

1Jn 13 - **Love is Perfected in Disciples - 1Jn 4:13-21**

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Another Msg on LOVE ?? Are you kidding ??
How important is this subject to God anyway ?

Here are the Msg's we've already had on Love:

Disciples Genuinely Love - 1Jn 2

Disciples Pick One To Love - 1Jn 2

Disciples Love One Another - 1Jn 3

Disciples Love Because God Is Love - 1Jn 4

& Now – **Love is Perfected in Disciples**

& we're **not done** - cause we're going to
revisit the subject of love - ***next message***

AGAPE - the GK word for God's Love

& in its Noun & Verb forms – it occurs **32 times** in this section
(*last wk, this wk, nxt wk*) - & almost **300 times** in the NT

& so I thought – Maybe – I'd try to remind us
WHAT this Agape Love of God - LOOKS LIKE (*as we get started*)

There are so many ways
to describe & illustrate **God's Agape Love**

But I just wanted to get the **General Picture**
Of **Agape Love** in our minds again – as we begin

Here is my favorite description - of God's Agape Love;

Sacrificing Self
For the Benefit of Another
To the Glory of God

Really – that is the example Jesus set for us

He willingly became a Sacrifice
For Our Benefit
To the **Glory of God**

So – When we are Living in God's Love – It means;

We are **setting aside** our SELF interest, & our SELF focus

We are **doing what's best** for another person

We are doing it **to the Glory of God**

The Bible says SOOO MUCH about what God's Love looks like
But that definition – is one of my favorites

If you still **want to study** – What God's Love Looks Like
maybe the best place to start - is in **1Cor Ch 13**

Now – Let's talk about **The TITLE**

Love is Perfected in Disciples

First - The Word Perfected

Suggests **an ONGOING FULFILLMENT**

So **THAT'S Good News** – Right ??

& Literally – the word means :
***Brought to Maturity, or to Completion, or
Brought to a Planned Goal !!!***

& THAT is what God wants to do
In Every Disciple's Life

He wants to **BRINGS US** to His ***“Planned Goal”***

Of His Love being **PERFECTED** in us -
Being brought to **Maturity** – Even **Completion**
In our Lives

Isn't that Incredible – that **THAT** is what God wants to do
with His Love – **in our** Lives ?

& not only – are we going to see
HOW God's Love is PERFECTED in our Lives . . .

But we're going to see another wonderful Benefit
Of that occurring in us - & to us

Let's Pray

We have to **go back** to **V.12** to start today
Because it **introduces** the next section

1Jn 4:12 - ESV

12 No one has ever seen God; (But) if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.

Again - that term **perfected in us** MEANS;
progressive brought to maturity, completion

So it means - IF we are Loving One Another . . .

Then **GOD** is abiding in us
& **HIS LOVE** is being brought to maturity *in us*

Now – we start today
With **John** telling us

HOW we **KNOW**
that WE Abide in God - & GOD Abides in Us

1Jn 4:13 - ESV

13 *By this* (what's coming up) *we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit*

The little word "OF" - denotes origin - the source of something

What it means is
We know that we live in Him & He lives in us

BECAUSE we see **FRUIT** in our lives
that can only come **FROM** the Holy Spirit – as its Source

ROM 5:5

So when we see that fruit – of the Love of God
That can ONLY Grow from God Abiding in us

Then we **KNOW** that HE IS **ABIDING** in us
& **We** ARE **ABIDING** in Him

The Loose Paraphrase – The Message – puts it like this

1Jn 4:13 The Message → →

1Jn 4:13 The Message

13 This is how we know we're living steadily and deeply in him, and he in us: He's given us life from his life, from his very own Spirit

& the **RESULT** of
His Life - - **REPLACING** Our Life is

The fruit of **HIS LOVE** - will begin to **GROW**
out of **His Life** in us . . . *AMEN ??*

John is talking about **God's Love**
Being **Evidence** or **PROOF**

of **Us Abiding in God** – and - **God Abiding in us**

But in **Vs's 14-15** – He wants to remind us

that it's not **LOVE ALONE**
that **assures us** that God is **Abiding** in us

But it's also our **CONFESSION** - of **Who Jesus Christ** is

1Jn 4:14-15 - ESV

14 And (NLT - Furthermore) we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.

15 Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.

