

Passage: 1 John 4:1-21

Title: The Great Deception (It's More than we Think it is)

Summary: The Great Deception has always been associated with the coming of the Antichrists; but in this study we will see it is even more than that, and the Church doesn't even recognize it. Join us.

1 John 4:1–6 (NKJV) ¹ Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. ² By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, ³ and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world. ⁴ You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. ⁵ They are of the world. Therefore they speak as of the world, and the world hears them. ⁶ We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

1 John 4:7–21 (NKJV) ⁷ Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. ⁸ He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. ⁹ In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. ¹¹ Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. ¹² No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us. ¹³ By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. ¹⁴ And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world. ¹⁵ Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. 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. ¹⁷ Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. ¹⁸ There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. ¹⁹ We love Him because He first loved us. ²⁰ If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? ²¹ And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.

Reminder

Just a reminder, that "Perfect Love", has written this letter to you, and is speaking to you today.

1 John 4:8 (NKJV) ⁸ , for God is love.

Introduction

Writings – Pastored Ephesus / Around 90AD

John wrote this epistle, as all early church writings agree upon. Early Church writings also say that John served as pastor of the church in Ephesus, which was founded by Paul (Acts 18-19). The writing of this epistle is dated somewhere around 90-100AD. John himself is close to 80 to 90 years old.

Situation

John tells us four reasons why he writes, and the ultimate reason he writes this letter, so that you may have fullness of joy (1:4).

You will never have fullness of joy, if you are insecure in your salvation, you will never have joy, if you are secure in your sin and unrepentant of it, you will never have fullness of joy if you are insecure in the finished work that Christ has done for you.

Theme:

That Your Joy may be Full:

(1 John 1:4 NKJV) And **these things we write to you** that your joy may be full.

That You may not Sin / When you Do Sin

(1 John 2:1 NKJV) My little children, **these things I write to you**, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

That You may not be Deceived

(1 John 2:26 NKJV) **These things I have written to you** concerning those who try to deceive you.

That You may know you have Eternal Life

(1 John 5:13 NKJV) **These things I have written to you** who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.

The Great Deception (It's More than we Think it is)

- Testing the spirits (4:1-6)
- Testing of Perfect Love (4:7-21)

2 Timothy 4:1–5 (NKJV) ¹ I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: ² Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. ³ For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; ⁴ and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. ⁵ But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

Matthew 24:9–14 (NKJV) ⁹ “Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name’s sake. ¹⁰ And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. ¹¹ Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. ¹² And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. ¹³ But he who endures to the end shall be saved. ¹⁴ And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.

From GotQuestions:

Usually, when people speak of the “great deception,” they refer to 2 Thessalonians 2:11, which predicts that God will, in an end-times judgment, send “a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie.” This great deception is associated with the satanic work of the Antichrist and his “displays of power through signs and wonders that serve the lie” (verse 9).

The same passage in 2 Thessalonians also speaks of a great apostasy that will take place before the man of lawlessness is revealed. Similar apostasies are predicted elsewhere: “The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons” (1 Timothy 4:1). Of course, people are complicit in the deception, for they reject the truth and prefer lies: “For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths” (2 Timothy 4:3–4).

Jesus spoke about a time to come when the deception will be especially great when false messiahs and false prophets will appear. Even the people of God could be deceived if it were not for God’s providential protection: “For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect” (Matthew 24:24, see also Mark 13:5–6, Luke 21:8).

All of these deceptions are instigated by the devil. However, 2 Thessalonians 2:11 also speaks of the deception as God’s punishment on people who refuse to believe the truth. The context seems to be similar to that of the gospel passages above and speaks of one to come who will be especially deceptive: “The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. Therefore God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false, in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness” (2 Thessalonians 2:9–12, ESV).

In this passage, after people have refused the truth for so long, God causes them to believe what is false—a “strong delusion.” This is not an instance where God actively deceives people; rather, God is simply giving those who reject the truth what they really want.

We see a similar pattern in Romans 1:18–25 where people reject God’s truth for so long that He simply abandons them to their own sinfulness. They have, as it were, crossed the point of no return:

“The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.

“For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became

fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles.

“Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.”

Much the same thing happened to Pharaoh after he refused to let the Israelites leave Egypt, and God hardened his heart. It was not as though Pharaoh would have been an obedient follower of the Lord if God had not hardened his heart. Pharaoh set his heart against the Lord, and God simply confirmed for all time Pharaoh’s decision (see Exodus 8:15, 32; 9:34; 10:1).

The deception spoken of in the Gospels has to do with false prophets and/or messiahs who appear and seem to be authenticated by miracles. Taking the futurist position, we see the great deception spoken of in 2 Thessalonians 2 as a future event associated with the coming of the Antichrist after the rapture of the church. “Those who are perishing” will willingly embrace the imitation and follow the beast of the end times; they will perish “because they refused to love the truth and so be saved” (verse 10).

We don’t know exactly what the great deception will be, only that it will be a strong delusion capable of swaying the world’s allegiance toward the Antichrist. The Bible says that, in the time of the Antichrist and false prophet, there will be many signs to bolster their lies. The false prophet “performed great signs, even causing fire to come down from heaven to the earth in full view of the people. Because of the signs it was given power to perform on behalf of the first beast, it deceived the inhabitants of the earth” (Revelation 13:13–14). It is hard to imagine, but the deception during the tribulation will be worse than all of Satan’s other deceptions. The Antichrist will have a deadly wound healed, his “image” will breathe and speak and give orders, etc. (Revelation 13:12, 15).

In the broader sense, anyone who rejects the truth of God is being deceived, and at some point, God may simply abandon him to the deception that he has willingly embraced. There are plenty of false teachers today who claim to teach God’s Word. Some claim to be Christians, and some claim to bring a word from God from outside of the Bible. It is vitally important that every Christian compare every teaching with what the Bible says and spend the time necessary to evaluate what is being taught. This is the mission of Got Questions, and in keeping with that mission, we would encourage every reader to compare what we say with Scripture as well.

