

Message #17**I John 4:7-12**

When it comes to the subject of God, this passage right here is probably the most famous in the entire world and the most misunderstood. It is in this context that we read the word “God is love.” In fact, the idea that people have that God is a loving God comes in part from this text, which is proof of the influence of the Bible.

Whenever I hear someone say we should love one another, I ask the question what do you mean by that.

Agape love is not sentimental love, it is not social love, it is not sexual love; it is a supernatural love that is exactly the kind of love God has and God is.

BELIEVERS WHO KNOW GOD AND HAVE CLOSE FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD ARE THOSE WHO CONTINUALLY LOVE ONE ANOTHER OF THE SAME KIND WITH GOD’S KIND OF LOVE.

PART #1 – The charge to love one another. **4:7a**

We know immediately from the context that this cannot be a charge to love everybody. We are not to love false prophets and teachers. The pronoun “another” is key, for it means another of the same kind.

Those who know God and have close fellowship with God are those who continually are developing a deeper and deeper love for those of the same kind. The more the similarities, the more the love. This is a great test of whether or not we are walking in a right relationship with God. Do you love to be around people who love God’s Word and love God’s doctrine and love God’s church?

PART #2 – The reasons for the charge to love one another. **4:7b-12**

Reason #1 - Because love is from God. **4:7b**

There is an article in the Greek text before the noun “love” and before the proper noun “God.” What this means is that there is a very specific kind of love that comes from “the” God of the Bible. The preposition “ek” (from) means this love is born out of God.

Reason #2 - Because love is evidence one is born of God. **4:7c**

When one continually demonstrates the supernatural type of love that God describes in His Word, one gives continual evidence of the fact that he is born of God. The target of the love is others of the same kind.

Reason #3 - Because love is evidence that one knows God. **4:7d**

Gnostics claimed they had really come to know God, but they hated those who loved God and the Word of God. They hated the apostles.

Reason #4 - Because not loving is evidence that one does not know God. **4:8**

When it comes to having fellowship with God, people are broken down into two categories by John: 1) Those who do love others who love the Lord and love the Word and are faithful; 2) Those who don't love others who love the Lord and love the Word and are faithful.

Reason #5 - Because God is love. **4:8b**

Here is probably the most famous of all statements about God. Actually in Scripture there are several "God is..." statements which give us understanding into His Person:

1) God is Spirit (John 4:24); 2) God is a consuming fire (Heb. 12:29); 3) God is light (I John 1:5); 4) God is love (**I John 4:8**). These terms do not refer to virtues we find in God; these terms denote what God actually is.

Reason #6 - Because God demonstrated His love. **4:9-11**

The love of God is manifested in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. So in this great reality lies the secret to God's kind of love.

God cannot save us by His love. In other words, God, by love alone cannot save us. He cannot just love us and overlook our sin. God can provide a sacrifice for us by His love. It is in the provisional sacrifice of Jesus Christ where God's love is manifested. He provided this sacrifice seeing us as the full sinners we are.

The cross of Jesus Christ tells us that God is love. But it also tells us God is righteous and just and is a God of wrath.

The love we should demonstrate for others is not a backslapping, joking, cheap sentiment that we are all okay. The love is that which truly cares that others are right with God.

Reason #7 – Because we demonstrate God's love to others. **4:12**

No one sees God but they see us.

When people see how we operate and care for each other and apply Biblical principles, they should see an accurate application of the love of God, which includes forgiveness, confrontation, discipline, reward, respect and honor.

That is precisely what John was after in this text.