

SERIES: I JOHN: HOW TO KNOW YOU HAVE ETERNAL LIFE, WEEK 18

TITLE: THE EMPHASIS OF LOVING ONE ANOTHER

TEXT: I JOHN 4:7-11

INTRODUCTION: (1) UP TO THIS POINT IN OUR STUDY OF I JOHN, MUCH OF IT HAS BEEN GIVEN OVER TO DEVELOPING 3 TESTS OF HOW A PERSON CAN KNOW THEY HAVE ETERNAL LIFE.

* THOSE TESTS ARE THE MORAL TEST WHICH IS RIGHTEOUSNESS OR OBEDIENCE TO GOD'S COMMANDS.

** THE DOCTRINAL TEST, WHICH IS THE TEST OF TRUTH OR GENUINE FAITH IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST AS GOD INCARNATE, GOD IN THE FLESH.

*** AND THEN THE SOCIAL TEST WHICH IS LOVE, LOVING ONE ANOTHER AS BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHRIST.

**** NOW THE TESTS HAVE BEEN INTERWOVEN THROUGHOUT THE BOOK AND JOHN IS RELENTLESS IN REPEATING THEM.

(2) BUT THE QUESTION CAN BE ASKED TODAY, WHICH TEST IS MOST IMPORTANT?

* WELL, IN ONE SENSE THEY ARE EQUALLY IMPORTANT, FOR ANY APPROACH TO THE TESTS IS NOT RIGHT IF IT ALLOWS US TO MINIMIZE ONE OF THEM. ALL 3 TESTS ARE VERY IMPORTANT.

** YET, THE ARGUMENT CAN BE MADE THAT IF YOU DON'T PASS THE DOCTRINAL TEST, YOU WON'T HAVE THE CAPACITY TO LOVE OR BE OBEDIENT.

*** IT IS TO SAY, UNLESS YOU TRULY SAVINGLY BELIEVE THAT JESUS IS THE MESSIAH, THE SON OF GOD, AND GOD THE SON, YOU ARE NOT A BELIEVER AND THEREFORE HAVE NO CAPACITY, NO ABILITY, NO POWER TO LOVE LIKE GOD OR TO OBEY GOD AS A PATTERN OF YOUR LIFE AS A FRUIT OF KNOWING GOD. AND THAT IS A GOOD ARGUMENT.

**** HOWEVER, ANOTHER ARGUMENT CAN BE MADE, THAT THE SOCIAL TEST OF LOVE AND LOVING ONE ANOTHER IS THE TEST THAT IS MOST EMPHASIZED IN I JOHN, MORE THAN THE MORAL TEST AND MORE THAN THE DOCTRINAL TEST.

(3) AND THE POSSIBLE REASON FOR THAT IS, LOVE WAS THE GREATEST NEED WITH THE BELIEVERS IN THE CHURCHES JOHN IS WRITING TO AND THEREFORE THE TEST MOST EMPHASIZED.

* AND PERSONALLY I DON'T WANT TO DE-EMPHASIZE ANY OF THE TESTS, THEY ARE ALL VERY IMPORTANT.

** BUT FOR WHATEVER REASON JOHN EMPHASIZES THE SOCIAL TEST MORE OFTEN IN THE LETTER OVER THE MORAL AND DOCTRINAL TESTS.

*** FOR THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN IS THE PREEMINENT BOOK ON LOVE. FOR IN THIS EPISTLE THE VERB LOVE APPEARS 28 TIMES AND THE CORRESPONDING NOUN LOVE OCCURS 18 TIMES FOR A TOTAL OF 46 TIMES.

**** IN FACT HERE'S THE BREAKDOWN OF THE WORD LOVE AND ITS FORMS.

(4) THE WORD LOVE IS USED 36 TIMES, THE WORD LOVED IS USED 4 TIMES AND THE WORD LOVES IS USED 6 TIMES, AGAIN GIVING US A TOTAL OF 46 USES.

* AND NOWHERE DOES JOHN EMPHASIZE THE NEED TO LOVE MORE THAN IN I JOHN CHAPTER 4 IN VERSES 7 TO THE END OF THE CHAPTER IN VERSE 21.

** AND IN I JOHN 4, BEGINNING IN OUR TEXT TODAY, JOHN FOR THE 3^D TIME DISCUSSES LOVE IN THIS LETTER.

(5) FOR THE FIRST TEST OF LOVE WAS TALKED ABOUT IN I JOHN 2:7-11 WHERE JOHN PRESENTS LOVE AS A PROOF OF TRUE FELLOWSHIP OF ONE WHO IS IN THE LIGHT.