Prayer

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need

Testing the spirits (4:1-6)

1 John 4:1 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

Stop Believing

v.1 1 Beloved, do not believe every spirit - "Believe not" is in a construction in the Greek text which forbids the continuation of an action already going on. It is, "Stop believing every spirit." The fact is that some were being carried away with the errors of the Gnostics

Mature Love – Requires Discernment / Loving Community – Can't allow Influence of Error

In talking about love, he says beloved, understand this, this love is to be a perfect (mature) love, which requires discernment. Perfect love requires that we test the spirits in order that we don't fall prey to those who would seek to lure us away from the "**simplicity of the gospel**", and this was happening in John's day, and it is happening in our day. We have read throughout the first 3 chapters God wanting us to be a loving community, but here we read we are to love wisely. We cannot Allow people to take away from our walk with the Lord, to diminish our love for the Lord, to dim the Light of the Lord within us, to allow that is not love. Allowing their influence in our lives is not love, either for them, or ourselves. We must test all spirits that come in our lives.

The Test Jig

v.1 - but test the spirits - As I work in aviation, we have to test components to make sure they met the standard before it flies, it's gotta comply. So we have these test machines that we put the component on and it's the master machine that makes sure that the component is within the lines and the specs of what it's designed to do for this mission and operation, this flight. What Is a Test Jig? A PCB test fixture, or test jig, is a piece of equipment that ensures the product is built to specification at the production stage.

There's a couple things that I see, so, fitting it is for what we're talking about. For us,

- First, the alignment is set to the standard prescribed as perfection. For us, here in is the perfect standard, the "agape", unconditional love of God.
- Secondly, and it applies so well for us is the person who operates the calibration machine, who takes the component and puts it on for the testing. They have to know how to use the machine, they have to be trained on the machine. And here's what the Lord gives us. He gives us this word of God and we calibrate against it. And that's what everything aligns with. Here we hold this perfect book.
- Thirdly, the test and calibration machine had to be pure. It can have no, what we call foreign object damage (FOD). 'because it'll throw the whole calibration off and the machine is calibrated to the standard. And that's what everything aligns with. Here we hold this perfect book.

So we take these words of the deceiving spirits and we put them on the "test jig", and see if they meet mission critical specification in accordance with God's Word.

Believe

v.1 do not believe - As we say all the time in the gospel. What believe means, it means to recognize, repent, and receive. Well here in verse one, these deceiving spirits that people will believe in. Some will depart from even knowing the absolute truth is to lay the same recognition of the word believe and say, I've listened long enough.

- Recognize - I'm recognizing what the devil says. This is starting to make sense to me.
- Repent - Repent means to turn and fall. I'm going follow the way he's calling me.
- Receive - And to receive means to simply say I agree with this and this is the manner of life that I'm going live.

Satan has his own gospel (a gospel of death) and Satan has his own way that man follows. It's a copycat of how we receive Christ but it's the same belief system.

Testing

Don't despise the testing because God's using it to keep you from being deceived by the antichrist. You'll see right through the liar. I know we don't really recognize this, but Proverbs 17:3 speaks about the God who tests the heart. And he puts us through a refining process into the fire to test the heart, to let the purity come out. And I know we don't understand this, but or we recognize it not. But part of the testing, the refining, the hardness that you go through is to reveal the purity and to bring forth what you truly believe, what you can truly settle on and know is the truth. And then verse four of Proverbs 17 speaks to the evil doer and a liar. See the purifying through the testing brings us to a place that we will not be

deceived because we have been through the fire to know what is truth. We've been through the fire to know what has been given and promised and who he is and who we are, and especially who we are when he's in us. Don't despise the testing because God's using it to keep you from being deceived by the antichrist. I won't get into the depths of can we be deceived and lose our salvation? That's another study for another time. But I will get into when you're purified and you're tested, you will not be deceived. You'll see right through the liar.

Proverbs 17:3-4 (NKJV) ³ *The refining pot is for silver and the furnace for gold, But the LORD tests the hearts.* ⁴ *An evildoer gives heed to false lips; A liar listens eagerly to a spiteful tongue.*

First False Teacher – Back to the Garden

v. 1 - because many false prophets have gone out into the world - Now, The first false teacher in the Bible is found in Genesis 3, and is none other than the father of all lies, the devil. What is the significance of the question, is that the deceiver doesn't come in piercing eyes, or fire in his voice. Eve was not scared of the devil, she was comfortable enough to engage in the conversation, she was relaxed enough to stay in his presence.

An interesting thought in the garden with Eve, we've already studied lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes and the pride of life (1 John 2:16). The fruit looks good, pleasing to the eye and satisfaction to the flesh, but the pride of life that you would be like God himself. The pride of life. That knowing better than God's word. But do you see here the first engagement Eve and the serpent, it should have never even gone further than that. She should have shut it down immediately and said, no, thus says the word of God. There's nothing more for us to discuss. And yet this is how the flesh, the world and the devil and all the other two are fueled by the devil. You'll never have one without the other two, no matter which one you pick. All three are intertwined just like Eve lusted the flesh, lust of the eyes, the pride of life.

1 John 2:15-17 (NKJV) ¹⁵ *Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.* ¹⁶ *For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world.* ¹⁷ *And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.*

But what I don't see, I don't believe the scripture makes it very clear for a reason, is when did Eve partake and eat of a forbidden fruit?

