

PERFECT LOVE **PROMOTES CONFIDENCE**

I John 4:16b-21

**Love that has reached it's goal receives good marks
which inspires assurance in the student who has earned them.**

I. CONFIDENCE IN OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD (16b-19)

A. THE RECORD OF ABIDING (16b)

1. The quality of love: This is what God is
2. The constancy of love: Abiding in love
 - a. We stick to it
 - b. The outcome of disciplined determination
 - c. A communion with God

B. THE REALITY OF CONFIDENCE (17)

1. We've reached the intended goal
2. We're fearless with regard to judgment - cf. II Cor. 5:10
3. We imitate Christ

C. THE REPELLING OF FEAR (18)

1. No Fear
 - a. Love and fear are antithetical
 - b. Perfect love forces fear out
2. No Guilt
 - a. A recognition that Christ has taken our punishment
- See John 5:24 and Rom. 8:1
 - b. The fearful are disturbed because they are incomplete in their love

D. THE REASSURANCE OF CHRIST'S INTEREST (19)

1. His Prerogative: He initiated the encounter with us
2. His Priority: He loves before He judges!

II. CONFIDENCE IN OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHERS (19-21)

A. THE PRACTICE OF CHRIST (19)

1. He showed us how to love others
2. He touched us and therefore we can touch others who are not "like" us
3. He gave us a pattern and expects us to participate: "We love, because He loved"

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B. THE PROBLEM OF INCONSISTENCY (20)

- The absence of perfect love

1. What you say is lying

- The brother-hater who says he is a God-lover is at the height of hypocrisy!

2. What you do is senseless

- “It’s obviously easier to love and serve a visible man than an invisible God, and if we fail in the easier task, it is absurd to claim success in the harder.”

[John Stott, “Epistles of John” (Eerdmans, 1964), p. 171]

3. What you attempt is impossible

- Literally: “He has no power to love God.”

C. THE PRINCIPLE OF OBEDIENCE (21)

1. The Commandment - Matt. 22:37-40

2. The Compliance: Obedience requires loving God and others

3. The Conditions: “Love for the brethren is not an optional aspect of Christian love which may safely be eliminated. God refuses to recognize such mutilated love as true love.”

[D. Edmond Hiebert, “The Epistle of I John,” (Reprint: Bob Jones University Press, 1982), p. 221]

CONCLUSION:

What would God think of your report card?

- Has your love reached God’s intended goal?

- Are you confident about your relationship with God?

- Is your relationship with others commendable?

My prayer is that we might be confident with a conduct that indicates perfect love.

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