These Vs's remind us – that **we cannot say**
Everyone who is loving – is from God

So John TIES together (as evidence) – **BOTH**

1) The **FRUIT** of God's Love in our lives - **AND**

2) The **CONFESSION** that
Jesus is the Son of God & Savior of the World

So there is **no conflict** between
God's **LOVE** - & God's **TRUTH**

We talked **last week** – about those who say
“If God is a Loving God then He would only do this & this, etc”

But – **Contrary** to man's opinion
God is **BOTH** Perfect **LOVE** – and – Perfect **TRUTH**

& so - God **LOVE** - & God's **TRUTH** about Jesus Christ
MUST Go together

BECAUSE – They **BOTH** come from **God's Life Abiding in us**

Now – John **goes back**
To the **Assurance** of God's Love (& a very encouraging vs)

1Jn 4:16 - ESV

16 So (because of these things) we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

The word “**ABIDE**” means **WAY MORE** than
“To develop a compartment – a part – a portion of your life”

The Word ABIDE
its **Best Illustrated** by Jesus Himself – in **Jn Ch 15**

What does it MEAN – that we ABIDE in Love
BY - Abiding in God – and – He in Us ??

I could give you the Technical Definition
But Jesus used an Illustration – so let me do that

Jn 15:4-5 – ESV

4 Abide in me, and I (abide) in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.

5 I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I (abide) in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

SIX TIMES in Two Vs's - Jesus says (or implies) –
The concept of ABIDING

& the PICTURE of the branch ABIDING in the Vine
Is a Perfect Picture - & a Familiar One

& it's VERY IMPORTANT that we see this picture
As we move to our KEY Vs's today

So – Here's what 1John has been telling us;

When - We are Abiding in Him

Then - His Life PRODUCES the fruit
of His Love in our lives

Do you See it ??

OK - Now – **FINALLY** – We're ready to see
HOW God's Love - Is **PERFECTED** – **MATURED** – in our lives

We have to start w/ the **2nd half of V.16**
& just the **1st half of V.17**

1Jn 4:16(B)-17(A) – ESV

16 . . . God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

17 By this is love perfected with us, . . .

Remember – the word **Perfected** means;
Mature, Completed, Brought to the Planned Goal

So - **HOW** is God's Love **PERFECTED** (Completed) ***in our Lives*** ??

By **Us Abiding in God**
& **God Abiding in Us** - - ***RIGHT ??***

Which ***“Looks Like”*** - How Jesus illustrated it in **Jn Ch 15**

As the **Branch** Can **ONLY** Produce Fruit
As it is **Permanently Connected** to the Vine

In the **SAME MANNER** – that is the ***only way***
we can see - **the Fruit** of the **Love of God** – **Produced** in our lives

As we remain **Permanently Attached** to the Vine

With the **Life** of the Vine – **Constantly Flowing** thru our lives
to **Produce** the **Fruit** of God's Love

THAT is how God's Love – is **PERFECTED** in our lives

But what else do we see here ??

WHAT else does V.17 say is Accomplished
BY God's Love being Perfected in US ??

Let's read all of 1Jn 4:17 - ESV

17 By this (abiding in God) **is love perfected** (mature, complete) **with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because as he is so also are we in this world.**

By Abiding in God & He is us – His Love is PERFECTED
(brought to maturity, full expression)

SO THAT – *The result of which is –*

That we may have confidence for the Day of Judgment

As we Abide in God – His Love is PERFECTED in us

& one of the great rewards of that is

That we will have CONFIDENCE on the Day of Judgment ??

WHY ??

Because we've Earned something– **NO !!**

Because His Love perfected in us – is the ASSURANCE
that we are Living - in the Righteousness of Jesus Christ

If God's Love is Growing toward Maturity in your life

Then YOU CAN KNOW

That AS HE IS - - SO also ARE WE - - in this World
(end of V.17)

That can be a tuff sentence - - But it's referring back to

The SIGN (Mark) of God's Love in us
BEING OUR ASSURANCE

That we are IN CHRIST

& so we presently HAVE His Righteousness "*Positionally*"

Eph 2:4-6 – NLT

4 But God is so rich in mercy, and he loved us so much,

5 that even though we were dead because of our sins, he gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead. (It is only by God's grace that you have been saved!)