- Was it immediate? If so, then we see the warning for us, the impulsiveness, that we can't react to anything. Impulsively. We need to always guard ourselves and say, let me go talk to the Lord paragraph. And so the point that I make in all of the conversation that Eve had, yes she talks to Adam what appears to be afterwards, some think Adam is standing with an earshot. I don't know and I don't think it's relevant. because in the end he willfully chooses. He wasn't deceived, he willfully chose.
- But nowhere does Eve stop and go, let me go talk to my Creator. Let me see what He has to say about what you are trying to say. Christian, Stop the conversation, go to the Creator and says this is what's being said. Spend time with him and he'll come. He'll answer through his word every time. We'll never be deceived. We don't even have to go far. He lives inside of us as we've been studying. He'll speak to our hearts arts. There's no reason for any Christian to ever be deceived by the little antichrists or the big Antichrist.
- Or did Eve ponder over time? We really can't tell even the sentence structure, I'm not sure in the original language. So if it was over time and not impulsive, we see another working of the devil as he is patient and he'll wear us down question after question until he ropes us in to question the very thing that we once were so sure of.
- Here's what I know, we're told that our adversary is very cunning and when we watch he knew how to work Eve, he knew how to work Adam, he studied Job and he studied Peter and he looked at their ways and their means that they were. And he came up with a strategy whether to come with an impulsiveness or come with a long term strategy to wear down. He looks and he studies and this is what we clearly see. We see people impulsively responding to these drips of the culture and the lies. But we also see he's had a long campaign. He never grows weary because he has an end goal in mind and he thinks he's eternal and he thinks he has all the time in the world and he's happy with the day-to-day victories, but he's totally not satisfied with the total victory. And he keeps working and working and working as he plots and strategizes against us.

Genesis 3:1–7 (NKJV) ¹ Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?'" ² And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; ³ but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.'" ⁴ Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. ⁵ For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." ⁶ So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate. ⁷ Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings.

How do we Test?

How test these spirits? By their words.

1 John 4:2 By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God,

1 John 4:3 and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world.

Confesses – Jesus Came in the Flesh

John now gives the test which will prove that the Holy Spirit is actuating a teacher. If that teacher confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, that is a proof of the fact that he is a true believer and is led/moved by the Holy Spirit. The word "confess" is homologeō (ὁμολογέω), from homōs (ὁμός), "the same," and legō (λέγω), "to speak," thus, "to speak the same thing as another," thus "to agree with another" on some particular thing. Therefore, every teacher who is in agreement with the Bible "that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh" is of God.

Means More Than That

Of course there's a misconception that all we have to say is, yeah, Jesus came and walked the earth, that it means way more than that. What this verse two and three is saying is that Jesus is coming to flesh. It says that he's the fulfillment of every prophecy. The virgin birth, the sinless life. Psalm 22 fulfilled in every last detail to the point of death of the piercing on the cross, that he became the lamb of God. Jesus came in the flesh. The point that's being made is that he felt every blow. He's not a God who's distant. He's not a God who can speak salvation to existence like a world. He spoke into existence. He had to come get his hands dirty to create man. Then he had to get his hands bloody to redeem man from the fall of the world that he created for us to live in. He's not an angel, he's not a mystical spirit. He demonstrated his love for us, Romans five, eight, while we were still yet sinners to every last blow. This is what's meant by he came in the flesh and as we have studied that he's Jesus

Romans 5:8 (NKJV) ⁸ But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

God Saved!

The Christ, the anointed and chosen one, but Jesus, he's God with us. Jehovah God. The transliteration in the Hebrew for Jesus is Joshua. The God who saves only God could save us. That's the price that was paid. And he's building a continual theme who's been forgiven, much will love much, and he's going talk about that. Don't be deceived by the spirits that are going come in these last days and take away his humanity. Take away the price that was paid. Take away the severity of sin. The severity is sin. So great that God would have to come down and feel every blow the pain of the cross to make and turn away the focus of Jesus coming in the flesh then would also diminish where we were last week. He who believes this purifies himself what our brother Paul and Peter would weave through their themes over and over be holy. We're called to live in purity in this fleshly world. There's a spiritual realm and we think it's the warship and it's the raising of holy hands. It's the emotion and surely that part be true, but man is body and spirit.

And there's the call of holiness beyond just an experience and a feeling. And because when you can take and make it all about the so-called it's spiritual, then church only becomes an emotional event, becomes that moment. All that matters is how I'm feeling about this. Whereas when we come spirit and body, we see that living in the purity is as vital as the worship.

Power Knowing – God Came Down

There is a power in continually preaching that Jesus Christ, God has come in the flesh. Why? "God Came Down"; He is not a distant God, He is an intimate God. He is a God who stepped not just into earth, but into my life, your life, to become known to us.

Will Affirm both Deity & Humanity

Here is the test, if a teaching, a suggestion, or thought is of the spirit of God.....it will affirm both the deity and the humanity of Christ.

Supplemental Notes:

Remember Context – Special Knowledge – Gnostics / Follow Us – Take you Deeper

What does that mean you may say. Remember the context of this epistle; people had come into the church and said they had special knowledge, deeper truth, deeper knowledge. These people became known as the "Gnostics", which in the Greek application would mean, "special knowledge, secret knowledge". They would say we know things you don't know, and if you really want to know God deeper, you need to follow our teaching. Or they would say if you really want to enjoy this life on earth, here is how. It is still present today and people come with all their special understanding, just go to any secular bookstores and look at some of the books in the "Christian Section".

Asceticism / Docetism

Strange Teachings / 2 Camps – Asceticism & Docetism

Well, in John's time these Gnostics said strange things. The Gnostics had two main camps one was Docetism, and the other was Asceticism.