* THEN THE 2'D TEST OF LOVE IS FOUND IN I JOHN 3:10-17 WHERE JOHN COMMUNICATES LOVE AS AN EVIDENCE OF SONSHIP, THAT WE ARE THE SONS OF GOD AND HAVE ETERNAL LIFE.

** AND EACH OF THESE TESTS OF LOVE HAVE BEEN IMPORTANT, BUT IN A SENSE, BOTH HAVE BEEN A PREPARATION FOR THIS THIRD DEVELOPMENT OF THE SOCIAL TEST IN WHICH THE NATURE OF GOD, WHICH IS LOVE IS BROUGHT FORTH.

*** FOR IN I JOHN 4:7-21, TWICE WE ARE TOLD THAT GOD IS LOVE, AND 3 TIMES WE ARE TOLD TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER FOR THE SOURCE OF LOVE IS GOD, TRUE LOVE COMES FROM GOD, HE IS THE AUTHOR AND ORIGINATOR AND ILLUSTRATION OF LOVE.

**** THEREFORE THE EMPHASIS OF THE SOCIAL TEST CONTINUES IN I JOHN 4 AND SPECIFICALLY IN OUR TEXT TODAY, THE EMPHASIS AND RE-EMPHASIS OF LOVING ONE ANOTHER AND WHY WE SHOULD LOVE ONE ANOTHER.

(6) FOR JOHN WILL BE RELENTLESS IN THE EMPHASIS OF LOVING ONE ANOTHER WHICH LEADS TO THE TITLE OF OUR STUDY TODAY, "THE EMPHASIS OF LOVING ONE ANOTHER."

* AND IN I JOHN 4:7-11 JOHN WILL STRESS THE IMPORTANCE OF LOVING ONE ANOTHER AND WHY WE SHOULD LOVE ONE ANOTHER, THERE IS A CLEAR EMPHASIS OF THE SOCIAL TEST.

** AND TO HELP US UNDERSTAND THAT, WE'LL LOOK AT 3 POINTS TODAY. NO. 1 THE SOURCE OF LOVE, WHICH IS GOD, VV. 7&8; NO. 2 THE SACRIFICE OF LOVE, WHICH IS MODELED BY GOD, VV. 9&10; AND NO. 3 THE SANITY OF LOVE, THE GOOD SENSE, THE COMMON SENSE, THE REASONABLENESS OF LOVING ONE ANOTHER BECAUSE GOD SO LOVED US, V. 11.

*** SO WE'LL LOOK AT THE SOURCE, THE SACRIFICE AND THE SANITY OF LOVE UNDER THE THEME OF THE EMPHASIS OF LOVING ONE ANOTHER.

**** AND WITH THAT THEME AND THOSE POINTS BEFORE US, LET'S LOOK AT OUR FIRST POINT TODAY, THE SOURCE OF LOVE, BEGINNING IN V. 7. LOOK AT I JOHN 4:7 PLEASE.

I. THE SOURCE OF LOVE, (READ V. 7)

A. NOW FOR THE 4TH TIME IN THIS LETTER, JOHN BEGINS A VERSE WITH THE WORD BELOVED, WHICH IS A FORM OF THE WORD AGAPE AND LIT. MEANS, LOVED ONES, ESTEEMED ONES, DEAR ONES.

* AND HERE AGAIN, JOHN IS REMINDING THE BRETHREN, THE BELIEVERS IN THE CHURCHES HE IS WRITING TO HOW MUCH HE LOVES THEM.

** THE APOSTLE OF LOVE, JOHN, IS MODELING LOVE, FOR HE TRULY LOVES THE BRETHREN HE IS WRITING TO AND REMINDS THEM OF THAT TO BEGIN WITH IN V. 7.

*** AND AS HE REMINDS THEM OF THAT HE EXHORTS THEM TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER, LET US LOVE ONE ANOTHER. AND THE PERSONAL PRONOUN US INCLUDES JOHN AND ALL THE BELIEVERS HE IS WRITING TO.

**** NOW IN DOING THAT, JOHN COMMUNICATES WHERE LOVE COMES FROM. AND WHAT IS THE SOURCE OF LOVE? WHO IS THE ORIGINATOR OF LOVE? WHO LOVED BEFORE ANYONE EVER LOVED?

