



Loving Like God Does? (1 John 4:7-21)

The theme of the New Testament is *THE LOVE OF GOD* revealed through the person & actions of Jesus. Following God's example, Christians are expected to extend the same sacrificial love they have experienced to others.
But...are we loving like God does?

teaching notes

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* All Scripture is from CSB (Christian Standard Bible) unless otherwise noted.

BIG TRUTH: Christians are expected to Love First and Love Sacrificially.

1 John 4:7-8 ⁷ Dear friends, let us love one another, because love is from God, and **everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God.** ⁸ The one who does not love does not know God, because God is love.

This writer calls himself "the disciple/one Jesus loved" (Jn 13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7, 20). He is drawn to the pulsing theme of the New Covenant - THE LOVE OF GOD revealed through the person & actions of Jesus.

1 John 4:9-10 ⁹ God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent His one and only Son into the world so that we might live through Him. ¹⁰ Love consists in this: not that we loved God, but that **He loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins.**

2 heavy-hitting truths

1. **God sent his one and only Son into the world.** More than just another man, John claims that Jesus is **the one and only Son** of God! This doesn't mean Jesus is God's kid (what Jehovah's Witnesses believe); it means that He is God in skin, equal with God the Father (Jn 5:18), the Creator of all things (Jn 1:3). God put on skin and showed up to live among and serve His creation for over 3 years!
2. **God loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins.** Rather than waiting on us to offer our lives to Him, God made the first move and offered His life for us! **He loved us first!** John wants his audience to pause and appreciate the significance of the truth. **GOD LOVES...US!!!!** Jesus - the One who never sinned (Jn 8:46; 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15; 1 Pet 1:18-19; 1 Jn 3:5) - gave His own life as a sacrifice for OUR sins!

❓ What would you have said to a judge & jury that simply turned the guilty loose and said, "We forgive you"? That would be a wicked injustice. So too, **our sins are serious** & MUST be payed for. But **our God is so gracious** that rather than forcing us to pay the price, Jesus came to pay our fines!

Living Out God's Example

1 John 4:11-12 ¹¹ Dear friends, **if God loved us in this way, we also must love one another.** ¹² No one has ever seen God. If we love one another, God remains in us and his love is made complete in us.

❓ If Jesus is God, then why would John say that **no one has ever seen God**? No one on our side of eternity has ever seen God the Father in all His glory (Ex 33:20, 1 Tim 6:16). Instead, some saw glimpses of the veiled glory of God. Remember what John wrote in his gospel.

John 1:18 No one has ever seen God. **The One and only Son, Who is Himself God** and is at the Father's side —**He has revealed Him.**

If God loved us in this way, we also must love one another. God loved us 1st & God loved us sacrificially, by giving Jesus to us. This is said so well by Paul:

Romans 5:8 But God proves his own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

And, John writes, **if God loved us in this way, we also must love one another**. Remember what John wrote earlier in this letter:

1 John 3:16 This is how we have come to know love: He laid down his life for us. **We should also lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters.**

Following the example of Jesus, Christians don't wait on others to love us 1st. We understand that...

Christians are expected to Love First and Love Sacrificially.

This starts with how we love brothers and sisters, but isn't limited to our faith family. As God has modeled, *we are to make the first move to love people while they are still sinners.*

Although no one has ever seen the Father, it is obvious that **God remains in us** when **we love one another**. And **His love is made complete in us**.

➡ **The invisible God is made visible when we love first and love sacrificially.**

God's Presence demonstrated by what we believe and how we behave.

1 John 4:13-16 ¹³ This is how we know that we remain in him and he in us: He has given us of his Spirit. ¹⁴ And we have seen and we testify that the Father has sent his Son as the world's Savior. ¹⁵ Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God—God remains in him and he in God. ¹⁶ And we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and the one who remains in love remains in God, and God remains in him.

The follower of Jesus who believes God loves people should be living in such a way as to be **SHOWING** and not just SAYING "*You are valuable, made in the image of God*". Our lives testify that Jesus is **the world's Savior** and that **God is love**.