Asceticism – Material World Evil / Beat Body – Spirit Rises

The teachers of Asceticism (which means to self-deny, self-mortification) believed the material world was evil, so you needed to free yourself from your body. So they said beat your body, physically so your spirit may rise up and free from the physical. Stories from church writings:

- *Simon the Stylite*, - built a tower 70 feet and he lived there for 40 years depriving himself of all materialism.
- *Mark Carren* - wrapped chains around his body, that weighed hundreds of pounds so that when he moved he could only crawl, so to keep his body beaten.
- *Bacisimus* - he stripped naked and went and sat in the swamp for 4 months until his body was so bug eaten that it was beyond recognition.

They beat the body so that the spirit may be released they believed.

They Even Quoted Bible / Foxes have Holes

They would say God sent His Son Jesus, who was deity, to show man how to live a life of Asceticism. He lived a deprived life, foxes have holes, birds of the air have nest, but the Son of Man has no place to rest His head. He punished His body by allowing Himself to be beaten, scourged, and nailed to the cross.

Today – Broken Glass & Crosses / Paid - Power

Sounds strange but we still see it today. In some Latin American countries around Easter time they have huge celebrations and festivals and at those festivals they will have a road of broken glass and men will come and crawl on their hands and knees along it, punishing their body. They will have crosses and men will actually be nailed to a cross to the point of death. If only they had read this book and know they are free in Christ, the price was fully paid on Calvary, and the power fully given to overcome the flesh.

Others – Material Evil / No Connection to Spirit / Party On

Others, the liberal camp of Asceticism, said hey, the body is material, all material is evil, only the spirit matters, and the body has no connection or effect on ones spirit, so party on, indulge the flesh with all the immorality it desires because it will have no effect on the spirit. So two views of the Ascetics, beat it, or indulge it.

Docetism / Jesus Phantom / Deity could not Dwell in Flesh

The other group, Docetism, which means “to appear. They taught that Jesus’ physical body was not real, but only “seemed” to be physical. He was like a phantom, in fact when He walked on the beach He left no footprints. When He ate He just went through the motions but really didn’t put the food in His mouth. They said the reason being was that Jesus was deity, and deity could not take on the form of human flesh, because all that was material was evil.

Early Church – Believed Deity – Questioned Humanity

Interestingly, the question in the early church never concerned the deity of Christ, they all believed Jesus was God; the debate was over His humanity. Church councils would convene in the second century and argue vehemently over this issue because Gnostic thought had penetrated the church.

Interestingly 2000 yrs Later / Deity Questioned – Humanity Accepted – Islam – Buddhist

Interestingly, two thousand years later, however, it is the deity of Christ that is continually called into question. Today no one truly questions if a man named Jesus Christ walked this earth, that is nearly accepted by all, even other major world religions such as Islam and Buddhism. The debate 2000 years later is, was Jesus God. Go to a bookstore today and you will shelves upon shelves of books, who was Jesus, searching for the historic Jesus, Jesus 2000 years later. All those books strip Him of His deity.

Important for Us – Cult or Person – Special Understanding / Humanity - Deity

The importance for us today, any person whether they be from an official cult (or the Jehovah Witnesses, Mormons, or Islam), or someone within the church who says brother I have a revelation for you, or I have a special understanding of the Bible and what it means for us. Here is the key, John says the Spirit of God attests to both the humanity (as we have just read here in verses 2-3), and deity of Christ as we had studied back in chapter 2:

(1 John 2:23 NKJV) Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also.

(1 John 2:24 NKJV) Therefore let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father.

He was Both / Antichrist to Get Same Place – Diminish – Distance / Relates - Understands

He was human, and He is divine, He was both. The spirit if the antichrist will do one of these two, to get the same place, to diminish Christ, and distance God. We have talked before on if you diminish His deity than you diminish His holiness, which diminishes the severity of sin, which ultimately diminishes His sacrifice on the cross because sin really isn’t that big of deal they will say. But here today in this passage, if you diminish His humanity than you diminish the fact that He can relate to us, and understand us, because He too was tempted in all points just as we are:

(Hebrews 2:17 NKJV) Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

(Hebrews 2:18 NKJV) For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.

Man Distance – People Come to Man / God too Far Away / Special Access

Man wants to distance people from God, so the people will have to come to that man, as he would say I have special knowledge, I have special access to God, you cannot access Him, He is too far away to reach you. We still see a form of this today with men who say you can’t approach Him on your own, come to me, you have to go through me. Oh they may not deny the his humanity the way they did in John’s day, but they bring the same trip upon man; hey I have special knowledge, I have special access, God is distant from you, but its ok, I’m here now.

Absolution / Last Rites

Some time ago, I saw a man give absolution to Prince Charles and Camille Parker for all their past sins, what a powerful man, more powerful than the cross. Awhile ago I passed a man in the hospital who had just given so-called last rights to a person so they may now go to heaven; he must have special access, what power, to declare who lives and who dies. There is a man who can, the God-Man and that is the point being made here as Jesus would say I will show you all things, for I am the Way:

(John 14:6 NKJV) Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

(John 14:7 NKJV) "If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him."

Pick out a Heretic – Distance You from God / Diminish Holiness / Draw Themselves / Good News

You can always pick out a heretic, because they will try to distance you from God, and draw you to themselves. They will diminish His deity and His holiness. John says be on guard for these people, but I know you have overcome them because He lives in you, verse 4!

1 John 4:4 You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

Context

A great verse about overcoming the evil one and his ways in temptation indeed, but first up is the context, and the context is that these readers have overcome these false teachers, because God in them testifying to the lies and deception. (see study 1 John 2:18-29)

1 John 2:21 I have not written to you because you do not know (oida) the truth, but because you know (oida) it, and that no lie is of the truth.

And a subtle power that can be missed here is that these people who are still standing, are the ones that are still "hearing" reading the Word of God that is coming to them. The ones that have left, are not hearing this word. Christian, every day start the day with Word open, pen in hand, expecting God to speak to you.

