

# WEDNESDAY 26 October 2022 "Clear Conscience"

## (1 John 3:18-20)

Good morning my "Walking with Jesus" friends,

I wonder if someone has ever said this to you: *'Your actions are speaking so loudly that I can't hear what you are saying' or maybe this simple statement: 'actions speak louder than words'.* We understand what it means, don't we, my friends? When a person's behavior contradicts their words, we believe their actions are a more accurate reflection of their heart, no matter what they might say, right? I wonder how this powerful truth has affected you in the relationships of your life journey.

Once again, we join the apostle John as he's writing his first letter to Christians in the first century. It's amazing how 20 centuries later, the issues you and I face in life seem to be so much the same as what people faced all across the Roman empire in that first century. John has picked up his stylus again and is writing the last part of his third chapter: ***"Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth."*** (1 John 3:18) There it is, John's appeal that our behavior and our words line up in obvious, consistent agreement. *No discord between what we claim and how we live. Do you say AMEN, or do you pass it off as out of touch with reality where you live in the world?*

*Do you notice John's priority on TRUTH? Seems to me the many times Jesus emphasized 'truth' impacted John's life deeply.* Over and over, as Jesus spoke with the people in large crowds or in private, Jesus said ***"I'm telling you the truth"***. Why? *Because then as now reliable, trustworthy, TRUTH was and is today rare yet valuable!* Truth was and is rare in business transactions. Truth was and is rare in government and politics. Truth was and is rare in too many relationships and so many everyday aspects of life. *So, what is your priority on TRUTH, my friend... in your life, your marriage, your family? And what standard do you set for TRUTH as paramount in your business transactions or the school classroom or political statements or judicial rulings? To what standard of TRUTH do you hold your doctor or your financial planner or your elected officials or the religious leaders you respect? Finally, is there anyone in your life to whom you've given the invitation to hold YOU accountable to a very high standard of YOU speaking and living truth?*

John continues his writing: ***"This then is how we know that we belong to the truth, and how we set our hearts at rest in His presence, whenever our hearts condemn us. For God is greater than our hearts, and He knows everything."*** (1 John 3:18-20) You and I have a conscience. John refers to it here as our hearts, and I have two important questions for us to consider...

1. *Is your conscience and mine truthful? Does our conscience place a high value on TRUTH?*

2. *What has influenced and shaped your conscience over your lifetime? How aligned is your conscience today with God's Holy standards of truth and ethics, moral right and wrong?*

You see, my friends, every day you and I come under an avalanche of influencing voices and images, thousands of them. *All of those voices and images either work to deaden our conscience so that our hearts become less and less aligned with God or those voices and images refine our conscience to bring our hearts more and more into alignment with God and His Holiness.* Now ponder that as you reflect on how your heart is affected by social media or advertising or your favorite radio stations or the movies & TV you watch or the friends you spend time with or the political voices you listen to or the amount of time you spend reading God's Word? *What do you see, my friends? Are you walking more closely with Jesus as a result of all the voices you hear, or are you drifting away from God?*

John wrote something very interesting here, did you notice? ***"This is how we set our hearts at rest in His presence, whenever our hearts condemn us. For God is greater than our hearts, and He knows everything."*** What does it feel like in your heart and mind when you feel 'condemnation' or accusation?

Do you know that one of the many names for Satan is 'the accuser'? (Job 1) The apostle Paul wrote this to the Roman Christians: ***"Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? Who is he that condemns?"*** (Romans 8:33,34) Yes, my friends, Satan and his demons love to taunt Christians, harass Christians, try to put guilt and shame on Christians, accuse Christians of failure and sin. *John and Paul both are calling us to look into the mirror of TRUTH whenever we feel condemned by anyone, any thought, our own conscience or the demonic world.*

What mirror of truth? *The Truth about Jesus...God the Son*, who gave His life on the cross as payment in full for our sin so God the Father could completely forgive us (Eph. 1:7) and God the Holy Spirit could completely cleanse and purify us! (1 John 1:9) *Look also into the Truth of God's Word* which the Holy Spirit enlivens and uses to instruct our minds and hearts. (Hebrews 4:12) *And look at the Truth that Jesus is at the right hand of the throne of God* in heaven as our advocate, our mediator interceding for us. Paul wrote: ***"Jesus Christ who died, more than that who was raised to life, is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us."*** (Romans 8:34) This, my friends, is great news, it's truthful news! *Hold on to it and reject the condemnation no matter where it comes from!*

Finally, did you notice John wrote: ***"This is how we set our hearts at rest in His presence, whenever our hearts condemn us. For God is greater than our hearts, and He knows everything."*** (1 John 3:20) God, of course, is greater than anything and everything, He is the great I AM, the source and origin of all.

*In His superiority over all, God knows EVERYTHING about each of us... absolutely EVERYTHING, past, present and eternal future!* So, when you and I approach God, we can be sure He looks at us in TRUTH, regardless of what we might say to God and regardless of how we might feel.

King David gave wise advice to his son Solomon as he was taking the throne of Israel: ***"And you my son Solomon, acknowledge the God of your father, and serve God with wholehearted devotion and with a willing mind, for the LORD searches every heart and understands every motive behind the thoughts."*** (1 Chronicles 28:9)

So, my friends, today as you and I go through life, let's celebrate that no matter what accusation or condemnation we might feel and no matter where it comes from, *Almighty, Holy, Omniscient God KNOWS everything about us and He loves us, regardless of how we feel about ourselves, even if our own conscience is condemning us.* More than that, the resurrected Jesus Christ is in God's Presence **advocating for you and me**, if we have trusted Jesus to be our Savior. *God the Father will not believe any lies about us for He knows the truth. God the Father will not condemn us if we've trusted Jesus to be our Savior and our Advocate!*

That my friends, is good reason to walk through this day as an overcomer, living in the victory of Jesus. Now that's why I call our time together each day, "Walking with Jesus"! I hope this great God truth encourages you today my friends. And here's a song to help us walk in victory today...

**Today's Scripture is 1 John 3:18-20.**