

1 John 4:7-12

Is Love All You Need?

God's love ...

I. Divine Agape

A. An Attribute

B. In Action

1. For His Creation

2. For Her Crown

3. For His Elect

II. Manifest

A. Love Incarnate

B. Love In Action

III. Imitated

A. A Christian Attribute

B. With Christlike Actions

1. For Our Creator

2. For His Covenant People

3. For the Lost

... God's love "seen."

Children, Listen ...

1. Where do we find the best understanding of what love is?
2. How did God show His love for this sinful world?
3. How did Jesus show His love for sinners like us?
4. If we want to be like Jesus will we try to love everyone?
5. If we show love to one another Whose love will people see at work?

T or F: Love is All You Need

Some like to argue that the 60's generation redefined, distorted and basically ruined "love." While it is certainly true that a segment of our population made a mess of what love was supposed to be, it is hardly arguable that this was anything new. Step back one more generation and you will find a similar problem just in different packaging. In fact mankind has always had a hard time understanding what real love is. It is perhaps for this very reason that so much is written about true love in God's Word. It would not be a stretch to say that the primary theme of the Bible is God's condescending love – it is certainly a primary motive for redemption. The Gospel in sum is God's gracious love toward sinners. Our passage today is from 1st John, a letter saturated with love. Love, love, love – but it's the right kind of love! But love, while only perfected by God, is not exclusively reserved for Him. If we understand love as an attribute of God it would fall in the category of a "communicable" attribute, in other words, an attitude with actions that we can have that reflect the ways of God Himself. We must always keep in mind that the sum of God's moral law is love toward God and neighbor!

It may seem impossible that we can actually reflect such a profound thing – but by His grace we can. John is in good biblical company when He insists that love is actually a test of true faith (1 John 4:7,8). It may be a little over the top to say: "all you need is love," but if God loves us, what more do we really need? In turn If we abound in love for Him, love for one another, and love for the lost we are moving in the direction of perfection. Sound crazy? Consider this; John simply cannot be over the top when he writes under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit: *No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.* 1 John 4:12