1. THE CLEAR ANSWER IS GOD, EXPRESSED BY 5 WORDS IN V. 7, "FOR LOVE IS FROM GOD." LOVE COMES FROM GOD, HE IS ITS SOURCE.

* AND GOD IS THE SOURCE OF LOVE FOR HE IS LOVE, IT IS A PART OF HIS ETERNAL NATURE AND BEING.

** IN FACT LOVE IS NOT SOMETHING THAT GOD DOES, IT IS WHAT GOD IS.

*** FOR IN HIS ETERNAL BEING AND NATURE, GOD IS LOVE.

**** AND THAT MEANS, LOVE DOES NOT DEFINE GOD, BUT GOD DEFINES LOVE. HE IS LOVE AND CANNOT BE OTHERWISE.

2. AND BECAUSE GOD IS LOVE, THERE IS NO AGAPE SUPERNATURAL SACRIFICIAL ACTION KIND OF LOVE APART FROM GOD.

* THEREFORE EVERYONE WHO LOVES THAT WAY IS BORN OF GOD AND KNOWS GOD, THE REST OF V. 7.

** SO HOW DO WE KNOW THAT WE KNOW GOD? HOW DO WE KNOW THAT WE HAVE BEEN BORN OF GOD THROUGH NEW BIRTH – REGENERATION?

*** BECAUSE WE LOVE ONE ANOTHER. NOW OBVIOUSLY NOT WITH THE PERFECTION OF GOD'S LOVE, BUT THROUGH NEW BIRTH WE HAVE A NEW NATURE, SO NOW WE HAVE THE CAPACITY, THE POWER, THE STRENGTH AND MOST OF ALL THE DESIRE TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER, TO SACRIFICE FOR ONE ANOTHER AND PUT OTHER BROTHERS AND SISTERS NEEDS OVER OUR OWN.

**** AND BELOVED, WHAT I'M ATTEMPTING TO SAY IS, WE WILL NOT ALWAYS LOVE ONE ANOTHER AS WE SHOULD

IN OUR HUMANNESS AND IN YIELDING TO SELFISHNESS AT TIMES.

3. BUT NOW THAT WE HAVE BEEN BORN OF GOD, WE WANT TO ACT LIKE HIM, AND DESIRE TO BE LIKE HIM AND WE WILL LOVE ONE ANOTHER NOT IN PERFECTION BUT IN THE DIRECTION, DESIRE AND DEVOTION OF OUR LIVES!

* AND WE THAT ARE GOD'S CHILDREN THROUGH NEW BIRTH WILL MANIFEST HIS NATURE, WHICH IS LOVE, WE WILL REFLECT HIS LOVE TO OTHERS.

** SIMON KISTEMAKER AT THIS POINT IN HIS COMMENTARY ON I JOHN SAYS: "THIS, THEN, IS THE DISTINCTIVE MARK OF THE BELIEVER. THE PERSON WHO IS BORN OF GOD IS A WINDOW THROUGH WHICH THE LOVE OF GOD SHINES INTO THE WORLD." (END QUOTE)

*** AND AS I HAVE BROUGHT TO YOUR ATTENTION BEFORE IN I JOHN 3, LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER SHOWS THE WORLD THAT WE ARE THE DISCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST, QUOTE JOHN 13:34&35.

**** SO WE SHOW THAT WE KNOW GOD AND WE IMITATE GOD AND PEOPLE KNOW WE ARE OF GOD BECAUSE BECAUSE BECAUSE WE LOVE ONE ANOTHER.

4. NOW WITH THAT SAID, WHAT DOES IT SAY FOR A PERSON THAT DOES NOT LOVE ONE ANOTHER? WELL, JOHN ADDRESSES THAT IN V. 8. LOOK AT V. 8 PLEASE.

B. READ V. 8. NOW THIS STATEMENT IS VERY CLEAR AND CANNOT BE MISINTERPRETED.

* FOR JOHN COMPARES THE BELIEVER WITH THE UNBELIEVER AND CLEARLY COMMUNICATES THAT WHEN LOVE IS ABSENT, KNOWLEDGE OF GOD, TRULY KNOWING GOD IS NONEXISTENT.

** PLEASE UNDERSTAND, THOSE WHOSE LIVES ARE NOT CHARACTERIZED BY ANY LOVE FOR OTHER BELIEVERS ARE NOT CHRISTIANS, NO MATTER WHAT THEY CLAIM. NO LOVE, NO GOD.