🌟 **Sermons We See** by Edgar Guest

*I'd rather see a sermon than hear one any day;
I'd rather one should walk with me than merely tell the way.
The eye's a better pupil and more willing than the ear,
Fine counsel is confusing, but example's always clear;
And the best of all preachers are the men who live their creeds,
For to see good put in action is what everybody needs.¹*

Confidence on Judgment Day

1 John 4:17-18 ¹⁷ In this, love is made complete with us so that **we may have confidence in the day of judgment**, because as He is, so also are we in this world. ¹⁸ **There is no fear in love; instead, perfect love drives out fear**, because fear involves punishment. So the one who fears is not complete in love.

There WILL be a **day of judgment**, when those who reject Jesus will be held accountable for sin. The intentions & quality of Christian works will be tested, but our salvation will be secure (1 Cor 3:11-16). Followers of Jesus **may have confidence in the day of judgment**, because our sin was already paid for at the cross!

John 5:24 Truly I tell you, **anyone who hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life** and will not come under judgment but **has passed from death to life**.

We can have this confidence because we are FORGIVEN & because we are LOVED and **there is no fear in love**.

❓ **But aren't Christians commanded to fear God?** "*The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom.*" (Prov 1:7)
*"Honor everyone. Love the brothers and sisters. **Fear God**. Honor the emperor."* (1 Pet 2:17)

🔍 The same words can mean different things in different contexts. Those who love Jesus ARE to fear God - that is REVERE & honor Him. Yet, John says **there is no fear in love**, because **perfect love drives out fear**. We are to **have confidence in the day of judgment** rather than fear.

✗ The English language typically views *FEAR* as something that is bad and unhealthy, but this isn't the way the Hebrew & Greek terms are used of those who trust and follow the One True God.

✓ **Christians are expected to REVERE God, not FEAR God.**

Fear as used here by John is referring to "a state of severe distress, aroused by intense concern for impending pain, danger, evil, etc."² Clearly, that is NOT how Christians are to live. We are **expected to REVERE God, not FEAR God**.

¹ Edgar Guest, "Sermons We See," Collected Verse of Edgar Guest (New York: Buccaneer Books, 1976), p. 599.

² Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 315.

God views Christians **as He is** [Jesus], **so also are we in this world** (v.17). The Father sees followers of Jesus with the righteousness of Jesus (see 2 Cor 5:21). And just as Jesus abides in the Father's love, we can too!

- ➡ There will be no day in court! There will be no sentence handed down. Our sin is paid for in full! Don't fear the next time you see your Father; look forward to it! ***We LIVE in the fact that we are LOVED!!!!***

Real Life Impact of God's Love in Our Lives

1 John 4:19-21 ¹⁹ **We love because he first loved us.** ²⁰ If anyone says, "I love God," and yet hates his brother or sister, he is a liar. For the person who does not love his brother or sister whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. ²¹ And we have this command from him: **The one who loves God must also love his brother and sister.**

My Notes:

Christians are expected to Love First and Love Sacrificially.

When we love one another this way, the invisible God is made visible to our watching world.

- ☀ **John MacArthur** *Brotherly love seeks nothing in return; instead it unconditionally forgives (cf. Matt. 18:21-22), bears others' burdens (Gal. 6:2), and sacrifices to meet their needs (Acts 20:35; Phil. 2:3-4). Yet it is also a righteous love that tolerates neither false doctrine nor habitual sin (1 Tim. 5:20; cf. 2 Thes. 3:15).³*

FEET2FAITH

- ➡ **Seek practical ways to love someone first & sacrificially!** Don't wait on them! Who is that for YOU?
- ➡ **Confess JESUS as King of your life.** You haven't gone too far for God's grace. Turn from your sin and turn to the One who loved you 1st!

heretoserveyou

Have questions and need some help? ...real soon...how about now? Please **call** or **text** us soon!

- * Contact **Jackie** (850-673-1582), **Justin** (704-618-6144), **Christy** (673-9764), or another follower of Jesus soon!
- * Or call our **deacons & wives:** Steve & Debbie Bass (673-7952), Freddy & Joyce Howard (973-0047), Jere & Darlene Burnette (673-1888), Fain & Linda Poppell (464-1282), Jim & Derita Pinkard (464-6188), or Boss & Amelia Mulkey (464-6717).

³ John MacArthur, 1, 2, 3 John, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2007), 171.