

Loving Obedience to God is Not Burdensome (1 John 5:1-3)

How can I be assured of my salvation?

1. *He walks in the light as God is in the light, and is the light (1:5-7)*
2. *He sees his sin, confesses it, and repents of it (1:8-10)*
3. *He abides in Jesus and walks as He walked (2:1-6)*
4. *He loves the brethren in word and deed (2:7-11; 3:14-18)*
5. *He does not love the world (2:15-17)*
6. *He practices righteousness considering Christ's return (2:28-3:3)*
7. *He sins less, not sinless (3:4-7)*
8. *God's seed abides in him, not the devil's (3:8-10)*
9. *The world hates him because of God's righteousness in him (3:11-13)*
10. *His heart (conscience) does not condemn him (3:19-22)*
11. *The Spirit of Christ (Holy Spirit) dwells in him (3:23-24)*
12. *He listens to the truth in growing discernment (4:1-6)*
13. *He loves God and His saints because God's love is wrought through him (4:7-12)*
14. *He confesses that Jesus is the Son of God (4:13-16)*
15. *He has no present or future fear of punitive judgment from God (v.17-18)*

16. He believes that Jesus is the Christ (5:1)

- John has previously argued that Jesus is the Son of God (begotten, not made, one-of-a-kind), focusing on the eternality of the Son.
- The word "Christ" means messiah or anointed one. This speaks to the mission (goal) of the incarnation, which is to deliver God's people from their sins. The predicted One has come (Isa 7:14; Ps. 2:2; Ps. 22; 26).
- To appropriate the accomplishments of the mission of the Son, there must be "belief."
 - While the verbs "believe" (5:1) and "confess" (2:22-23; 4:2-3) are different, the result is the same. Belief emphasizes internal change, and to confess is to agree with God. Both are inclusive of one another.
- The "believing" is in the present tense, which indicates a continual process. The belief is in the work of Jesus, as Messiah, and is apart from any work as a result of that belief.

How does someone believe that Jesus is the Christ?

- He is born of God (from God). The Greek word (born) is used three times (v.1), though it appears only twice in English. The word "Father" is not in Greek.
- The translation should read, "Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is *born* of (from) God, and everyone loving (the One) Who *begot* (Him) also loves him who is *begotten* of Him."
 - The word "born" is in the perfect tense, which indicates a past event having a completed action and reality.
 - Believing in Jesus as the Christ results from being born of (from God), not a means to that birth. Birth precedes belief.
- The Father is identified as the One begetting us. We are begotten (birthed and made) in Christ (begotten, not made).
- The Father, after giving us life (Jam. 1:17-18) through the Holy Spirit (Tit. 1:5-6), makes us like Himself. The children of God are like the Father Who has already begotten them.

How are we like the Father?

- A. The Father loves the Son (John 15:9).
- B. The Father loves those He has given to the Son (1 Jn. 3:1).

Evidence of already being born from God is demonstrated by love towards the Father. Love towards the Father is expressed in love toward His people (v.1). Right belief will yield the right conduct.

17. He loves God and obeys His commandments (5:2)

- "By this, we know" (2:3, 4, 5; 3:10, 16, 19, 24; 4:2, 9-10, 13, 17; 5:2) we love the children of God.
 - John continues his theme of loving one another that he stated previously (2:10; 3:14, 16, 17-18, 23; 4:11, 12, 19-21; 5:1-2).
- "Loving God" (v.2) is in the present tense. Evidence of loving God vertically is expressed in the horizontal love toward those who are His children (born of Him).
- Love is concerned with the well-being of the object of its affection (as God defines and describes love) since it is essential to God and those born from Him.
- Evidence of being born from God is love towards Him, His children, and obedience to His commandments.

What are "the commandments"?

- John is reflecting on the teachings and commandments of the life and ministry of Jesus, particularly in the Upper Room Discourse (Jn. 13:34-35).
- The commandments:
 - are any commandments that reflect the moral law, which reveals the character of God in the Ten Commandments, as well as the teachings of Jesus and His apostles in the New Testament.
 - are those inaugurated with the New Covenant through positive law (baptism, Lord's Supper, church government, etc.).
- God has commanded His people to love Him, and out of that love, obey Him (Ex. 20:6; Deut. 5:10; 7:9; 10:12-13; Dan. 9:4; Jn. 14:15, 21-24; 15:10, 14; 1 Jn. 2:3-6; 2 Jn. 1:6).
- The love of those born from (of) Him is expressed through obedience to His commands.
- The immediate context is love toward the brethren. Other expressions of this love are:
 - Outdoing one another in honor (Rom. 12:10); refusing to pass judgment on tertiary issues of the faith (Rom. 14:13); instructing one another (Rom. 15:14); serving one another in love (Gal. 5:13); refusing to entertain deceit, envy, or provoking one another to anger (Gal. 5:26); carrying one another's burdens (Gal. 6:2); being patient with one another (Eph. 4:2); being kind and compassionate with one another (Eph. 4:32); forgiving one another (Eph. 4:32); speaking to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs (Eph. 5:19); submitting to one another (Eph. 5:21); not lying to one another (Col. 3:9); overlooking grievances (Col. 3:13); encouraging one another (1 Thess. 4:18; 5:11); spurring one another toward love and good deeds (Heb. 10:24-25); confessing sins to one another and praying for one another (Jam. 5:13-16); and offering hospitality to one another without grumbling (1 Pet. 4:9).
- We are to keep the commandments (1 Tim. 6:13-14; 2 Tim. 4:7).
 - "To keep" means to attend to with precision or observe with detail. It is the picture of someone who is guarding something precious.
 - God's commandments are not burdensome but delightful (Ps. 1:2; 40:8; 119:14, 16, 24, 77, 92, 97, 103, 174).

Man is not regenerated, adopted, nor justified by obeying the commandments, for the commandments (law) are a heavy yoke and burden (Matt. 23:4; Acts 15:10; Gal. 5:1). Through the law comes the conviction of sin, misery of the soul, and physical/spiritual death (Rom 3:20-23; 5:13; 7:7-10; 2 Cor. 3:16).

Once regenerated (5:1), adopted (3:1), and justified (2:1) by the passive and active obedience of Christ secured by faith alone (apart from works), the moral commands which previously condemned us, are now instrumentally used by the Spirit to sanctify. Holiness and Christlikeness are wrought through obedience to the moral law/commandments (Rom. 7:12) and demonstrated through love towards God and His people.