*** IF THERE IS NO LOVE IN MY HEART FOR MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS, I AM A CONTRADICTION.

**** WHY? THE LAST 4 WORDS OF V. 8, "FOR GOD IS LOVE," BECAUSE GOD IS LOVE.

**** AND I WANT TO EXPAND ON THIS TRUTH A LITTLE MORE AT THIS POINT THAT GOD IS LOVE.

1. FOR GOD BY NATURE IS LOVE, IT IS WHAT HE IS. IT IS ONE OF THE ATTRIBUTES THAT HE IS DEFINED BY.

* AND YOU WILL SEE THE STATEMENT GOD IS SOMETHING IN DIFFERENT SCRIPTURES.

** TO ILLUSTRATE THAT, GOD IS LIGHT IN I JOHN 1:5, GOD IS SPIRIT IN JOHN 4:24, GOD IS A CONSUMING FIRE IN HEBREWS 12:29.

*** NOW GOD IS ALL OF THESE THINGS PERFECTLY AND IN THE NATURE OF GOD, NONE OF THESE THINGS CONTRADICT EACH OTHER. THEY ALL WORK PERFECTLY TOGETHER, IT'S WHAT MAKES GOD, GOD.

**** NOW FOR FINITE BEINGS THAT SOMETIMES IS DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND, FOR WE IN OUR HUMAN LIMITATIONS TRY TO LIMIT GOD.

2. FOR EXAMPLE, SOMETIMES PEOPLE COME TO THE WRONG CONCLUSION IN HAVING VERY SMALL THOUGHTS OF GOD AND TRYING TO BRING HIM DOWN TO OUR LEVEL OF UNDERSTANDING AND SAY, WELL IF GOD IS LOVE, HOW COULD THERE BE A PLACE CALLED HELL?

* WELL, GOD IS ALSO LIGHT SO HE IS ABSOLUTELY HOLY, THERE IS UNDILUTED HOLINESS AND PURITY IN HIS BEING, SO THERE ARE NO SHADOWS IN GOD, NO DARKNESS IN HIM AT ALL, NO SIN, NO DESIRE FOR SIN, HE IS INCAPABLE OF SIN.

** AND GOD IS ALSO A CONSUMING FIRE SO HIS BURNING HOLINESS WILL EITHER PURIFY OR CONSUME US.

*** THEREFORE WHEN GOD JUDGES, HE JUDGES IN LOVE, FOR HIS LOVE IS ALSO IN JUSTICE. HE LOVES PURITY AND HATES IMPURITY – SIN.

**** AND FAR FROM CONDONING SIN, HIS LOVE HAS FOUND A WAY TO EXPOSE IT BECAUSE HE IS LIGHT AND TO CONSUME IT BECAUSE HE IS FIRE.

3. SO GOD'S LOVE IS A HOLY PURE LOVE, NOT A BLIND OR INDULGENT LOVE. AND GOD'S HOLINESS AND JUSTICE ARE NOT COLD OR ARBITRARY; THEY ARE LOVING HOLINESS AND LOVING JUSTICE.

* THEREFORE RATHER THAN GIVING EVERY PERSON THE JUDGMENT THEY DESERVE, HE IN HIS LOVING JUSTICE HAS BROUGHT FORTH THE MEANS TO APPEASE HIS WRATH IN THE DEATH OF HIS SON AS AN ATONING SACRIFICE THAT HE IN HIS LOVE AND HOLINESS WILL RESCUE PEOPLE FROM HIS WRATH.

** HENCE GOD LOVES HIS ELECT – THOSE WHOM HE CHOOSES TO SAVE IN CHRIST WITH AN ETERNAL, UNCONDITIONAL SACRIFICIAL LOVE WHICH BRINGS THE ACTION OF SAVING THEM THROUGH THE DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF HIS SON.

*** AND SO THEN ELECTION HAS BEEN DEFINED AS GOD FROM ETERNITY SETTING HIS LOVE UPON THOSE HE HAS CHOSEN TO SAVE.

**** AND THAT'S WHY WHAT IS CALLED THE PRESCIENT OR FOREKNOWLEDGE VIEW OF ELECTION IS IN ERROR.

4. THAT GOD AT ONE TIME IN ETERNITY PAST LOOKED OUT IN THE FUTURE AND SAW THAT CERTAIN PEOPLE WOULD TURN TO HIM IN THEIR FREE WILL, AND WOULD FREELY CHOOSE HIM, THEREFORE GOD IS A RESPONDER TO THEIR ACTION, THEIR DESIRE AND THEN CHOOSES THEM.