7 days without the Word, makes 1 Weak

The Believers – Were Standing Strong

The intensive use of the personal pronoun gives us, "as for you, little born-ones (in contradistinction to the anti-Christian teachers), you are of God." John states that the saints to whom he is writing have overcome these false teachers. The verb is perfect in tense, speaking of a past completed victory, and a present state of being a conqueror. That is, the saints to whom John refers were not taken in by the heresies of the false teachers, and were in a settled state of victory over them. They were confirmed in their attitude against heresy and had their eyes wide open to its source and nature.

The genuine believers who received the letter stood in strong contrast to those deluded by the spirit of Antichrist. They had God as the source of their spiritual life. These "little children" had been born into God's family. In addition they had overcome "them," namely, the false prophets of verse 1. The perfect tense of "overcome" shows that they had withstood the lure of false doctrine in the past and were still standing firm at the time of the epistle's writing. But they still needed to be on guard to maintain their purity in the future.

There is no rest, no day off, from the deceiving spirits trying to lure a Christian away.

Overcame Because God in Them

The reason why they thus gained a complete victory over the false teachers and their heresies is that God the Holy Spirit who indwelt them is greater than that fallen angel Satan who is in the world system of evil. It is a great encouragement to be reminded of the power available to believers. Satan is an active force in the world, he has great power and many ways of attacking the people of God. It is good, then, to remind ourselves that though the devil is mighty, God is almighty. Satan may be powerful, but God is all-powerful

Save to Hard Drive / He is Greater / You Overcome Errant Doctrine - Temptation

Underline that verse, save it to the hard drive of your heart, back it up on a floppy. He is greater than any pressure that is against you. You seek Him, and you will always overcome what ever it is that comes against you. Is there someone trying to draw you away from Christ, distance you from Him, whether through temptation or attack? He that is in you is greater than he that is after you.

Inside – Outside Pressure / Mariana Trench / 2 Miles Deep / Fish / Equal Pressure

The walls of the submarines that descend two miles into the Mariana Trench of the Pacific Ocean are constructed of thick steel plates to withstand the tremendous pressure placed upon them; then steel would crumble under such external pressure of the weight of the water. Now they get down into the pitch

darkness, they are ready for lights, camera, and action, to flick the lights on and see a desert at the bottom, but what do they see, little fishes, fishes that are not even 1 inch thick. The pictures taken from such heavily protected submarines reveal fish swimming two miles below the surface of the water with scales no thicker than that of any other fish. How can this be? Scientist give us the answer through their studies of these fish, The pressure on the inside of those fish is equal to the pressure of the water around them, and thus they can withstand the pressures of their world, that we have to build submarines with 2 inch thick steel walls.

People Insulating from Attacks – Isolation / Key not Walls – the One Inside Greater than Pressure

That's the beauty of Christianity. Some people erect massive walls to insulate themselves from the attacks of the Enemy—only to find themselves filled with the frustration of isolation. The key is not to put up massive walls to protect you from the Enemy—but to realize the One inside you is greater than whatever pressure threatens to attack you. When we understand that He that is in us is greater than any temptation, problem, trauma, or difficulty that could come against us, we can move through life freely.

Napoleon – Austrian / Eagles Insignia – Devil Defeated

Let me add this about our enemy; when Napoleon defeated the Austrian army, he moved into the great palace of Schonbrunn and mounted two eagles, symbols of his empire, on each side of the main entrance. He was soon dislodged and the palace returned to Austrian hands. But the eagles looked so good there, nobody ever bothered to take them down. They are still there today. The devil has been defeated in the life of the believer, but it is possible we may still carry some of his insignia. If so, we ought to get rid of it at once.

Satan No Power over You / No Say in Matter / Flee at Name of Jesus

Satan has no power over you, all he can do is make suggestions. At the name of Jesus he must flee. We say Satan you are a defeated foe, you have no say in this matter, be gone with you in the name and power of Jesus Christ.

John Makes Point / God not Distant – He can Relate – He Knows You – He is There for You

John is making the point to us, hey God is not distant and far off, He can relate to you, He knows you are only dust, He knows your weakness, He doesn't condemn you, He knows all about you, and He is in you. So close, so intimate, that He will show you the way out when that temptation comes upon you.

Hear This – He is Alive / He Knows your Struggles / Not Distance – Call to Fellowship

Beloved, hear me please, Jesus Christ is alive and He knows what you are going through, and He is not distancing Himself from you, but calling you to fellowship so that He may show you the way. If we just do what He telling us to do, in all these things, then things will be fine. We don't need to run to some person to tell us what to do, just do what we know we ought to do.

Greater is He / Greater than all World Throws at You

Greater is He that is in you, than all these things that are against you, whatever the world throws against you.

Greater is He that is in you, then he that is after you!

1 John 4:5 They are of the world. Therefore they speak as of the world, and the world hears them.

Source “of this world” / Speak the Same Language

The personal pronoun is intensive here. It is, “They themselves are of the world.” We have here ablative of source. These false teachers have their source in the world system of evil, this present pernicious age. “Speak they of the world” could mean, “speak they concerning the world.” But the Greek is clear here. It is, “out of the world as a source they speak.” The source of their false doctrines is the world. The demons of Satan are part of this world system, and the source of all heresy. The world of sinners accepts their teaching, for it recognizes its own language.

The false teachers who had harassed the churches based their work on a different source. They were creatures of the satanic world system, thoroughly at home in this view of life. Since their thoughts were in tune with the world, they found a ready audience when they spoke to other world-dwellers. They spoke the world's language and found easy acceptance.

1 John 4:6 We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

As for Us – Out of God We Are

The intensive pronoun is used. “As for us (in contradistinction to the false teachers), out of God we are.”

