

My little children, let's not love in word only, neither with the tongue only, but in deed and truth. And by this we know that we are of the truth, and persuade our hearts before him, because if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things.

Beloved, if our hearts don't condemn us, we have boldness toward God; and whatever we ask, **we receive** from him, because **we keep his commandments** and **do the things that are pleasing** in his sight. **This is his commandment**, that we should **believe in the name of his Son**, Jesus Christ, and **love one another**, even as **he commanded**. He who keeps his commandments **remains in him**, and **he in him**. By this we know that **he remains in us**, by the Spirit which he gave us. (1 John 3:18-24)

Not in word only – **head knowledge** versus **synchronized heart**. Superficial vs. Authentic and internal.

How is **deed and truth** related to **heart living**? Jesus says **out of the heart** the mouth speaks. **Authentic living**.

Knowing we are **of the truth** is **linked to persuading** our heart. Beyond head knowledge to **experiential knowing**.

What is important to know about **how to persuade** our heart? How does the **heart come to believe**?

Note the **location**. I need to posture my **heart before God** as my reference point regarding my **identity**. Honesty.

Why does our heart **need persuading**? Its when we **feel condemned**.

Feeling condemned can **come from a deceived heart**, but **never from God**. It is **always rooted in a lie**.

God is greater than my heart, meaning **God's view of me never aligns** with any feelings of **condemnation**.

If God **knowing all things** is what **makes Him greater** than my heart, then **what He knows is the antidote** for any condemnation felt by my heart. God is not a formula or explanation or excuse, but the **Origin of saving truth**.

It is God and **what He knows to be true about me** that brings me **relief from feelings of condemnation**.

What we **crave** is **freedom from feelings of worthlessness**, condemnation, fear of **rejection** and abandonment.

We are **made to live in this freedom**, to **thrive in knowing** we are accepted, loved, valued and not judged unworthy.

Notice how all of this **precedes mention of keeping God's commandments**. Why is this important?

How does John **define keeping His commandments**?

What does it mean to do the **things that are pleasing** in God's sight? **How** does this happen?

*For you were **once darkness**, but are **now light** in the Lord. **Walk as children of light**, for the **fruit of the Spirit** is in all **goodness and righteousness and truth**, proving **what is well pleasing to the Lord**.* (Ephesians 5:8-10)

*So then, my beloved, even as **you have always obeyed**, not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence, **work out your own salvation** with fear and trembling. For **it is God who works in you** both to will and to work, **for his good pleasure**.* (Philippians 2:12-13)

*Now may **the God of peace**, who brought again from the dead the great shepherd of the sheep with the blood of an eternal covenant, our Lord Jesus, **make you complete in every good work** to do **his will**, **working in you** that which is **well pleasing in his sight**, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.* (Hebrews 13:20-21)

*Jesus answered them, "Most certainly I tell you, you seek me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate of the loaves, and were filled. Don't work for the food which perishes, but for the **food which remains to eternal life**, which **the Son of Man will give to you**. For God the Father has sealed him."*

*They said therefore to him, "**What must we do**, that we may **work the works of God**?"*

*Jesus answered them, "**This is the work of God**, that you **believe in him** whom he has sent."* (John 6:26-29)

*There is therefore **now no condemnation** to those who are **in Christ Jesus**, who don't walk according to the flesh, but **according to the Spirit**.* (Romans 8:1) [This is what John references as **remaining in Him** and He in us.]

As I **choose to believe the word of God over my heart** based on what He says **more than how I feel**, that is what it means to not walk according to the flesh but **according to the Spirit**. That is **how I persuade** my heart and **be bold**.