* WELL, SCRIPTURE DOES NOT COMMUNICATE THAT. FOR OUR WILL IS DOMINATED BY SIN AND IS IN BONDAGE, THEREFORE WE DON'T SEEK GOD, WE ARE SPIRITUALLY DEAD, BORN THAT WAY AS A SON OR DAUGHTER OF ADAM. NOW IN THAT VIEW GOD IS AN OBSERVER NOT THE AUTHOR, INITIATOR, GIVER AND FINISHER OF FAITH.

** BUT HERE'S WHAT GOD DID ACCORDING TO II THESSALONIANS 2:13&14 –

V. 13 – BUT WE SHOULD ALWAYS GIVE THANKS TO GOD FOR YOU, BRETHREN BELOVED BY THE LORD, BECAUSE GOD HAS CHOSEN YOU FROM THE BEGINNING FOR

SALVATION THROUGH SANCTIFICATION BY THE SPIRIT AND FAITH IN THE TRUTH.

V. 14 – IT WAS FOR THIS HE CALLED YOU THROUGH OUR GOSPEL, THAT YOU MAY GAIN THE GLORY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

*** AND BEYOND THAT ROMANS 8, 9 & 11 AND EPHESIANS 1&2 COMMUNICATE THAT GOD LOOKED INTO THE FUTURE AND SET HIS LOVE UPON PEOPLE TO SAVE WITH NOTHING FORESEEN IN THEM IN THEIR RESPONSE BECAUSE MANKIND'S NATURAL RESPONSE IS REJECTION.

**** BUT GOD, BUT GOD, BUT GOD IN SCRIPTURE, SET HIS LOVE UPON PEOPLE THAT HE WOULD SAVE AND IN TIME WOULD CALL THEM AND JUSTIFY THEM AND GLORIFY THEM IN ROMANS 8:28-30.

5. SO IT WAS UNDESERVED LOVE, ELECTING LOVE, MERCIFUL LOVE THAT WOULD BRING FORTH OUR SALVATION, THROUGH GOD'S LOVE IN SENDING HIS SON TO BE THE SACRIFICE FOR HIS PEOPLE.

* NOW WHY DID GOD LOVE HIS ELECT THAT WAY?

** WELL EPHESIANS 1:4-6 SAYS:

V. 4 – JUST AS HE CHOSE US IN HIM BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD, THAT WE WOULD BE HOLY AND BLAMELESS BEFORE HIM. IN LOVE

V. 5 – HE PREDESTINED US TO ADOPTION AS SONS THROUGH JESUS CHRIST TO HIMSELF, ACCORDING TO THE KIND INTENTION OF HIS WILL,

V. 6 – TO THE PRAISE OF THE GLORY OF HIS GRACE, WHICH HE FREELY BESTOWED ON US IN THE BELOVED.

*** AND HERE WE SEE FREE SOVEREIGN GRACE FLOWING FROM A GOD WHO IS LOVE TO SAVE HIS PEOPLE FROM THEIR SINS. GOD IN LOVE SAVES SINNERS! AND THAT IS AMAZING LOVE AND THAT AMAZING LOVE LEADS TO AMAZING GRACE THAT SAVED A WRETCH LIKE ME, I ONCE WAS LOST, BUT NOW AM FOUND, WAS BLIND BUT NOW I SEE.

**** AND ONE LAST TEXT THAT ILLUSTRATES GOD'S LOVE IS CHOOSING ISRAEL. DEUTERONOMY 7:7&8A –

V. 7 – THE LORD DID NOT SET HIS LOVE ON YOU NOR CHOOSE YOU BECAUSE YOU WERE MORE IN NUMBER THAN ANY OF THE PEOPLE, FOR YOU WERE THE FEWEST OF ALL PEOPLES,

V. 8 – BUT BECAUSE THE LORD LOVED YOU AND KEPT THE OATH WHICH HE SWORE TO YOUR FOREFATHERS.

***** WELL, GOING BACK TO V. 8 OF I JOHN 4, I AM GLAD THAT GOD IS LOVE!

6. AND THE POINT IS, IF WE DON'T LOVE WITH SOME SELF-DENYING, SELFLESS LOVE THAT MANY TIMES IS NOT DESERVED, WE HAVE NOT TRULY BEEN BORN OF HIM, FOR WE DO NOT HAVE HIS NATURE.

