

Confidence before God – where does this come from? As we move through the rest of chapter 3 and into chapter 4 John, emphasizes where this confidence comes from! And **it's NOT our WORKS – GOOD OR BAD!!**

A. God's LOVE for us –

Understanding God's love for us is KEY to having confidence and assurance before Him! Our confidence is not rooted in OUR WORKS; rather, it's rooted in GOD'S LOVE.

Four Truths about God's Love:

1 John 4:7–19 (ESV) ⁷ Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸ Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.

- 1. God IS Love. Love is FROM God. Real, Authentic, self-sacrificing LOVE comes from the source, God.**

1 John 3:1 (ESV) ¹ See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

- 2. God's Love is Familial – He invites us to become His Children – adopted into His family**
 - a. Adoption into His family; NOT just His creations. Rom 8:15**
 - b. Inheritance: co-heirs with Christ! Eternal life, resurrection, and fullness of God's Presence (Rom 8:17)**
 - c. Intimacy: we call God "Abba Father" (Gal 4:6)**
 - d. ALL possible through relationship with Christ! John 1:12 to ALL who received Him, who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God.**

1 John 4:9–10 (NIV) ⁹ This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. ¹⁰ This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

- 3. God's Love is Self-Sacrificing: He makes the way for us!**

- a. The Judge Analogy for Grace, Mercy, & Justice:** Imagine a person has committed a crime and stands before a judge.
 - i. Justice (What We Deserve)**
 - The Judge's Role: The judge must uphold the law based on the defendant's actions.
 - The Outcome: The defendant is proven guilty and is sentenced to the full penalty required by the law (e.g., a fine or jail time).
 - ii. Mercy (Not Getting What We Deserve)**
 - The Judge's Action: The judge, while acknowledging the guilt, decides to waive or reduce the penalty out of compassion.
 - The Outcome: The defendant is not sentenced to jail time, but their record remains stained, and they are not necessarily made better off.
 - iii. Grace (Getting What We Don't Deserve)**
 - The Judge's Action: The judge not only pardons the sentence (mercy) but then goes a step further by providing the defendant with an unearned, positive gift.

- The Outcome: The judge clears the defendant's record, pays the required fine out of their own pocket, and then offers them a scholarship or a job opportunity so they can start a new, productive life.
- **Grace is receiving a positive benefit you in no way earned or merited.**

Romans 5:8 (ESV) but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

THIS INVITATION INTO GOD'S FAMILY – RECEIVING SAVING GRACE – FORGIVENESS FOR SIN – is offered FREELY TO EVERYONE. You can receive this gift TODAY!

1 Timothy 2:3-4 (NIV) "This is good and pleases God our Savior, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth."

2 Peter 3:9 (NIV) "The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead, he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance."

Philippians 1:6 (ESV) ⁶ And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

Paul understood God's love, justice, mercy, & the grace freely given! (God wants us to understand it as well!)

God's Love is the REASON we can stand confidently before God! NOT based on our ability to DO good or BE perfect or get everything RIGHT – based on Christ's atoning sacrifice (JUSTICE SATISFIED) and God's mercy & grace granted to ALL who choose (through faith) to receive this GIFT!

4. God's Love is transformational: it saves us and transforms us! "perfected by God's love"

B. Being Perfected in God's Love...

Perfected "teleioo" means: To complete, add what is wanting, to make perfect, to carry through to completion, accomplish, finish.

PAUSE: What if I don't FEEL God's love? What if I feel FEAR & SHAME? And I don't have confidence before God? Does this mean I am not saved?

1 John 3:19-21 (ESV) By this we shall know that we are of the truth and reassure our heart before him; for whenever our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and he knows everything.

Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God;

- **You are saved by God's grace through faith in JESUS (period).** Not your works. Not your feelings.
- We follow God's Word, not our hearts. Change, healing, and freedom take TIME. PROCESS.
- A... B... C... D... Z!

Your feelings don't limit God's ability to work in and through your life! The only thing you can do to limit this is say, "NO."

1 John 4:7-21 (NIV) Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us. This is how we know that we live in him and he in us: He has given us of his Spirit. And

we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in them and they in God. And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them. This is how love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment: In this world we are like Jesus. There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. We love because he first loved us. Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen. And he has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister.

REMEMBER: 1 John 2:28 God desires us to have **CONFIDENCE!** → **1 John 4:17** Being **PERFECTED** in GOD's Love is how we gain this **CONFIDENCE!**

- **Shame (c.2 v.28) + Fear (c.4 v.17) rob us of confidence before God!**

Two means through which we are “perfected” in God’s Love:

1. **Faith in Jesus:** Believe, Confess, Abide (Remain & Continue with Him!)

1 John 4:15–17 (ESV) Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because as he is so also are we in this world.

2. **Love ALL People:** Not in word alone – words + ACTION!

1 John 3:18–21 (NIV) *Dear children, let us **not** love with words or speech **but** with actions and in truth. This is how we know that we belong to the truth and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence:*

1 John 4:11–12 (ESV) *Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.*

1 John 3:23–24 (ESV) ²³ And this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God, and God in him.

- **Our VERTICAL relationship with God is TIED together with our HORIZONTAL relationships with each other!**
- **Research has shown:** that serving and showing compassion to those in need who CANNOT pay you back has been shown to grow and strengthen the areas of the brain that govern: satisfaction, self-control, happiness, impulse control and other executive functions! WOW!

1 John 4:20–21 (ESV) If anyone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.

3. **BONUS: The Holy Spirit is given to ALL who believe in Jesus!** The Spirit testifies we are God’s children! Empowers us to DO God’s will! Transforms us! And causes us to bear fruit!!!!

1 John 3:24 (ESV) Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God, and God in him. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us.

1 John 4:13 (ESV) By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.

C. Loving People requires Action

1 John 3:11–18 (NIV) For this is the message you heard from the beginning: We should love one another. Do not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own actions were evil and his brother's were righteous. Do not be surprised, my brothers and sisters, if the world hates you. We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love each other. Anyone who does not love remains in death. Anyone who hates a brother or sister is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life residing in him. This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.

- 1. Loving others is a TOP priority!**
- 2. Love requires Forgiveness**
- 3. Love requires Sacrifice**
- 4. Love requires Generosity**
- 5. Love requires ACTION**

Action Steps to show Love for God & People: (ACTIONS require DOING)

1. Who is someone that you need to forgive? How can you show them love?
2. Is there something you could give up (e.g. hours on phone) to make room to serve and help other people?
3. How can you be more generous? Are you giving to help others?

REMEMBER: Loving others is a primary way that God perfects – completes US!

BAPTISM is a Covenantal Commitment to Christ: (this is part of faith in action!)

We are not saved through baptism, we are saved by grace through faith; yet, baptism is a necessary sacrament! It is a sign and seal of the promises of the New Covenant, a means of grace within a person's life through which the Holy Spirit strengthens the faith of the one being baptized, and it is a public declaration of our commitment to Christ.