

1 John 4:7-16

Announcements:

- [America](#) - **250 years, amazing!** (so very thankful...) (young Washington movie!)
- [2nd Service](#) (consider) [Distractions](#) (**infants/toddlers** (spaces), metal bottles, turn off phones, bathroom before, if you know you need to get up, sit in back...) - **REVERENCE / LOVE!**
- [New Here Lunch](#) after 3rd service today...
- ([Invite Tim up...](#)) [Tim gives a special call](#) for the ministers' interest meeting...

Please open to **1 John Chapter 4** (Need a Bible? ...)

- Last time: **Anchor & Compass** - **Assurance** in the Harbor; **Discernment** on the Seas (*spirit?*)
- This time: **Love** (Familiar) **What is Love?** (*steak, sports, spouse*) - **mashed into mush!**

Message Title: **This is Love**

- **Love Defined** (verses 7-8)
- **Love Demonstrated** (verses 9-10)
- **Love Displayed** (verses 11-16)

Not **Hallmark, Hollywood, Happiness**... (culture = all **distorted ideas** of love). Today, the real thing:

- Not **"what?"** But **"who"?** The world looks to **emotion**, John begins with **theology**...

Love Defined (verses 7-8)

Bible translator, William Tyndale - **"John singeth his old song again."** (*third time: 2:7-11 & 3:11-18*)

V. 7 - **Beloved, let us love one another**

- **Beloved, let us love (agapetoi agapomen)** - "those who are loved, let us love"
- The **command flows from identity!** We love **not to earn** God's love, but because **we have already received** it. **The beloved church is already loved and lives in light of that reality!**

V. 7 - **For love is of God**

- **Not Phileo, Storge, or Eros (not in NT)...**
- **Love (Agape)** - "affection, good will, love, benevolence, brotherly love; self giving, **sacrificial unconditional commitment.**"
- Agape is **NOT romance, pleasure, or emotion.** It's an **action.** **Volitional choice (not impulse)**
 - It's a love that **isn't based** on **"when we feel like it"** or **"when it's deserved"**
- **Love is of God (ek tou Theou)** - **God is the source and origin** of this highest divine love.
- **James 1:17** - "Every good gift and every perfect gift **is from above, coming down from the Father of lights...** (**not self-generated (originates "outside" humanity)**) (**phone electricity**)
- **Chesed (Hebrew)** = "kindness/goodness/mercy (i.e. Unfailing Covenant Love)" (**Book of Ruth!**)
- **Exodus 34:6-7** - "And the Lord passed before him and proclaimed, 'The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in **goodness (chesed)** and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin..."
- **Backbone of the O.T... (story of God)** - **Point: John isn't introducing a new idea.** (**Ps 136**)

V. 7 - **And everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.**

- **Born (gennao: perfect tense)** a **past moment (regeneration)** w/ *permanent, ongoing effect*.
- *Something is given* to one who is **"born again"** that *wasn't there before* **(imparted)** (birthmark!)
- **Loves (Agapao)** = "to have a warm regard for and cherish another; a willed, active love expressed in sacrificial commitment; not mere sentiment, but the highest deliberate act of love."
- All these words (agapetoi, agapomen, agape, agapao) = **new atmosphere we live in & breath!**
- *Not shifting like the winds of culture...* **A reflection of God. The moon reflects the sun!**
- **And knows God** - It's **evidence of relationship!** Though **not perfected**, must be **present**

For those in **God's slow learner class (opposite is true)...**

V. 8 - He who does not love **does not know God**

- The Greek negative **"ou"** which conveys **absolute negation (have not been born again)**
- **Can the lost world display occasional acts of sacrificial love?** Sure! (**common grace** and being **made in the image of God**) makes that possible... **Prominent New Testament scholar:**
- **"It is because men are created in the image of God, an image that has been defaced but not destroyed by the Fall, that they still have the capacity to love... Human love, however noble and however highly motivated, falls short if it refuses to include the Father and Son as the supreme objects of its affection."** (Howard Marshall)
- The **kindest & noblest human love falls short** if it **leaves out God...**
- And **that's John's point in verse 8, one cannot claim to know God** and **not reflect His love...**

V. 8 - For **God is love** - a splendid truth!

- **(all on one slide:)**
- **God is "Spirit"** (John 4:24)
- **God is "Light"** (1 John 1:5)
- **God is "Love"** (1 John 4:8)
- **The gnostics** may have *believed the first two*, but **not the third one...**
- **The Biblical God embodies Love.** He **defines it. In essence** is **found in God, and from God.**
- **Culture twists** this concept: **"Love is God"** (and *then* **redefine** "love" as **emotion or feeling**)
- Another note is that **it colors all His other attributes.** *"If he judges, he judges in love"* (Dodd)

How do you know if someone loves you?