* FOR GOD IS THE SOURCE OF LOVE WHICH LEADS US TO OUR 2'D POINT TODAY, THE SACRIFICE OF LOVE, THE ACTION OF GOD'S LOVE IN SAVING PEOPLE. LOOK AT V. 9 PLEASE.

II. THE SACRIFICE OF LOVE, (READ V. 9)

A. NOW AS WE HAVE ALREADY LEARNED IN OUR STUDY OF I JOHN, LOVE IS AN ACTION OF SACRIFICE, LOVE IS A VERB, LOVE IS NEVER STATIC OR INACTIVE.

* SO HOW WAS GOD'S LOVE MADE MANIFEST?

** WELL UNDERSTAND THE VERB MANIFESTED, OR MADE MANIFEST, OR SHOWED DEPENDING ON WHICH TRANSLATION YOU HAVE LIT. MEANS TO MAKE VISIBLE, TO MAKE KNOWN, TO EXPOSE TO VIEW.

*** SO HOW WAS GOD'S LOVE MADE VISIBLE, MADE KNOWN, EXPOSED TO US, LIT IN US, IN BELIEVERS IN V. 9, TOWARD US, TOWARD PEOPLE THAT GOD WILL SAVE, BY SENDING (THE ACTION OF LOVE) HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON INTO THE WORLD, SO THAT, WE MIGHT LIVE THROUGH HIM.

**** NOW THE WORDS "SO THAT" ARE A HINA PURPOSE CLAUSE IN THE GREEK, WHICH LIT. MEANS IN ORDER THAT.

1. SO WHY WAS GOD'S LOVE MADE MANIFEST?

* WELL, FOR THE PURPOSE THAT WE (BELIEVERS) THAT JOHN IS WRITING TO THAT HAVE EXPERIENCED GOD'S LOVE, THE GREEK LIT. SAYS THAT WE LIVE THROUGH HIM. THE PURPOSE OF CHRIST'S COMING WAS NOT TO POTENTIALLY BRING LIFE, BUT TO BRING LIFE, THE PURPOSE OF CHRIST'S COMING, HIS ADVENT INTO THE WORLD.

** SO GOD SENT HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON INTO THE WORLD WHICH SOUNDS LIKE JOHN 3:16 DOESN'T IT, FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD, WHICH WE WILL SEE THAT CLEARLY IN V. 11, GOD SO LOVED, AND THE ADVERB SO BEFORE THE VERB LOVE COMMUNICATING THE DEGREE, THE INTENSITY OF GOD'S LOVE.

*** SO WE SEE THE SACRIFICE, THE INTENSITY, THE HEAT, THE HEART OF GOD'S LOVE.

**** AND NOTE IN THAT GREAT LOVE SENT HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON. AND THE WORD BEGOTTEN MEANS UNIQUE, HIS ONLY SON, CHRIST IS ONE OF A KIND, NOT LIKE WE ARE THE SON OR DAUGHTER OF SOMEONE, BUT THE ONLY ONE OF HIS KIND, GOD THE SON. ONLY BEGOTTEN DOES NOT HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH BIRTH OR COMING INTO EXISTENCE FOR CHRIST IS ETERNAL, BUT IT DECLARES HIS UNIQUENESS AND THERE IS AND WAS NO ONE LIKE HIM, WE WOULD SAY, ONE OF A KIND, THERE IS NONE LIKE HIM, THE GOD-MAN, NOT A CREATION OF GOD, BUT GOD HIMSELF.

*** SO WE SEE GOD'S LOVE IN SENDING HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON IN THE WORLD. AND THIS LOVE THAT COMES FROM GOD IS EXPERIENCED BY US BECAUSE GOD FIRST LOVED US. LOOK AT V. 10 PLEASE.

B. READ V. 10. NOW AGAIN LOVE IS SEEN IN WHAT IT DOES, IN HOW IT SACRIFICES.

* FOR JOHN BEGINS IN V. 10 BY SAYING, THIS IS LOVE, HEREIN IS LOVE, IN THIS IS LOVE, SPEAKING OF THE WORKING AND ACTION OF GOD'S LOVE.

** AND IT'S A LOVE HE HAS FOR US, NOT ONE FORESEEN THAT WE WOULD HAVE FOR HIM FIRST, NOT THAT WE

LOVED GOD FIRST, BUT HE LOVED US FIRST, QUOTE I JOHN 4:19.

