

# So That You May Know

## An Expository Study of the Epistle of **1 John 4:11**

### Chapter 19- God's Love Brings Forth Our Love

#### 186- God's Love Brings Forth Our Love- Part 1

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WAOY Tuesday 05/13/08

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We're continuing our verse by verse "journey" through the Epistle of **1John**, and today I want to begin to look at what John taught about how "God's Love Brings Forth Our Love". So, let's open our Bibles and read **1John 4:11** together:

**Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.**

Now we have spent a great deal of time examining the manifest love of God and I pray that you now stand in awe of the glory of that Love. For a holy and righteous God to love sinners like us is truly astounding and we should never get over it and we should never take that Love for granted.

But now John, in his usual style, shows us that God's great manifest Love toward us in and by and through Jesus Christ goes way beyond simply being astounded by it- now John teaches us here that because this Love of God in Christ is just that great- that we now need to do something. John is telling us here that since God's Love is so glorious and so filled with wonder and awe- that is it proper; it is fitting; it is reasonable that God's Love promotes and causes a reaction in and through us.

And this reaction is that now that God has set His great manifest Love on us through the Person of Jesus Christ- therefore we ought to love one another.

Now there are several aspects of this one single verse that are very interesting. First of all- John is predicating what he says here in this verse to that which he said in the previous two verses. In other words, John is saying since it is true that the manifest Love of God comes to us through the death, burial, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ- therefore-we ought to love one another.

In other words, John is saying here that our love toward each other is the direct result of God's Love toward us. And as we read in verse 10 – God's Love came first. It was God who first loved us- not we who loved God first. And this is consistent with what the Bible teaches about God and man. God is always supreme, and Man is always the servant or better put- the bond slave. God is always first, and Man is always last.

For example- the Bible teaches that it is God Who chose *us*- not *we* who chose God. This is true and it is also wonderful to know if you believe what the Bible teaches about the great difference between God and Man. Now I realize that it is very popular to say that lost Man has his own free will and that God will never violate that free will and therefore- it is Man who must choose to be saved and it is Man who must choose to love and serve Jesus Christ.

But as we just discussed, the Bible doesn't teach that. Our Lord Jesus Christ said this in **John 15:16**:

**You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and *that* your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you.**

So we can see, dear friends, that the Bible teaches that it is God Who chooses Man and not the other way around. And the Bible also says that it is God Who first loved us- not the other way around. But if this is true- then why do so many people today believe and teach just the opposite? The answer is real bad teaching and real bad learning.

The Truth about the order of how love comes- refers us back to God's Sovereign Election and Predestination of His chosen people. The Bible says that God set His great Love upon those whom He chose from before the foundation of the world and it is because God set His Love upon them that these people are saved and now that they are saved- they are now commanded to love one another.

You see, no one born of woman loves God naturally without God first "setting His Love" upon that person and changing that person and equipping that person prior to that person being saved. And the reason that this is true is because of the great and negative affect that the Fall of Adam had on us.

In fact, the Fall of Adam was so devastating to the human race that unless and until God first Sovereignly moves upon the lost soul to open his eyes and unstop his ears and give him a heart to believe- no one would ever know God; no one would ever love God; and no one would ever be saved.

And this is why we need to carefully study what the Bible teaches about the Fall of Adam and how that Fall so greatly affected us. An improper and unbiblical understanding about the Fall will *always* lead to an improper and unbiblical understanding of God and Man and of the order of love and God's Sovereignty and Man's free will. And an incorrect and unbiblical understanding of these things always leads to an incorrect and unbiblical understanding of Salvation.

You see, dear friends, the Bible teaches that our lost condition is so prevailing; that the Fall of Adam so radically and negatively affected the sons of Adam- that it robbed us of not only the *power* to save ourselves- but it also robbed us of something even worse- the Fall robbed us of even the *desire* to be saved. Let's read **Philippians 2:13:**

**for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for *His* good pleasure.**

Now look at this verse very closely with me, brothers and sisters. The Apostle Paul is writing under the moving of the Holy Spirit here to give us these inspired and infallible and inerrant Words that say that it is God Who works in us- now notice here that it does *not* say here in **Philippians 2:13** that it is *we* who work; or it is we who do *anything* here- but this verse says that it is God- all by Himself- Who works in us.

Well, just *how* does God "work"? Just what does God do in us? This verse says that God works "inside of us" to give to us and to do for us two things that we do not already have and do not already possess until and unless God does that work in us. Well, what are those two things that **Philippians 2:13** says that God gives us and that God works in us to give to us that we do not possess in ourselves until God does work in us?

1. The *will* to do of God's good Pleasure
2. The *power* to do of God's good Pleasure

Now here is the real question that I want you to ponder with me. If lost unsaved man has the free will to choose to be saved like we have all been taught- then why does this verse say that God has to work in us to give us the will to do God's good pleasure? In other words, if lost fallen Man already possess his own independent free will in and of himself and Salvation is simply a matter of us exercising our own human prerogative and making a human choice and deciding to accept Christ into our hearts then what is Paul teaching here?

This verse says that God has to "work in us" not only to give us the *power* or the *ability* to do God's good Pleasure –which most of us would readily agree to- but this verse also teaches that God has to work in us to give us the *desire* or the *will* to do God's good Pleasure.

