

Briefing Document: 1 John Lesson 69

Wednesday, July 15, 2026

Executive Summary

This document synthesizes the teachings from 1 John Lesson 69, focused on the concept of "holy affections." Originally popularized by Jonathan Edwards in the 1700s, these affections serve as tangible proof of a person's salvation and a transformed heart. The lesson examines how a believer's conscience, prayer life, and obedience change after conversion. Key takeaways include the understanding that while a believer's conscience may condemn them for sin, God's knowledge and grace are greater than any self-condemnation. The lesson outlines five specific "holy affections" that manifest in a true Christian: love for other believers, gratitude for grace, boldness in prayer, obedience to God's commands, and an enduring faith in Jesus Christ.

Community Updates and Prayer Requests

The following administrative and community matters were noted prior to the lesson:

- **Memory Verse:** The memory verse for July is Proverbs 3:5: *Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding.*
- **Operational Announcements:**
 - The "OC campaign" is collecting school supplies, socks, and flip-flops this month.
 - Free books and MacArthur pamphlets are available in the information center.
 - Volunteers are needed for the AV (audio-visual) team and the nursery.
 - Registration for New Life Kids and Students begins July 22, with a meeting scheduled for July 26.
- **Health and Prayer Needs:**
 - **Belinda's Family:** Prayer is requested for her sister, who faces multiple blockages, a blood clot, an aneurysm, and kidney failure. Her brother, David, is also hospitalized for kidney issues.
 - **Congregational Illness:** Several members, referred to as the "Duncan bunch," are currently sick.
 - **Upcoming Surgeries:** Deb is scheduled for surgery in Albuquerque on the 30th. Uncle Bill has a procedure on the 22nd.
 - **Recoveries:** Karen and "Mom" have recently returned home.

The Concept of Holy Affections

The lesson centers on "holy affections," a term describing the internal desires and inclinations that prove a person belongs to God. These are not merely emotions but are indicators of a "new heart" and a "bloodwashed" conscience.

The Awakened Conscience

When an individual becomes a Christian, their conscience is informed by God's standards. This leads to several internal shifts:

- **Sensitivity to Sin:** A saved conscience becomes very sensitive to the law of God. When a believer acts outside of God's will, the conscience accuses and condemns them.
- **Satanic Influence:** The lesson warns that Satan attempts to neutralize self-knowledge by misinforming or "searing" the conscience. If a person ignores their conscience repeatedly, it loses its impact.
- **A New Standard:** A well-taught Christian uses God's standard of right and wrong rather than their own feelings.

Overcoming Self-Condemnation

A major challenge for believers is when their "heart" (the mind and conscience) condemns them. This can lead to a loss of assurance regarding salvation. The lesson provides the following comforts based on 1 John 3:20:

- **God's Omniscience:** *For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things.*
- **Higher Standards:** God hates sin more than a human conscience does, yet He also knows the true state of a believer's heart.
- **No Condemnation:** According to Romans 8:1, *There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.*
- **Justification:** When God looks at a believer, He sees the righteousness of His Son rather than the person's sin.

The Five Indicators of a Transformed Life

The lesson identifies five specific affections that confirm a person is "of the truth."

1. Love for the Brethren

The primary indicator of being "of God" is a sincere love for other Christians. This affection creates a natural desire to be in community with other believers.

2. Gratitude for God's Grace

A transformed heart is characterized by deep gratitude. Even when a believer fails, they find comfort in knowing that God knows their heart and has provided grace through Jesus Christ. This is illustrated by Peter's response to Jesus in John 21, where he appeals to God's knowledge of his love despite his recent failures.

3. Boldness in Prayer

True believers possess a "holy affection" that drives them to run into God's presence.

- **Definition:** The Greek concept of *parrhesia*¹ is used here, meaning "boldness" or "confidence."
- **Access:** Believers can speak to God honestly and openly, like a child to a father.
- **Scriptural Basis:** 1 John 3:21 states, *Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God.*

4. Obedience to His Commands

Obedience is described as a foundational evidence of salvation.

- **Motivation:** A Christian is motivated by a desire to please God rather than self-interest.
- **Fruit-Bearing:** As noted in John 15:7, abiding in Christ results in following His words: *If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.*
- **Consistency:** The lesson argues that while believers may stumble, a total lack of obedience contradicts a claim of faith.

5. Faith in Christ

A permanent, lifelong belief in Jesus Christ is the final affection discussed.

- **The Nature of Belief:** Being a "believer" is not a one-time human act but a continuous state of being.
- **The Deity of Christ:** True faith requires believing that Jesus is the Son of God who came in the flesh. Denying this makes one an "antichrist" according to 1 John 4:3.
- **The Purpose of the Text:** The overarching goal of 1 John is stated in chapter 5, verse 13: *These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.*

Conclusion

The lesson concludes that salvation is not a "temporary manifestation" but a permanent transformation. A mature Christian must move beyond "baby food" and consume the "meat and potatoes" of deep biblical truth. By examining their holy affections—love, gratitude, boldness, obedience, and faith—believers can find assurance that they are walking in the truth.

Greek Vocabulary Guide

Greek Word	Phonetic Pronunciation	Definition
Parrhesia ¹	pahr-ray-see'-ah	Boldness, confidence, or freedom in speech; particularly the courage to speak openly before God.
Abba ²	ah'-bah	An Aramaic term for "Father," used to express a close, personal, and loving relationship with God.

¹ Referenced in the context of "boldness" or "confidence" in prayer (1 John 3:21). ² Referenced in the context of believers knowing God as their "Abba Father" or "Papa."