6 For he raised us from the dead along with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ Jesus.

THAT is what John is saying at the End of V.17

As Jesus Christ IS (*Raised & Seated with God*)

So Are WE – because we are UNITED with Him (*One with Him*)

& the EVIDENCE of that –

Is us SEEING God's Love Perfected in us

The Evidence is not because we say so – or demand so

The Evidence is that we see the FRUIT of the Life of God
Growing, Maturing, BEING PERFECTED – in our lives

Here's how John Bunyan put it in

Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners (without olde english)

Quote → →

John Bunyan

“Sinner, you think that because of your sins and infirmities I cannot save your soul, but behold my Son is by me, and upon Him I look, and not on you, and I will deal with you according as I am pleased with Him.”

& to THAT – we can say Praise God !!

& 1John is saying - **As we see** more & more
of the Love of God **PERFECTED** in our lives

We can have **absolute confidence** about that day
when we will **meet Him** face to face

& so - we have **NO NEED** to **FEAR** that day
We can have Complete **Confidence**

WHY no fear ? Because **as** the Love of God **Matures** in us
it **CASTS OUT** all fear

look at the **next vs.**

1Jn 4:18 - ESV

18 There is no fear in love, but perfect (mature) love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected (brought to maturity) in love.

As the Love of God is **Perfected** (Matured) in us
By us **Abiding** in Him & He **Abiding** in us . . .

As we allow this to happen in our lives
this **Mature** (perfected) Love - Casts Out **ALL FEAR**

The NLT writes the beginning of V.18 this way
18 Such love has no fear, because perfect (mature) love expels all fear.

This **FEAR** that is being **cast out** by God's Love in us
This is **not Fear** as in Reverence or Awe

This is **Fear of punishment**, it refers to dread, or terror

& God **doesn't want you** (His child) to have this kind of **fear**

If you are Abiding in Him - & He is Abiding in you
He wants you to have **Peace** & **Confidence** – That EXPELS fear

HE wants us to **come** to Him as our **ABBA** Father
Knowing we've been adopted (**Rom 8:16**)

He wants us to come **Boldly** to His **Throne of Grace**
To receive exactly what you need (**Heb 4:16**)

& if you will **ABIDE** in Him more & more
then **His Love** will be more & more "**Perfected**" in you

& when you **see** His Love
Growing, Maturing, Being Perfected in you

The more & more **confident**
you can be – for that day when you **face Him**

But again – Remember
We **DO NOT** Love in order to **EARN** Something with God

WHY DO WE LOVE ??

Let's look at the Next Vs - -

1Jn 4:19 - ESV

19 We love because he first loved us.

We Love in RESPONSE – NOT to Earn – Not to Deserve
But - In Response

We love because he first loved us.

We love – because Love is the Fruit
that His life produces in us

Because GOD IS LOVE - & He ABIDES in us
THAT is why we love !!

& That is why – the TEST
of whether God's Love SHOWING in our Lives

is such a Clear & Absolute Test

1Jn 4:20 - ESV

20 If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen.

The final test in this section
is the test of Religious Hypocrisy

If we are claiming to Love God
while holding hate (extreme hostility) toward a fellow Christian

then the Bible has a **Title** for us – We are a **LIAR**
A more **polite word** would be - **Hypocrite**, right?

We've **seen it** over & over again in **1John**

If we Truly Love God
We **MUST** Love One Another

Why is this such an absolute truth ??

Because in **Jn 14:15** - Jesus said
If you love me, you will keep my commandments.

And **then** – Look at our **last Verse** today

1Jn 4:21 - ESV

21 And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.

So – for us to CLAIM to **Love God**
But to hold on to **Extreme Hostility** toward another Christian

Causes a Real **Conflict** – with **whether** the Life of God
Is **truly Abiding** in our Lives

Because **IF** the **Life of God** is living in you – *Abiding in you*
Then you **WILL LOVE**

Because the **Life of God** in you – **IS LOVE**

So – again - if this message
causes you to be concerned

about whether God
is truly Abiding with free reign in your Life

Don't get defensive - Just Cry Out to God

& so - I'm going to ask us right now

to Bow our hearts before God – Humble ourselves
Surrender our Pride

& Pray that God would Forgive us

That He would take over our life
& that He would Create in us a Clean Heart

Let's Pray – you can pray this prayer with me

Dear God, please forgive me of my sin.

I have been blinded by my sin.

And I am helpless to change, without you taking over my life.

Please, take over my life. Create in me a clean heart.

Please fill me with your Holy Spirit, please live in me & thru me.

Please crush my Selfishness & Pride, so that I can see your love living
thru my life

I commit my full life, to you. From this day forward, my life is not my
own.

I surrender myself to you Jesus, as my Savior, and my LORD.

In your own name, Amen.