

Sermon Guide



“You’re Afraid... And We Love You”

July 16, 2023

”¹⁸ There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love. ¹⁹ We love because he first loved us. 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.”

1 John 4:7-11

1. **JC encouraged us to consider our understanding of God’s love. He gave the analogy of research versus experiential knowledge. We can research the ocean but never truly experience the ocean. He then said that our daily actions reveal our beliefs— do we have a “researched knowledge” of God’s love? Or do we truly know the love of God?** As you think about the past few weeks, what do they reveal about your knowledge of God’s love? Do you really *know* He loves you?
2. **Read 1 John 4:17. “...as he is so also are we in this world...”** Take some time to talk about Jesus. Who is He? What was He like on this earth? What is He like now? Then, talk about what that means for you. Evaluate: What do I already believe about myself in light of this? What feels challenging to believe?
3. **1 John challenges us respond to God’s love by loving our brothers and sisters. JC unpacked some implications of that: Christians are meant to be a people characterized by forgiveness as well as avoiding gossip and slander. He also talked about our tendency to forgive in the hopes of someone changing rather than forgiving out of response to God’s love.** Does this hit home with any of your relationships? What might the Spirit be doing in you?

Take Your Next Step of Faith. What next step of faith will you take in response to today’s teaching?