats, but sometimes our own heart, emotions, or internal voice can be our greatest nemesis.

So far in 1 John, the apostle has bolstered the church against external threats who teach an anti-Jesus message. Now he turns his attention to our internal nemesis with these words, "whenever our hearts condemn us...." He doesn't say "if" but "when." It's a certainty that at some point God's children will experience feelings of doubt, condemnation, or self-loathing of many kinds. How should we respond when we face these internal accusations? John's words give the believer rock solid assurance, and turn a condemning heart into a praising heart.



## Overview

**Context:** There is a wonderful pattern to John's writing. He often alternates between demanding teachings and words of affection. For example, 1:5-2:11 contains some challenging material for the church.

Then 2:12-14 is an incredibly affectionate poem in which he reassures his precious church. The passage you're studying today is a lot like that poem! In the previous passages John has spoken hard but necessary truths about sin and hatred. These are areas in which all Christians fall short. So in verses 18-24, he reassures the reader of the multiple evidences in their lives of God's love for them. This is a passage for doubters.

**Structure:**

- I. Confidence in God's grace (vv. 18-22)
- II. Doing what God wants (vv. 23-24)



**Engage**

1. Look at verse 18 in your Bible. It may come as the last sentence to a paragraph that starts in verse 13. Why would it make sense for verse 18 to be the start of a new paragraph that includes verses 19 and 20?
2. How can loving "in action and truth" (v. 18) give us reassurance that we "belong to the truth" (v. 19)?
3. What are some reasons that believers might have a condemning conscience? A hurting heart? (v. 20)
4. Why should we look to God for assurance and not our own consciences? (v. 20)
5. Verse 22 says believers receive whatever we ask from God in prayer. Can you find one or two examples in the Gospels where Jesus said the same thing? How might a non-believer misunderstand this verse?
6. Verse 22 says God answers our prayers because we keep his commands. Where in the immediate passage does John describe which "commands" he has in view?
7. Verse 23 says we are to "believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ." It's common to think of this only as a reference to one's conversion. However, how does this line inform our sanctification?
8. Verse 23 says we are to "love one another as he commanded us." How is your Growth Group practicing love to each other as Jesus commanded us, a love in action and in truth (v. 18)? What needs to stay the same? What needs to change? If you are not in a Growth Group, answer this question in relation to your closest relationships: family, friends, church, coworkers. etc.
9. Using verses 18-24, see how many different ways God gives us reassurance of our salvation.