- Not because they **say** it, but because they **show** it...
- Agape love is **defined by action.** **God is love,** and He has **proved it to us...**

Love Demonstrated (verses 9-10)

John's *first argument* is that **love is bound in God's eternal nature**; his *next argument* is that **love is shown in a historical gift (origin, and now, manifestation)**

V. 9 - In this the **love of God was manifested** toward us

- **In this...** **John points to one event.** Not creation. Not blessings. **The incarnation & the cross.**
- **Manifested (phaneroo)** - "to be made visible or plainly recognized; appeared, unveiled"
- **Aorist tense** points to a *definite historical event which took place* at a given time in the past...
- **Manifested = put on display! (like an end aisle at the store)...**
 - **Bethlehem, Nazareth, Galilee, Jerusalem, Calvary...**
 - **Agape love always existed in God,** and is **on display in the person of Christ!**

- You can't photograph "love" but you can take a picture of an event (kid on shoulders!)
- Toward us - we are the benefactors!

Here it is on display...

V. 9 - That God has sent His only begotten Son

- Begotten does not mean made or created. The Greek word is Monogenes: (Monos - "one") + (Genes - "kind" or "type") = "unique; only one of its kind!" - same essential Being! (Jn 3:16)
- Not one among many. Not created (like a statue); not an emanation, nor representative / angel
 - Hebrew thought = Son of God, is God!
 - Only begotten marks Christ's uniqueness.
 - Son marks Christ's deity.
 - Dig deeper...? (A "Different Gospel" - Apologetics (Trinity))
- The main point here is the action of love. Old Testament illustrated...
- Genesis 22:2 - "Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you."
- A dress rehearsal (shadow) pointing to the real thing. God will provide HIMSELF a sacrifice.
- Has sent (apostello) (apo = "off, away from" + stello "to send") = one sent forth from afar
 - Picture an amazon driver (ancient Greeks: admiral of a fleet!)
- Two-fold Point: (1) not born, sent from heaven; (2) Divine mission & objective, as follows:

V. 9 - Into the world

- Kosmos: Godless system - sinful society, estranged from God, under the dominion of evil one.
- Hostile territory!

V. 9 - That we might live through Him

- Let's go! Out of the miry clay... Eternal & abundant! (not just out of, but unto!)
- Through (Dia) = Christ is the means/agent (not found in other places, things, people, ideas.)
- Friends, there is a difference between existence and life. Agape love offers us life!

And, we have no reason to boast in this blessed life...

V. 10 - In this is love, Not that we loved God, But that He loved us

- Definite article "the" love (not just any type of love, but Agape, flowing from God as the source)
- Negative "ou" - Divine love, absolutely did not come from us. (eye dropper vs ocean!)
- Romans 5:6-11, ESV - "For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation."
- He loved us - In our depravity, we weren't searching for Him, He came searching for us.
- Aorist active - past tense, panoramic view of humanity, with action attached!
- And God gave His son to die for us, while we were yet sinners. Undeserving. Unloving.
- Just like water flows downhill, love flows from God! God is love!

And, as if that wasn't enough...

V. 10 - And sent His Son to be **the propitiation for our sins**

- **Sent (apostello (again) 'aorist')** - a real **historic event**, on a **divine rescue mission**
- **Propitiation (hilasmos)** = "atoning sacrifice, means of appeasing, or satisfaction of divine wrath." (not merely covering (bandaid), but **satisfying** (healing)) - **Mercy Seat (Lev. 16)**
- **For our sins: you and I.** All have sinned and fallen short... All in need of this **justice satisfied**...
- Remember, **God is love. Even his Justice.** A **judge who simply ignores** isn't **loving**, he's **corrupt** (person goes on to **hurt himself and others**)
- **Propitiation** = **justice served, penalty paid**, but **God promised Himself a sacrifice!**

And, **maybe we could picture** a person dying/paying for **somebody noble, but for rebels...?**

- Friends, **God's wrath was fully satisfied** in **His Agape act of love.**
- **Nothing more** for you to carry... (guilt, shame) - **burden gone** (*Pilgrim's progress, Matt. 11:28*)

You **don't earn it, but simply receive it; then, display it!**

Love Displayed (verses 11-16)

V. 11 - **Beloved.**

- **Identity language** once more! All flows from this...

V. 11 - If God so loved us, we also **ought to love one another.**

- **If = first class conditional statement**... ("*in view of*" or "*since*")
- **Ought to (opheilo)** = "to owe; that which is due, the debt" (Love received creates love owed)
- **John 13:14-15** - "If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, **you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you...**"
- We've **seen the example in Christ**, but also are **empowered in Christ.** **No do likewise...**
 - **How could we look to the cross of Christ** and **go back to a life of selfishness?**
 - **Doesn't mean it will be easy...** to **deny ourselves/pick up or cross**, but nonetheless.
- "**Has anybody offended you? Seek reconciliation. 'Oh, but I am the offended party.' So was God, and he went straight away and sought reconciliation. Brother, do the same. 'Oh, but I have been insulted.' Just so: so was God: all the wrong was towards him, yet he sent. 'Oh, but the party is so unworthy.' So are you; but 'God loved you and sent his Son.' Go write according to that copy...**" (Spurgeon) - **I've had to repent and do this many times... You will as well...**

More theology...