Know God – Hears His Word / Don't Know – Don't Hear

Wow, inspired by the Spirit, John declares those who truly know God, know the Word. Those who don't know God don't listen to the Word. Sadly these people miss out on the promises we have just read, all the power available to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

John spotlighted the readers in verse 4 and the heretics in verse 5. Here the focus is on the teachers of the truth. Like you, he claimed, “we are of God.” And those who were in tune with God would listen to men like the apostles who had received their message from Him. Those who thought in the world's thought patterns would, of course, not care to hear the truth.

In conclusion one may see that there is another test of truth—the type of people who welcome a message give a clue to its nature. People who love truth will respond to a spirit characterized by truth; those who are already deluded will respond to a spirit of delusion.

Testing of Perfect Love (4:7-21)

God is Love – (1 John 4:7-8)

1 John 4:7 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.

Divinely Loved One

“Beloved” is *agapētoi* (ἀγαπητοί), “divinely-loved ones,” that is, “beloved ones, loved by God.”

Not a Transition – Continual Deception (Not to Love Unconditionally)

Most every commentary or teacher I listened to, all say this verse is a shift, a new theme, (no longer talking about being on guard of being deceived by little antichrist) but no talking about loving one another. I strongly disagree. I believe this is a continual on of the theme of not being deceived, because..... to lift or lighten in any way the sacrifice Jesus made in His flesh, to miss the that and to miss the call to holiness, purity preaches, is to again miss the love of God..... it is a sacrificial love, it is a choice, not an emotion, it is a command, not option.

Note:

- Deception of what is acceptable today (LGBT, gay marriage, continual sexualization everywhere)

And again, most of the commentators on all of 'em, actually, they believe it's a new theme. It's a new thought that John's bouncing back to. But I believe it's a continual theme and thought. And that is, if we don't adopt a love unconditionally,

- the lost world, our neighbor or the neighbor that we call brother or sister in the church, the neighbor in our house that we call spouse children. If we don't have this unconditional love for them, then we open ourselves up for the deception.

Because when the love of many grows cold, we read in Matthew 24, that's when we see the people being deceived and following the ways of the world. The antichrist, the little ones and then the big Antichrist.

Matthew 24:11–13 (NKJV) ¹¹ Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. ¹² And because lawlessness will abound, the love (agape) of many will grow cold. ¹³ But he who endures to the end shall be saved.

Love is the ultimate defeater of being deceived because love (agape – unconditional, sacrificial love) always overcomes.

Love the Lord your God & Neighbor

Jesus thank you and praise you,

- I am amazed by the depth of Your love for me, that You would take such brutality in order to make me your own.
- I didn't truly know what sacrificial love was, until I saw, and CONTINUALLY, think upon how You gave me the "pictorial definition of love", by Your life in the flesh, and Your life in death.

If I cannot love that person, if I cannot love my enemy, than I have the question how much I really realize, and how much have I really understood, the definition of the sacrificial love that God taught me when He came in the flesh

Those who are loved by God should love one another. The love with which children of God should love one another is the agapē (ἀγάπη) love which God is in His nature, the love which is produced by the Holy Spirit in the heart of the yielded saint, the love which was seen in action at the Cross, and the love whose constituent elements are defined for us in I Corinthians 13.

The exhortation is in the present subjunctive which speaks of continuous action. The translation reads, "Let us be habitually loving one another." The words "one another" are a reciprocal pronoun in the Greek text. There should be reciprocity in the exercise of this love.

Everyone who habitually loves "is born of God." "Is born" is perfect tense in the Greek text, literally "has been begotten with the present result that that person is a child" of God. The new-birth is a permanent thing. A child of God remains a child of God forever.

The one who is not habitually loving "knoweth not God." "Knoweth" is aorist tense in the Greek text, literally, "did not know God." Vincent says, "He never knew." Smith translates, "did not get to know." The verb is ingressive aorist, referring to entrance into a new condition.

1 John 4:8 He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

God as His Nature is Love

As to the statement, "God is love," we would suggest that that simply is not true. God is not an abstraction. The word "God" has the article, the word "love" does not, which construction in Greek means that the two words are not interchangeable. The absence of the article emphasizes nature, essence, character. The translation should read, "God as to His nature is love." That is, God is a loving God. It is His nature to be loving.

The Essence of God

God is love, and everything else He does and is stems from the very essence of who He is – Love. Any thought of God must be in the context of love, love as it is described in the Bible not in our modern society. Every thought of God towards you, every event that happens in the world around us, whether it be in your home or 6000 miles away from you, must be considered and evaluated in the context and terms of God is love.

God is Love – What Does that Truly Mean

God is love. And we all agree with that. But truly what does it mean? It means that he's not this object called love.

It means it's His nature is love. And what does that mean? Nature of love is clarified by the definition of nature. It's the sum total of how you think, feel, and behave. Everything God thinks, feels and behaves he does is in the sum total of agape, unconditional love. He says, everything I think of you, Ray, is in the sum total of unconditional love.

- When he speaks to me in my pain through a hard time, it's through the sum total of how he thinks, feels and behaves of unconditional love
- when he speaks and leads me in my life, circumstances, sin the sum total how he thinks, feels behaves and unconditional love.
- When he has to discipline me as a father to a son, it's in the sum total of unconditional love, how he thinks and feels and behaves according to unconditional love.
- When he sends me to a lost person, a hurting person, it's because of his sum total of how he thinks, feels and behaves of unconditional love that he has towards that person. I soak and I saturate you and my unconditional love Ray. And as the vessel I need to be unblocked, not let

Inn His Love

I sent my pastor friend a word of encouragement as he prepares for his message up there in the finger lakes of New York, and I ended my text with the word in his love and my finger tapped twice that word "inn". And I looked and I said, this is so perfect in as in a place of abode, in his love. That's what I want to be like an inn, a cabin, a country cottage. The people would come in and soak and saturate in the agape love of Christ. I want to be an inn of unconditional love. The sum total of how I think Phil and behave to my sons, to my wife,

To my brothers and sisters in Christ, to my neighbors and coworkers. I wanna be an inn that people can come and feel that they've been received into unconditional love of God.