*** SO THIS IS LOVE INITIATED BY GOD FIRST, NOT IN RESPONSE TO OUR LOVE.

**** STEVE LAWSON SAID IN VIEW OF THAT IN HIS BOOK ON I JOHN THAT: "IF GOD WAITED TO LOVE US IN RESPONSE TO OUR LOVE FOR HIM, HE WOULD NEVER HAVE LOVED US. HE SIMPLY CHOSE TO LOVE US AS A FREE EXERCISE OF HIS SOVEREIGN WILL, PRAISE HIS NAME." (END QUOTE)

1. NOW HOW DID GOD LOVE US, BELIEVERS AND THOSE WHOM GOD WILL SAVE?

* V. 10B, "HE SENT HIS SON TO BE THE PROPITIATION FOR OUR SINS!"

** BELOVED, GOD FORELOVED US SO MUCH THAT HE SENT HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN UNIQUE SON TO BE, NOT POTENTIALLY BUT ACTUALLY TO BE THE PROPITIATION FOR OUR SINS.

*** AND AS WE LOOKED AT THE WORD PROPITIATION IN I JOHN 2:2, I WANT TO REMIND YOU THAT IT LIT. MEANS APPEASEMENT OR SATISFACTION.

**** AND HERE WE ARE LED TO THE LOVE OF GOD MANIFEST ON THE CROSS. FOR JESUS CHRIST'S SACRIFICIAL DEATH ON THE CROSS SATISFIED THE HOLY DEMANDS OF GOD'S JUSTICE, THUS SATISFYING OR APPEASING HIS HOLY WRATH AGAINST HIS PEOPLE'S SINS.

2. THEREFORE THE ATONEMENT, MEANING THE PAYMENT OF SIN, WAS THE SACRIFICE THAT SATISFIED. IT SATISFIED GOD'S JUSTICE.

- GOD'S WRATH IS PLACATED, APPEASED, SATISFIED IN CHRIST'S SACRIFICIAL DEATH FOR THOSE HE DIED FOR, HIS ELECT. NOT POTENTIALLY BUT ACTUALLY.

*** IN OTHER WORDS, THERE WAS AN ACTUAL ATONEMENT BY CHRIST IN HIS DEATH, AND HIS BLOOD PURCHASED SALVATION, NOT JUST PROVIDED, BUT PURCHASED, AND BECAME AN ACTUAL RANSOM FOR THOSE HE DIED FOR.**

**** WHICH MAKES THE DEATH OF CHRIST NOT A POTENTIAL MEANS OF FORGIVENESS BUT AN ACTUAL MEANS OF FORGIVENESS AND EVERYONE CHRIST DIED FOR WILL BE FORGIVEN.**

***** IT IS TO SAY, THE CROSS WAS A COMPLETE SUCCESS AND THEREFORE THERE IS NO ONE IN HELL THAT CHRIST DIED FOR. HIS DEATH PURCHASED AN ACTUAL REDEMPTION FOR PEOPLE HE DIED FOR, THERE IS NO**

UNLIMITED ATONEMENT BUT A PARTICULAR ACTUAL REAL ATONEMENT FOR THE SINS OF PEOPLE THAT JESUS ACTUALLY CAME TO SAVE.

****** AND THEREFORE GOD'S PURPOSE IN THE DEATH OF CHRIST WAS PURCHASING A REDEMPTION THAT WAS ACCOMPLISHED AND APPLIED AT THE CROSS FOR THE PEOPLE HE CAME TO SAVE.**

3. NOW WITH ALL THAT SAID, IN THIS IS LOVE. THIS IS LOVE BECAUSE GOD SENT HIS SON TO BE THE PROPITIATION FOR OUR SINS – BELIEVER.

*** SO WHEN WE WONDER HOW MUCH GOD LOVES US, WE CAN VISIBLY ANSWER BY SAYING THIS MUCH! (STRETCH OUT OUR ARMS AND VISUALIZE JESUS HANGING ON THE CROSS TO SATISFY GOD'S JUSTICE, TO APPEASE GOD'S HOLY WRATH!)**

**** HEREIN IS LOVE. THIS IS LOVE. THE ACTION OF SACRIFICE.**

***** SAMUEL RUTHERFORD SAID: "THE CROSS IS NAUGHT BUT LOVE COVERED WITH FLESH."**

****** AND ISN'T IT AMAZING LOVE, HOW CAN IT BE, THAT THOU MY GOD (JESUS CHRIST IN A BODY) SHOULDST DIE FOR ME! THAT IS THE SACRIFICE OF LOVE.**

4. AND THAT KIND OF LOVE LEADS US QUICKLY TO MY LAST POINT TODAY, THE SANITY OF LOVE. LOOK AT V. 11 PLEASE.

III. THE SANITY OF LOVE, (READ V. 11)

A. NOW I USE THE WORD SANITY TO TALK ABOUT THE LOVE OF V. 11 FROM THE STANDPOINT OF GOOD SENSE, COMMON SENSE, REASONABLENESS.

