

INTRODUCTION

1. Please take God's Word and turn with me to 1 John chapter 4.
2. In our last two times together we have talked about John's exposition of love.
3. This is the third time he addresses the subject of love in 1 John.
4. God calls us to love one another.
5. Throughout the Bible we see God demonstrating His love to His creation.

6. In Christ we see the ultimate in God expressing His love to man.
7. And we are to express the love that He has shown us to one another.
8. We have already seen...

REVIEW

- I. The Exhortation to Love (vv.7-8)
- II. The Manifestation of Love (v.9)
- III. The Intervention of Love (vv.10-11)

Today I want us to zoom in again on verse 11 and see...

LESSON

IV. The Debt of Love (v.11)

A. We Have a Debt to Love One Another

1. Because God loves us we are in debt to Him to love one another
2. John already stated this earlier in 1 John 3:16 (NASB) when he said, “We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.”
3. John’s use of the word “beloved” (agapetoi) marks the 6th time he has used this word and this word expresses his love for them and the

love they also are to demonstrate to other believers

Though it is not stated here but loving one another is a command...

B. Loving One Another is Commanded

1. It is commanded by Jesus - John 15:12 (NASB) This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you.
2. It is commanded by God - 1 John 3:23 (NASB) This is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as He commanded us.

3. It is also mentioned by Paul - 1 Thessalonians 4:9 (NASB) Now as to the love of the brethren, you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another.

4. Loving one another goes as far back as to the book of Leviticus
 - a) Leviticus 19:17-18 (NASB) You shall not hate your fellow countryman in your heart; you may surely reprove your neighbor, but shall not incur sin because of him. 18 You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the sons of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am

the Lord.

- b) Leviticus 19:34 (NASB) The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt; I am the Lord your God.

C. The Love of God Becomes Our Motive

- 1. Before we were saved we lived selfishly - Titus 3:3 (NASB) For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another.

2. But now God's love shown to us becomes the motive for our responding to others properly
3. Our motive is not what we can get but what we can give. It's never about us.
4. We are as Philippians 2:3 (NASB) says to "Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves."

Back in 1 John 4:11, John uses the word "ought" to speak about our obligation...

D. Loving One Another is Our Obligation

1. This word “ought” (*opheilomen*) infers that there is an inner motivation and obligation to love others.
2. Further, this obligation or debt cannot be postponed for any reason. It is one we rightly owe.
3. John is insisting that loving God and loving others cannot be divorced, which is exactly what Jesus taught in Matt 22:37–40, which says, “And He said to him, “ ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ 38 This is the great and foremost commandment. 39 The second is like it, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ 40 On these

two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets.”

4. John is writing to those who are recipients of God’s love. Since God has loved them in this way, they have no option but to do the same.
5. Burdick explains: “The fact of God’s matchless love lays upon us a continuing obligation (Greek present tense) to be loving one another. Not only is it true that we have received the nature of God by reason of our new birth and thus we should love, but we have the example of His love teaching us and persuading us to love each other.”

6. Those who are children of God must show mercy because he shows mercy (Luke 6:36), they must be holy since he is holy (1 Pet 1:15), and they must love since he loves.¹
7. So we are “under obligation” to love one another---all because what God has done for us in sending Jesus to appease Him of our sin

E. Love is Now What Characterizes Believers

Listen to this short survey of a believer's love:

1. Believers love God - Rom.8:28

¹ Burdick, *Epistles of John*, 74.

2. Believers love God's Word - Psalms 119:47-48 (NASB) I shall delight in Your commandments, which I love.
48 And I shall lift up my hands to Your commandments, which I love;
And I will meditate on Your statutes.

3. Believers love each other -
Philippians 2:25-26 (NASB) But I thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger and minister to my need; 26 because he was longing for you all and was distressed because you had heard that he was sick.

4. Jonathan loved David - 1 Samuel 18:1-3 (NASB) Now it came about

when he had finished speaking to Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as himself. 2 Saul took him that day and did not let him return to his father's house. 3 Then Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself.

5. Believers love their families

a) Husbands to wives - Eph.5:25

b) Wives to husbands - Titus 2:4 (NASB) so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children.

6. Believers love strangers - Leviticus 19:34 (NASB) The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt; I am the Lord your God.

7. Believers love their enemies

a) Exodus 23:4-5 (NASB) If you meet your enemy's ox or his donkey wandering away, you shall surely return it to him. 5 If you see the donkey of one who hates you lying helpless under its load, you shall refrain from leaving it to him, you shall surely release it with him.

- b) Matthew 5:44 (NASB) But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.
- c) Romans 12:19-20 (NASB)
Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” says the Lord. 20 “But if your enemy is hungry, feed him, and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.”

F. Love Must Be Practiced

We have already heard some ways in which we are to love but let me give you a few more:

1. Meet needs

a) Matthew 25:34-40 (NASB)

“Then the King will say to those on His right, ‘Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.
35 For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in;
36 naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to

Me.’ 37 Then the righteous will answer Him, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You something to drink? 38 And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You? 39 When did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ 40 The King will answer and say to them, ‘Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.’

- b) Leviticus 25:35 (NASB) Now in case a countryman of yours becomes poor and his means with regard to you falter, then

you are to sustain him, like a stranger or a sojourner, that he may live with you.

- c) Acts 2:44-45 (NASB) And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common; 45 and they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need.

2. Visit the sick

- a) In Job 31:16-22 (NASB), Job appeals to his integrity and says, “If I have kept the poor from their desire, or have caused the eyes of the widow to

fail, 17 Or have eaten my morsel alone, and the orphan has not shared it 18 (But from my youth he grew up with me as with a father, and from infancy I guided her), 19 If I have seen anyone perish for lack of clothing, or that the needy had no covering, 20 If his loins have not thanked me, and if he has not been warmed with the fleece of my sheep, 21 If I have lifted up my hand against the orphan, because I saw I had support in the gate, 22 Let my shoulder fall from the socket, and my arm be broken off at the elbow.

- b) James 1:27 (NASB) Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of

our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

3. Sympathize

- a) Romans 12:15 (NASB) Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.
- b) 1 Corinthians 12:26 (NASB) And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.
- c) Galatians 6:2 (NASB) Bear one another's burdens, and thereby

fulfill the law of Christ.

4. Be patient - Ephesians 4:1-3
(NASB) Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, 2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, 3 being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

5. Be kind - Ephesians 4:32 (NASB)
Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

6. Forgive and don't hold grudges -
Colossians 3:13-14 (NASB) Bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. 14 Beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity.

7. Rebuke and correct

a) Leviticus 19:17 (NASB) You shall not hate your fellow countryman in your heart; you may surely reprove your neighbor, but shall not incur sin because of him.

b) Matthew 18:15 (NASB) If your brother sins, go and show him

his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother.

CONCLUSION

1. I want to conclude by reading Paul's account of love from 1 Corinthians 13:1-8 (NASB) If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 If I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. 3 And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing. 4 Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, 5 does

not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, 6 does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; 7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.
8 Love never fails; but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will be done away.

2. In short Paul is saying what he said in Ephesians 5:1-2 (NASB) Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; 2 and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.

3. All of this is only possible by a relationship with Jesus Christ.
4. When God saves you, He gives you His love.
5. As John says in 1 John 5:11, “Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.
6. Do you personally know this love this morning?
7. You can by surrendering your heart to Jesus right now.
8. Turn from your sin, confess Him as Lord calling on Him and He will save you.
9. Let’s pray.