Outline for Abiding in Love (Perfect Love) – 1 John 4:7-21:

- God is Love – (1 John 4:7-8)
- He First Loved Us – (1 John 4:9-10)
- We then Should Love One Another – (1 John 4:11-15)
- There is no Fear in Love – (1 John 4:16-21)

He First Loved Us – (1 John 4:9-10)

He first loved us, therefore there is nothing that a person needs to add to that love, just freely receive it, and bask in the beauty of His love

1 John 4:9 In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.

1 John 4:10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

God's Definition of Life / Rich & Famous / Cleansed & Forgiven

Verse 9 -that we might live through Him – God's definition of life, that we might live through Him. Not the lifestyle of the rich and famous, but the cleansed and forgiven.

Propitiation – Appease an Offended Power / Pure God

Propitiation means to appease and satisfy an offended power. Whatever it takes to satisfy the power, the propitiation has met the requirement. Whether that is money, property, flesh and blood, the propitiation has met the requirement. Our sin offends the Holy God, for God is Light and in Him is no darkness at all, nothing impure can come before a Holy God without being consumed. God consumed our sin, our impurity, there on the cross as Jesus took the full wrath. Jesus traded places with us; God is Love!

God gives No Greater Picture

God gives no greater picture of His love towards us than through the Cross. 2000 years ago everything I have done or will do was washed down over the rocks of Golgotha. I can look at that picture of Calvary, maybe you'll be blessed to go and stand before Calvary, and look at those rocks, and picture the blood flow, watch your sins wash over those rocks to the valley floor never to be remembered again.

None Seek After Him

Verse 10 - not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son: Scripture declares that no man seeks God:

(Romans 3:11 NKJV) There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God.

Gospel / If You Were to Die Tonight

Personal

Jeremiah 29:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.

Problem

Romans 3:23 (NKJV) ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Penalty

Romans 6:23 (NKJV) ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord

Provision

John 3:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Profession

Romans 10:13 (NKJV) ¹³ For "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved."

Recognize

John 14:6 (NKJV) ⁶ Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

Repent

Acts 3:19 (NKJV) ¹⁹ Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,

Receive

Romans 10:9 (NKJV) ⁹ that 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.

We then Should Love One Another – (1 John 4:11-15)

Based on the love received, it is love that we freely give to others, even when they are less than loveable.

1 John 4:11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

God loves us, we love each other!

Both Father & Son Pierced

"So" is houtōs (οὕτως), and refers back to the act of God sending off His Son to become the expiatory sacrifice for our sins. It was an act of infinite love and infinite sacrifice, not only on the part of the Son on the Cross, but on the part of the Father who sent the Son, for the heart of the Father was pierced when sin was laid on the Son at the Cross and His holiness demanded that He abandon the Son (Zech. 12:10). *Zechariah 12:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ "And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.*

In View of the Fact – We Should be Loving

In the same manner, to the same extent, John says that the saints have a moral obligation to be constantly loving one another. The infinitive "to love" is present tense in Greek, speaking of continuous action. The "if" is a particle of a fulfilled condition, and should be "since" or "in view of the fact." "Ought" is opheilō (ὀφείλω) which speaks of a moral obligation.

Jesus Seeks Out Peter / World Just Throws Them Away

I am reminded of Peter, and we find a marvelous story that the Lord privately on resurrection Sunday appeared to Peter. We don't know what they spoke of, but of course we know the heart of the Lord.

He personally sought out Peter because he knows where Peter's heart would be just like he does me and you. He knows when we just wanna run away and never come back because of something we said did thinking it'll never be right again. And then he'll seek us out as a have a personal meeting. because that's what he does. That's his manner of love. And there's something for us to see when that brother or sister falls, when that person even they don't know the Lord and the world just casts 'em off and throws 'em away where we just keep coming. We find them. We love them to the end until they would if they choose to have nothing else to do with us.

I think that's probably the restoration of Peter was resurrection Sunday. I think the feed my sheep that time later before he ascends into heaven.

I don't necessarily think that's the restoration of Peter. It's the recognition of Peter before the people, the other apostles. See the Lord has to come and let everyone know even though this man failed me in that way, I by no means have cast him off. He still will be profitable to me. In fact, his failure will make him a strength that he will go and be unstoppable because forgiveness does that. That's the power of forgiveness and love.

When you know that you're forgiven, you'll love much. Just as Jesus said, Peter has been forgiven much and now he's going love much and he's going go out and nothing's going stop him. Even death to preaching the gospel. And how could Peter even restored, ever personally thought Jesus would ever use him again in ministry as he was used mightily in those three years being in Jesus' inner circle, would he not have been so much like us? because he just represents us. I'm just content that Jesus loves me. I'm saved. I know I blew it. I'll just be quiet little church mouse. I know I destroyed my witness. I'll just be quiet. But Jesus comes in publicly before all the other apostles is giving him a clear call, feed my sheep, teach my word and he will. And so too will you. The first step for you to go out and minister to the lost, the first step for you to go out and minister to the one who has fallen. The first step for you to go out and minister to the one who has harmed you greatly is to have the recognition of who's been forgiven. Much will love much, and you'll respond in kind just like Peter. You'll even get at times to be just like Jesus. I'm going go find them and I'm going restore them and I'm going tell 'em I got plans for you. God has plans for you.

Luke 7:47-48 (NKJV) ⁴⁷ Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little." ⁴⁸ Then He said to her, "Your sins are forgiven."

