

verse 19, 20

① "assure... before Him." Ⓞ Emphasis in the Greek - the important thing is that we can quiet our consciences in the sight of Ⓞ.

20 = a man's heart burdened w/ a sense of its own unworthiness forms an unfavorable opinion of the state of the soul, pronounces against its salvation.

Ⓞ is greater - Because Ⓞ is superior to our consciences in being omniscient, we may (when our love is sincere & fruitful), persuade our consciences before Him to acquit us. Our consciences through imperfect knowledge may either be too strict or too easy of us; Ⓞ can be neither, for He knows & weighs all.

- "of our heart condemn us (it is plain) that Ⓞ is greater than our heart - it means that He is a more perfect judge than our heart can be. It is the difference between conscience & omniscience.

"& knoweth all things" - This explains the special character of Ⓞ's superiority when the soul stands before the judgment-seat of conscience.



John 3: 19, 20



Sum of vv 19, 20 - "By loving our brethren in deed & truth we come to know that we are His children & have His presence w/in us, & are enabled to meet the disquieting charges of conscience.

— For, if conscience condemns us, its verdict is neither infallible nor final. We may still appeal to the Conscientious O, whose love implanted w/in us is a sign that we are not condemned & rejected by Him. (Cambridge)

③ Summary: aware of shortcoming, they may be diffident (v. 20a) about approaching O. They can reassure themselves. O will assess them by a standard more reliable than their feelings (their heart).

Suppose these sincere X'ians come before O ~~and~~ untroubled by even initial diffidence. They come confidently (v. 21) & have their petitions granted (v. 22a). On what ground? John states it clearly - their keeping of O's commands & love & true belief & their doing of what is pleasing in His sight.

- The aim of the whole passage is to give assurance. (Zorck)

1 John 3:19, 20

(3)

Our failures in duty & service rise up before us, & our heart condemns us. - The reassurance is two-fold: (1) The worst that is in us is known to God, & still He cares for us & desires us. Our discovery has been an open secret to Him all along. (2) He "readeth" everything - sees the deepest things, & these things are the real things. His failures lie on the surface -

assure, persuade - to tranquilize - soothe the alarm of our heart. [How? - God is greater than our heart.]

- when our heart condemns us we shall quiet it w/ the assurance that we are in the hands of a God who is greater than our heart - who surpasses men in love & compassion no less than in knowledge. (Wuest)