V. 12 - **No one has seen God at any time.** Literally "**but absolutely not one**" no one; none at all

- **Exodus 33:20** - "You cannot see My face; for **no man shall see Me, and live.**" (**cleft of rock**)
- **John 1:18, CSB** - "**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.**"
- **1 Tim 1:17** - "Now to the King eternal, immortal, **invisible**, to God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen."
- **O.T. Theophanies** - **Angelic or God in disguise**, but **not the full revelation of His glory**

But that's not even the point John is making...

- If **God is love**, and **God is spirit**, and **no one can see Him**, then **how is His love now seen?**

I'm glad you asked... **Through His people!**

V. 12 - **If we love one another God abides in us**

- **If = 3rd class conditional statement**... *Not hypothetical*, but *presentational*...
- This is the **agape love of the church!** (*our corporate love is evidence of abiding*)
- **Like a planet with a gravitational pull**, so is the **love of God to His people!** (*beam me up!*)

But there's **something even deeper (and even shocking)**, **theologically**, here...

V. 12 - And His love has been **perfected in us**.

- **Perfected (teleioo)** = "to accomplish, complete, mature, finish, bring to an end..."
- **Not sinless perfectionism**, but **mature in expressionism**...
- **John 13:35** - "**By this all will know** that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."
- God's love on display - **through His church** ("**we ... us**")
- **Matthew 5:14-16** - "**You are the light of the world**. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may **see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.**"
- You can't see the **wind**, but you certainly see the **effects of it**. **The same with God's people!**
 - **Use the moon analogy once more!** (*reflecting the sun for all to see*)
- **Not power (speak to this!) or popularity**, but **sacrificial love**.
 - (*Is the church like trying to hug a porcupine? ...ha!*) (*good job church, keep it up!*)

God's love **originates in Himself**

Was **revealed to us in His son**

And is **made complete in His people!**

vv. 13-15 = Three closing witnesses of this Agape love!

- **The Spirit** (verse 13)
- **Eyewitness Testimony** (verse 14)
- **Present confession** (verse 15)

V. 13 - **By this we know** that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has **given us of His Spirit**.

- **Has given = perfect tense** (**permanence of the Father's Gift** at the **moment of regeneration**)
- **Romans 8:16, ESV** - "The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God" - **The fruit of the Spirit is Love....** (prior to the Spirit, **sporadic and distorted (blind)**)
- **Christ, and His spirit are now the fuel** (**high octane propelled!**)
- **2 Cor. 3:2-3, CSB** - "**You yourselves are our letter**, written on our hearts, known and read by everyone. **You show that you are Christ's letter**, delivered by us, not written with ink but with the Spirit of the living God—not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts."

V. 14 - And we have **seen and testify** that the Father has sent the Son **as Savior of the world**.

- **WE have seen** - **Eye witness apostolic testimony!**
- **Testify** - (*martureo = Martyr*) - **grounded in witnesses willing to die!**
- **The Father has sent his Son** - **Doctrinal importance** of the **incarnation and Christology!**
- **Savior (soter) of the world (kosmos)** - **Not Caesar, whoa!** (*capital offence to the Empire*)

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

- **Confesses** ("homo" (same) + "logeo" (to say)) = "to speak the same word or say the same thing." (to be **in agreement with**) - **Are you?**
- **To confess is to live/remain, dwell/abide!**
- **Abides/Lives (Meno)** = "to last, endure, remain, stay settled, rooted, immovable"
- To **confess Christ** is to know Him and receive Him and live with Him (**oneness/communion**)
- **Romans 10:9** - "...**if you confess** with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." - **Altar call, now before communion?**

V. 16 - **And we have known and believed** the love that God has for us. **God is love** and **he who abides in love** abides in God, and God in him.

- **Not the order, knowing and believing.** **Belief and love** stand together, **Truth and Grace.**
- You **cannot have real Christian love without the right belief** about Jesus...
- And you **cannot claim the right belief without love showing up** in your life...
- **Mutual abiding! (Koiononia)**

Closing:

Remember, the opening question: **"What is love?"**

- **Culture? Hallmark? Hollywood? Feelings? Emotions?**
- **Originates from God, revealed in Jesus,**

The bread reminds us that **Love took on our flesh.**

The cup reminds us that **Love poured out his blood.**

At the table we remember that God's love was not merely spoken - **it was demonstrated.**

Pass out Communion...

The bread: **"This is my body, given for you"** - echoing **"God sent his Son"** (v. 9).

The cup: **"This cup is the new covenant in my blood"** - echoing **"propitiation for our sins"** (v. 10)

PRAY