* AND WHAT IS THE REASONABLE RESPONSE OF GOD SO LOVING US? WELL THE ADVERB “SO” MEANS “TO SUCH AN EXTENT,” AND HERE WE HAVE AN ECHO OF JOHN 3:16.

** WHAT IS THE REASONABLE RESPONSE BY US THAT ARE THE BELOVED, AS JOHN BEGINS V. 11 WITH THAT WORD AGAIN.

*** WHAT IS THE REASONABLE, COMMON SENSE, RESPONSE TO SUCH AMAZING LOVE FOR US?

**** TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER. WE OUGHT TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER AND THE WORD OUGHT HERE IN THE GREEK MEANS WHAT WE OWE, THAT WE ARE IN DEBT, SO WE PAY BACK WHAT IS DUE.

1. AND WE THAT HAVE BEEN LOVED SO GREATLY, IMMEASURABLY HAVE A DEBT TO PAY. WE OWE LOVE TO OUR BRETHREN. WE HAVE THE DEBT OF LOVE.

*** AND I CAN RELATE THIS TO ROMANS 13:8 WHICH SAYS: (QUOTE IT).**

**** AND BELOVED THE REASONABLE, LOGICAL, COMMON SENSE RESPONSE TO GOD'S LOVE FOR US IS TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER. WE HAVE A DEBT WE CANNOT PAY, FOR WE HAVE BEEN FORGIVEN AN UNPAYABLE DEBT WHEN IT COMES OT OUR SIN.**

***** WE HAVE A HOLY OBLIGATION TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER.**

IN WRAP UP: (1) SINCE GOD SO LOVED US, WE OUGHT ALSO TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER.

*** JOHN OWEN SAID: "CHRISTIAN LOVE IS TO BE AS UNCONFINED AS THE BEAMS OF THE SUN. IT DOESN'T SELECT ON WHOM IT WILL SHINE ITS BEAMS." (END QUOTE)**

**** AND BELOVED THAT MEANS PRACTICALLY OUR LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER IN THE CHURCH AND TO OTHER TRUE**

BELIEVERS GOD BRINGS ACROSS OUR PATH SHOULD NOT SHINE ONLY ON THOSE WHO WE THINK DESERVE IT, FOR WHO OF US IS WORTHY OF GOD'S LOVE?

***** AND WITH THAT SAID, SOME PRACTICAL APPLICATION QUESTIONS THAT HELP THE RUBBER TO MEET THE ROAD.**

****** SINCE GOD SO LOVED US, HOW CAN WE HARBOR GRUDGES AGAINST BROTHERS AND SISTERS?**

(2) SINCE GOD SO LOVED US, HOW CAN WE BE RESENTFUL AND ENGAGE IN PETTY SQUABBLES?

*** SINCE GOD SO LOVED US, DO YOU FORGIVE OTHERS AS YOU HAVE BEEN FORGIVEN?**

**** SINCE GOD SO LOVED US, DOES YOUR LOVE GO BEYOND MERE FEELINGS TO SACRIFICIAL SERVICE AND GENUINE CONCERN, OR DO YOU CONTINUE TO LIVE IN AN UTTERLY SELF-FOCUSED WAY?**

****** BELOVED ASSURANCE GETS REAL WHEN LOVE GETS REAL.**

(3) NO ONE WHO HAS BEEN TO THE CROSS AND HAD THEIR EYES, EARS AND HEART OPENED TO THE IMMEASURABLE AND UNMERITED LOVE OF GOD CAN

**LIVE IN SELFISHNESS AND NOT BE CONVICTED AND
DESIRE TO CHANGE.**

*** AS WE GROW IN SANCTIFICATION, WE GROW IN
SERVICE, SACRIFICE AND SELFLESSNESS.**

**** BELOVED, IF GOD SO LOVED US, WE HAVE THE
REASONABLE SERVICE OF LOVING ONE ANOTHER.
(LET'S PRAY)**