

1 John 4:15-17 *Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. By this, love is perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because as He is, so also are we in this world.*

We have said from the beginning of this series that 1 John is a book written to bring CONFIDENCE to the believer – specifically in our standing as a true possessor of eternal life.

1 John 5:13-14a *These thing I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life. This is the confidence which we have before Him ...*

And today’s passage is brimming with statements that build my CONFIDENCE.

7 CONFIDENT CONFESSIONS

1. My confession that Jesus is the Son of God ASSURES me of God in me and I in Him
(*“Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God”*)
2. I can be CONFIDENT of God’s love for me, and for all His children
(*“we have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us”*)
3. I am CONFIDENT that God is love, by His very nature
(*“God is love”*)
4. By my abiding in this agape love, I am again ASSURED that God abides in me and I in Him
(*“the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him”*)
5. As I love others, I KNOW that God’s desire to love the world is fulfilled through me
(*“By this, love is perfected with us”*)
6. My divine love for others gives me CONFIDENCE that I will “pass the test” in the day of God’s ultimate judgment
(*“we may have confidence in the day of judgment”*)
7. As I so love, I KNOW that I am representing God in this world. I am literally a “little Christ”
(*“because as He is, so also are we in this world”*)

Of these 7 statements of CONFIDENCE, I see 5 of them are restatements of what He just said:

(#2) In 4:10 we were told of God’s love for us by His sending Jesus to die for our sins

(#3) In 4:8 we were told that God is love

(#4) In 4:13 we were told that our loving others assures us of God in us, and we in Him

(#5) In 4:12 we were told that His love is perfected in us, as we love others

(#7) In 4:14 we were told that we are now God’s testimony in the world

And there is nothing wrong with restating wonderful truths in different words. They are worth hearing again and again. Preachers like myself do it all the time. As the old hymn says, *“Sing them over again to me – wonderful words of life.”* John wants to be sure we don’t miss the import and impact of these deep and delicious truths of God’s love.

But if 5 of the 7 statements of CONFIDENCE are rewordings of what has been said before, that leaves 2 of the statements as new truth to be learned and pondered, and that is what we will do for the remainder of today’s message. Here they are again:

1. My confession that Jesus is the Son of God ASSURES me of God in me and I in Him

2. My divine love for others gives me CONFIDENCE that I will “pass the test” in the day of God’s ultimate judgment

CONFIDENCE IN THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

Let’s look at this second one first - CONFIDENCE in the day of judgment. The “day of judgment” to which John is referring is the great white throne judgment of which John wrote about in Revelation 20:11.

Revelation 20:11-12, 15 *Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. ... And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.*

And Jesus spoke of this final judgment during his final week on earth:

Matthew 25:31-34, 41, 46 *When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. And He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left. And the King will say to those on His right, “Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world”. ... Then He will also say to those on His left, “Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels” These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.*

This is scary stuff! If we were left to “hope” and wonder if we would be a sheep or a goat, we would and should be in great fear and apprehension of our future. That would be what psychologists would call “krisisphobia” – the fear of impending calamity or judgment. Note: “krisis” = “crisis”, so it is actually crisis-phobia.

John’s word “fear” that comes in the next verse is literally “phobia” – a Greek word that has made it into our English language. And John speaks in verse 17 of our confidence in that day of judgment, rather than our phobia. Why? Because God’s agape love is flowing through His believers. And that divine love that we express to one another and even to our unbelieving world is evidence and CONFIDENCE that we will be a “sheep” on that ultimate judgment day. And likewise, our name will be found in the book of life because of our life’s confession that Jesus is exactly Who He says He is – the very Son of God.

Wow! – Thank you, dear God, for that CONFIDENCE that doesn’t paralyze us believers in “krisisphobia.” The very agape love of God that flows through us is our CONFIDENCE now that in the day of judgment we will stand as a beloved “sheep” and fall as an accursed “goat.” So here John teaches us of another very real benefit and result of “God is love” in and through us. Our future in the heavenly realm is secure.

JESUS IS THE SON OF GOD

But our confidence in the day of judgment is not borne on God’s love through us alone. It is also borne on our earthly confession that Jesus is the Son of God – meaning fully divine, even while He was on earth. This is the other new truth that John introduces in this passage.

1 John 4:15 *Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.*

You will recall back in 4:2 we learned that the first belief test was acknowledging that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh – meaning that He was fully human.

1 John 4:2 *By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God.*

So now John has made the declaration in these two passages that we must believe both that Jesus is fully man and fully God. (And yet to come in chapter 5 are two more belief tests – that Jesus is both Savior of all and Savior of each who receive Him.)

So what does it mean to believe that Jesus is fully God? We must know what our confession means.

1. He is God from eternity past

As John said in his gospel of John, verse 1, *“In the beginning was the Word (Jesus, as seen from John 1:14), and the Word was with God and the Word was God.”*

Paul’s book of Colossians, beginning in chapter 1, verse 15, declares that Jesus is the image of the invisible God, preceding the birth of all creation and that He is the creator and sustainer of all creation. These two references alone, combined with so many others, are proof enough that Jesus is God from eternity past. He has always been the second person of the Trinity – God the Son.

2. He was God as He walked the earth

This doctrine is in question by so many. They say that Jesus was a great teacher, a superb example of mankind, a courageous martyr and an influential figure for all to follow. But they deny the deity of Jesus. They say God might have worked through Him as the “chosen one,” but He was not God.

But our confession that Jesus was indeed God in the flesh is essential to our God-abiding-in-us salvation, as John teaches in our passage today. There are so many proofs of this – but let us simply look at the 7 “I AM” statements that Jesus made of Himself while on earth, all recorded in the John’s gospel.

- a. “I AM the bread of life” (John 6:48) – the spiritual sustenance of life for all humans
- b. “I AM the light of the world” (John 8:12) – the ultimate spiritual illumination for all
- c. “I AM the door” (John 10:9) – the only entrance into God’s sheepfold of believers
- d. “I AM the good shepherd” (John 10:11) – who lays down His life to be Savior and guide
- e. “I AM the resurrection and the life” (John 11:25) – who can raise you from the dead
- f. “I AM the way, truth and the life” (John 14:6) – the way to heaven and truth incarnate
- g. “I AM the vine” (John 15:5) – your only source of spiritual existence

3. He will be (is) God forever and ever

√ The writer of the book of Hebrews declares that *“Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever.”* (Hebrews 13:7).

√ John in his Revelation, has Jesus declaring, *“I am the Alpha and the Omega, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”* (Revelation 1:8).

√ And John in his heavenly vision heard the angel say, *“The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ; and He will reign forever and ever.”*

The great revelation of the virgin birth of Jesus is perhaps the crowning proof of His earthly deity. And belief in the virgin birth of Jesus is therefore essential to the CONFIDENCE of our salvation.

May the Spirit of God living in you, dear believer, give you absolute CONFIDENCE in the divinity of Jesus Christ – fully Son of God, begotten from the very essence of God from eternity past.

CONCLUSION

Rejoice in the 7 “Confident Confessions” of this passage

Rejoice specifically in the Christian’s confidence in the day of judgment

Affirm your confession of Jesus as the Son of God – fully divine