So, the question is, "Why?" "Why does God have to work in us to give us something that we already have?" That would make no sense at all, would it? God would *only* need to work in us to give us something that we normally do *not* have or that we normally do *not* possess and God's Word says here that lost, fallen, unsaved people in their natural state of being fallen do not have either the will or the power to serve God by and through our own human abilities- which is exactly why God has to work in us to give us these things.

Now you are free to disagree with me about this, dear friends, and you will suffer no harm to your souls at all- but what you are *not* free to do is to disagree with Scripture. I didn't write this verse- the Apostle Paul did and the Bible makes the claim that every single verse of Scripture that is in the Bible was exhaled by the Mind and Heart and Mouth of Almighty God. So we are forced to deal with what God has said here.

Now because this verse is in the Bible- then only one of two things is true. Either the Bible is true and the Fall of Adam was so devastating to us that we lost everything as it pertains to God- including our ability to freely choose God and to freely love God and therefore **Philippians 2:13** is right and God has to work in us to restore what the Fall robbed us of- or else the Bible is *not* true and Man suffered no ill effects at all from the Fall and we are born just fine and we already have the power and we already have the will to love and serve God on our own without God working in us at all. Now you are free to choose which side of this discussion you want to be on- but keep

in mind, dear friends, that both statements *cannot* be true- either the Bible is true or it isn't.

So if the Fall was as bad as the Bible says that it was- then we must acknowledge that Man was *radically* and *negatively* affected by it- not just in losing his immortality and his relationship with God but also in his loves, desires, and will. Now if the Fall was not that big a deal- then we were not that affected by it at all. But if we were affected by the Fall – we must decide just how much were we affected? A little; a lot; or not at all? And the Scripture is clear about this issue- Man was radically and negatively affected by the Fall.

Now keep in mind as we discuss this- that this is the very issue that Secular Humanism is all about. Secular Humanists deny the authority of the Bible. Humanists reject the notion that Truth is Divine and Objective and Absolute. And the result of their rejection of Scripture is that Humanists teach that the Fall was a myth and so therefore all men are born just fine. Secular humanists teach that Man can love and serve whoever he chooses to love and serve- including God at any time that he himself chooses because the crown jewel of Secular Humanism is the omnipotence and the sovereignty of Man's "free will".

Humanists acknowledge that Man may need education or money or a change of environment or a change of attitude in order to be all he can be- but the godless secular humanist utterly rejects the notion that Man needs to be saved from sin by a Savior. Humanists teach that all Man really needs is to tap into that "power" that already lies inside the heart of Man and to build up self- esteem in order to be a better you.

So Secular Humanism upholds the false belief that Man initiates what Man needs; that Man does what is right based upon his own free choice and that Man loves and desires things based upon his own intellect and will.

But Christianity teaches that the Fall so radically damaged Man that Man is both *unable* and *unwilling* to love and serve or even to choose God until and unless God first sovereignly moves upon that individual and does for Man what that Man *cannot* and *will not* do for himself. And *that* is what Grace is all about.

Secular Humanism teaches that human beings don't need Salvation- which makes Grace to be patently ridiculous because they teach that all that fallen Man needs is a little bit of education combined with some money mixed in with some opportunity and presto! We have

the inner power to affect whatever changes that we need for *ourselves*. And by the way- what I just told you is the foundation of the disciplines of Sociology Psychology and Psychiatry- which all teach that Man has the internal power to make himself better through education, money, and opportunity.

And we hear this all the time in our schools and in corporate America and in movies and on television shows: that we all have the internal power to “be all we can be” or that to dream big dreams and to believe in ourselves enough will cause all our dreams to come to pass. And all of that nonsense is godless Humanistic blasphemy that is at war with what Scripture teaches.

Secular Humanism teaches that what is *wrong* with Man is what is external to him- that which is on the outside of him- things like crime; violence, disease, not enough money, and no opportunities- while Humanism also teaches that what is *right* with Man is what is on the inside of him; inner strength; self- esteem; and belief in himself.

But the Bible teaches just the opposite of all of that. The Bible teaches that what is *wrong* with Man is what is *inside* of him from birth- his wicked heart; his rebellious nature; and his proclivity to sin. The Bible also teaches that what is *right* with Man is what occurs *external* to him- on the outside- things like God first loving us; and the death, burial and Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

So if you believe that the Bible is true- then you have to believe that until and unless God Sovereignly does for us what we *cannot* do for ourselves- we are in terrible shape and therefore it is Mercy; it is Grace; it is God’s manifest Love in and by and through Jesus Christ that awakens our dead souls and opens our blind eyes and unstops our deaf ears and takes out of us a heart of stone and gives us a heart of flesh and it is God Who gives us the gift of faith that we need to believe and it is God Who sets His Love upon us- so that we might see and so that we might hear and so that we might believe and so that we might be saved. And because we are now saved; because we are the recipients of this marvelous Love of God; this unconditional Love of God- because you and I have been so radically and eternally changed because God first loved us- now we have a great commandment that the only proper response to this great Love of God is that we ought to love one another.

Well, I have to stop right here, but please join me on the next broadcast as we continue our journey through the Epistle of **1John**. May God help us all.

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