

God is Love

**How should we respond to God's love?
¿Cómo deberíamos responder al amor de Dios?**

1. Let's _____ one another.

Vamos a _____.

1 John 4:7 (1 Juan 4:7)

1 John 4:11-12 (1 Juan 4:11-12)

1 John 4:20-21 (1 Juan 4:20-21)

2. Let's get to know _____.

Conozcamos a _____.

1 John 4:8 (1 Juan 4:8)

1 John 2:3-5 (1 Juan 2:3-5)

3. Let's trust in _____.

Confíemos en _____.

1 John 4:9-10 (1 Juan 4:9-10)

1 John 4:17-18 (1 Juan 4:17-18)

4. Let's live by the _____.

Vivamos según el _____.

1 John 4:13 (1 Juan 4:13)

1 John 3:24 (1 Juan 3:24)

1 John 4:15-16 (1 Juan 4:15-16)



Life Group Discussion Questions

Week 9: May 3-10

Scripture: 1 John 4:7-21

Three times in 1 John 4, John tells us to love one another (4:7; 4:11; 4:12). This command was also mentioned in previous chapters (2:10; 3:11). However, in chapter 4, John says that “God is love” (4:8; 4:16) and “love comes from God” (4:7). The love he is talking about is not a romantic feeling but a decision to value others and do what is best for them regardless of our feelings. This kind of love is unconditional and sacrificial. The ultimate example of this sacrificial love is seen in the gospel when Jesus died for us on the cross (4:9-10). God is love and He continues to reveal His love through us as we love one another (4:12).

Read 1 John 4:7-21

1. What did John command us to do in verse 7?

John Stott comments,

The Greek sentence in verse 7 opens with a striking assonance: *agapētoi agapōmen* (“Beloved, let us love,” RSV). Here and in v. 11 (2:7) the author practices what he preaches. In urging them to love each other, he begins by assuring them of his own love for them. He then continues by developing his first argument for brotherly love, which is based on God’s eternal nature. (Stott, 161)

2. What did John say about the person who does not love in verse 8?

David Allen writes,

Dozens of times in this letter alone John uses the word “love.” Primarily he speaks about three kinds of love: God’s love for us, our love for God, and our love for one another. The concept of love is so important to John that three times he discusses it in this letter. This is the third passage. The first time was in chapter 2; he talked about love as evidence for our fellowship with God. In chapter 3 it was evidence of our sonship with God. Now in chapter 4 John comes to the apex of what love is. He traces the stream of love to its source: “God is love.” (Allen, 185)

3. According to verse 9, how did God show His love among us?

4. How did John describe Jesus in verse 10?

5. How should we respond to the love we see in the gospel? (4:10-11)

Robert Yarbrough notes,

Within the horizon of 1 John 4:11, the major consequence is the onus that God's love places on both John and his readers: "We too [i.e., like God] ought to love each other." This conviction and its underlying rationale are not unique to John. Jesus's parable of the unmerciful slave (Matt. 18:21–35) illustrated the same point in a graphic way, and the logic at the parable's core parallels the logic of 1 John 4:11: "Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?" (Matt. 18:33 NIV; cf. Col. 3:13). (Yarbrough, 243)

6. Why did John remind us that no one has ever seen God? (4:12)

Morris Womack observes,

This kind of love is different from any kind of love we experience with our fellow human beings. We love people in our physical existence because we see them, we associate with them, and for some reason, we come to love them. John reminds us that this is a different kind of love. No one has ever seen God. How can we love someone whom we have not seen? This is a concept addressed several times in the Old Testament. Moses was allowed to see God's back side but was never allowed to see "God's face." John discusses this elsewhere... (John 1:18). (Womack, 109)

7. How can Christians know that they live in God and God lives in them? (4:13 and 3:24)

8. What was John's testimony about Jesus? (4:14-15)

9. How is love made complete among Christians? (4:16-17; 2:5)

Womack notes,

Only when we put our faith in God, and allow his love to permeate our lives, can love be perfected, or made complete. So, God's love can be made complete in us when we love. We can then develop a true confidence in our lives. We can have confidence that God has redeemed us through his Son, for it was his love that sent Jesus to die for us. We can then look to the Day of Judgment with confidence that our eternal life is secure. (Womack, 112)

10. What does John mean when he says, “as He is, so also are we in this world”? (4:17, see also John 17:16-18)

11. What does perfect love do? Why? (4:18)

According to verse 17, this fear is in contrast to having “confidence on the day of judgment.” John wrote this letter to help Christians who were struggling with doubts about their salvation (1 John 5:13). If someone believes in the day of judgment but they don’t have confidence about their eternal life, they will live in fear of God’s judgement (Hebrews 10:31). But if the Holy Spirit is helping us to grow spiritually and develop in our love for one another (1 John 4:12-13), we will gain confidence in our relationship with God. Because of our love for one another, we know that God is abiding in us and we really are His children.

12. According to verse 19, how should we respond to God’s love?

13. What is the relationship between loving God and loving one’s brother? (4:20-21)

14. How has God used other people to teach you about His love?

15. What helps you to love people who are difficult to love?

16. How has the love of God helped you to overcome fear?

17. How does the gospel help us to love other people?

18. How does the Holy Spirit help us to love other people?

19. Who will you thank for helping you to understand and experience God’s love?

20. How will you show God’s love to others this week?

Sources cited:

Allen, David. *1-3 John: Fellowship in God’s Family*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013.

Stott, John. *The Letters of John*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2009.

Womack, Morris. *1, 2, & 3 John*. Joplin, MO: College Press, 1998.

Yarbrough, Robert. *1-3 John*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008.