God loves us, we love each other!

1 John 4:12 No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us.

1 John 4:13 By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit.

1 John 4:14 And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world.

1 John 4:15 Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.

God loves us, we love each other!

Capital Offense to Say "Saviour of the World"

The expression, "the Saviour of the world" has a reference to the fact that the Roman emperor was called *sōtēr tou kosmou* (σωτηρ του κοσμου), "Saviour of the world." The Samaritan men also have the above in mind when they say to the woman, "We have heard Him ourselves, and know that this is the Christ, the Saviour of the world" (John 4:42). Emperor worship was the state religion of the Roman Empire, and the binding factor that united its far-flung, heterogeneous subject-peoples together in a union stronger than that of any military force. To recognize our Lord as the Saviour of the world instead of the Emperor was a capital offence, for such recognition was a blow at the very vitals of the Empire. That was the quarrel which Rome had against Christianity, and that was the reason for the bloody persecutions. (Wuest)

God loves us, we love each other!

There is no Fear in Love – (1 John 4:16-21)

If God loves us enough to go to the cross for us, then how can we fear anything that comes against us in this world knowing that God is for us.

1 John 4:16 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.

1 John 4:17 Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world.

Boldness day of Judgement

We will have boldness in that day, and there will be a day, not because of anything we have done, but we will have boldness (meaning freedom of speech) because of what Jesus did for us. We can have confidence and say we are here because of Him.

We have Freedom of Speech / Roman Court

Verse 17 - that we may have boldness - this freedom of speech as it was applied in the day of this writing, was taken from the Roman court; if a person was guilty in a Roman court they would not have freedom of speech if they were found guilty. But for those who were cleared of the charges against them would have freedom to defend against accusations brought against them, they will say I have been found not guilty, your words mean nothing. As for us, we can have confidence in the day of judgement as the Accuser Satan tries to have us condemned, we can say the judge has found us not guilty. The record has been wiped clean.

Perfect Love / Sets Tone for Verse 18

These verses set a beautiful tone for us for verse 18, because we all face fears and anxieties in our life, and God say you need not fear anything.

1 John 4:18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love.

Perfect Love

The word “perfect” is teleios (τελειος), “that which is complete, brought to its fulness.” The saint who approaches that tribunal in a spirit of fear is the saint who has not experienced the fulness of this love, and for the reason that he did not maintain a Spirit-filled life during his earthly sojourn.

Perfect Love – Cast out Fear / Understand God Loves Me – Absolute Confidence

Perfect love casts out fear. How so? If I understand that God really, truly loves me, I can have absolute confidence that whatever happens at any given moment is the best for me.

Regardless Doctor – Terrorism / Sure of His Love – Whatever Happens

Regardless of what the doctor may say, what the IRS may declare, or who wins the election—when you are sure of God’s love for you, you don’t have fear. When you are sure of God’s love for you, then you won’t have fear, you will trust that whatever happens is the right thing for me and the furtherance of His purposes.

Regardless of how I fear loving others, even those who have hurt me, I still love unconditionally and sacrificially, because we can see even through the piercing, Jesus never stopped loving unconditionally and sacrificially.

God loves us, we love each other!

Casting

Cast - ballo, bal'-lo; means to "arise, cast (out), lay, lie, pour, put (up), send, strike, throw (down), thrust. It is used in the Scriptures to cast out demons, casting out Satan, in Revelation casting Satan out of Heaven, and we find it here.

Spend time at the "Inn of God's Love"

Answer to Anxiety – not Face Fears – Figure Phobias / Answer Saturated God's Love

The answer to anxiety and fear is not to face your fears or to figure out your phobias. The answer to fear is to become saturated in God's love because His perfect love casts out fear. Grumpiness and cynicism doubt and despair wash over me whenever I take my mind off God's perfect love—so undeniably demonstrated at Calvary.

Verse 10 – Cross Key to Casting Out All Fear

Back to verse 10, the cross is the key to casting out all fear. It is perfect love:

(1 John 4:10 NKJV) In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

(1 Peter 5:7 NKJV) casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

(Deuteronomy 31:6 NKJV) "Be strong and of good courage, do not fear nor be afraid of them; for the LORD your God, He is the One who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you."

(Deuteronomy 31:8 NKJV) "And the LORD, He is the one who goes before you. He will be with you, He will not leave you nor forsake you; do not fear nor be dismayed."

(Hebrews 13:6 NKJV) So we may boldly say: "The LORD is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?"

(John 14:1 NKJV) "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me.

(John 14:2 NKJV) "In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

(John 14:3 NKJV) "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.

(John 14:4 NKJV) "And where I go you know, and the way you know."

1 John 4:19 We love Him because He first loved us.

1 John 4:20 If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen?

1 John 4:21 And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.

God loves us, we love each other!

Forgiveness – Nothing do Feeling / Decide – Feelings will Follow

Forgiveness doesn't have to do with feelings. Forgiveness is a decision we make. If we decide to forgive, feelings will follow in due season.

Who Forgive – Only One Living in Love / Realize God Good – No other Option / Choose Forgive

Who can choose to forgive? Only one who's living in love. Who is living in love? The one who realizes that, although he's a sinner and a failure, because God has been so good to him, he has no reasonable option but to love his brother. Beloved, today, will you choose to forgive, will you choose love.

Conclusion

Passage: 1 John 4:1-21

Title: The Great Deception (It's More than we Think it is)

Summary: The Great Deception has always been associated with the coming of the Antichrists; but in this study we will see it is even more than that, and the Church doesn't even recognize it. Join us.

The Great Deception (It's More than we Think it is)

- Testing the spirits (4:1-6)
- Testing of Perfect Love (4:7-21)

Prayer

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need