Fighting the Good Fight: Punching Above Your Weight
1 John 3:14-24
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1 John 3:14-24: We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love each other. Anyone who does not love remains in death. [15] Anyone who hates a brother or sister is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life residing in him. [16] This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. [17] If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? [18] Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth. [19] This is how we know that we belong to the truth and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence: [20] If our hearts condemn us, we know that God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. [21] Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God [22] and receive from him anything we ask, because we keep his commands and do what pleases him. [23] And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us. [24] The one who keeps God's commands lives in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us.

Our Vision: Connect with Christ, Church, and Community

1. _____ with the fight

_____anger: Jesus said: I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother or sister shall deserve judgment. Whosoever calls someone a "blockhead" will deserve accountability…whosoever calls someone a fool shall deserve the fires of hell itself!

Matthew 5:22 (JOT)

_____reconciliation: If you bring an offering to God and you remember a brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift immediately! Go and be reconciled with your brother or sister, then….

Matthew 5:23 (JOT)

2. _____God's punching power

_____ the power of new life: The way we know we've been transferred from death to life is that we (sacrificially) love our brothers and sisters. Anyone who doesn't love is as good as dead.

1 John 3:14 (MSG)

_____ to God's love: Let us…love in action and true love, like Jesus. This is how we realize that we are out of true love, because we experience it! When we experience being in God's love, it convinces our hearts of God's strength! 1 John 3:19 (JOT)

_____ condemnation: Even if we think we have gotten it all wrong and feel terrible, God is greater than our feelings and knows exactly how to help us! Once we realize God's power over condemnation, we will be filled with confidence in Jesus Christ!

1 John 3:20-21 (JOT)

3. _____ the power of fear

_____ God's path: Yes, be bold and strong! Banish fear and doubt! For remember, the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." Joshua 1:9 (TLB)

Spiritual Action Step:

Where do you need greater strength to fight the forces in your life? Are you struggling with fear and condemnation? How is God's Spirit working in your heart to lead you to strength? Jesus says: "*Do not let your hearts be distressed or lacking in courage."* (John 14:27 (NET)) God is the source of courage and confidence for our lives. He wants to make you stronger and more confident in your life. It begins by choosing to accept the truth of the Gospel that Jesus died for you, so you will experience the power of being his child! God wants you to grow in trust, and this will help you fight the battles that are before you! This week, read 1 John 3 and 4 to allow the Holy Spirit to empower you with love that conquers condemnation and fear!

Translations: NIV: New International Version; JOT: Jon's Own Translation; MSG: The Message; NLT: New Living Translation; TLB: The Living Bible; NET: New English Version.