Outline for Hermeneutics and Homiletics

I John 4:7-21

> **7-10** My beloved friends, let us continue to love each other since love comes from God. Everyone who loves is born of God and experiences a relationship with God. The person who refuses to love doesn't know the first thing about God, because God is love—so you can't know him if you don't love. This is how God showed his love for us: God sent his only Son into the world so we might live through him. This is the kind of love we are talking about—not that we once upon a time loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to clear away our sins and the damage they've done to our relationship with God.
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> **11-12** My dear, dear friends, if God loved us like this, we certainly ought to love each other. No one has seen God, ever. But if we love one another, God dwells deeply within us, and his love becomes complete in us—perfect love!
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> **13-16** This is how we know we're living steadily and deeply in him, and he in us: He's given us life from his life, from his very own Spirit. Also, we've seen for ourselves and continue to state openly that the Father sent his Son as Savior of the world. Everyone who confesses that Jesus is God's Son participates continuously in an intimate relationship with God. We know it so well, we've embraced it heart and soul, this love that comes from God.
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> **To Love, to Be Loved**
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> 17-18 God is love. When we take up permanent residence in a life of love, we live in God and God lives in us. This way, love has the run of the house, becomes at home and mature in us, so that we're free of worry on Judgment Day—our standing in the world is identical with Christ's. There is no room in love for fear. Well-formed love banishes fear. Since fear is crippling, a fearful life—fear of death, fear of judgment—is one not yet fully formed in love.
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> 19 We, though, are going to love—love and be loved. First we were loved, now we love. He loved us first.
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> **20-21** If anyone boasts, "I love God," and goes right on hating his brother or sister, thinking nothing of it, he is a liar. If he won't love the person he can see, how can he love the God he can't see? The command we have from Christ is blunt: Loving God includes loving people. You've got to love both.

- Title: Love Matters

- Organizing Thought/Topic Sentence: Because God loved us first, our love for Him must be demonstrated in how we love others.

I. Introduction
II. Love Matters in Our Salvation and Faith
III. Love Matters in Our Fellowship
IV. Love Matters in Our Relationship with God
V. Conclusion

Five-minute homily exemplar

Love Matters

Scripture: 1 John 4:7–21

Introduction

Beloved, we live in a world where people talk a great deal about love, but sometimes we see very little evidence of it.

We see division in our communities, conflict in our families, and even disagreements within the church that cause us to question whether we truly understand what it means to love one another.

Yet John reminds believers of a foundational truth: **God is love.**

In 1 John 4, the apostle addresses a community of believers whose fellowship has been threatened by division and false teaching. He calls them back to what is essential to the Christian faith.

And his message is simple: **Love matters!**

I. Love Matters in Our Salvation and Faith

In verses 9 and 10, John reminds us that God's love was demonstrated when He sent His only Son into the world so that we might live through Him.

Notice something important. God did not wait for us to love Him first. He took the initiative.

Think about it. When Noah needed direction, God initiated. When Abraham was called into covenant, God initiated. When Moses stood before the burning bush, God initiated.

And when humanity needed redemption, God once again took the initiative by sending His Son, Jesus Christ.

Our salvation is grounded not in how much we love God, but in how much God first loved us.

We love because He first loved us!

II. Love Matters in Our Fellowship

In verse 11, John declares that if God loved us this much, we ought to love one another.

Church, loving God cannot be separated from loving people.

It is easy to love those who agree with us, encourage us, and treat us well. But what happens when someone disappoints us? What happens when someone challenges our beliefs or treats us unfairly?

John reminds us that our love must extend beyond what is convenient or comfortable.

Loving others does not mean accepting harmful behavior or abandoning healthy boundaries. It means that even when we disagree, we are called to respond in ways that reflect the character of Christ.

Before we speak, before we respond, and before we judge, perhaps we should ask ourselves one question:

Does my response reflect the love of Christ?

Because the love we profess must become the love we practice.

III. Love Matters in Our Relationship with God

In verses 20 and 21, John confronts us with a difficult truth. We cannot claim to love the God we have not seen while refusing to love the brother or sister we see every day.

Our relationship with God must be reflected in our relationships with others.

We can attend church, quote Scripture, participate in ministry, and speak eloquently about our faith. But if our lives are characterized by bitterness, hatred, and unforgiveness, we must examine whether we are truly living according to God's Word.

Love is not simply something we say. It is something we demonstrate.

The closer we walk with Christ, the more His love should be evident in our lives.

Conclusion: Love Matters!

So today, I leave you with this challenge.

Who needs to experience the love of God through you?

Is it a family member with whom you have not spoken? A neighbor who is difficult to love? Someone whose beliefs are different from your own?

Remember, God did not wait for us to become worthy of His love. He loved us first.

And because He loved us first, we are called to extend that same love to others.

Church, love matters in our salvation. Love matters in our fellowship. And love matters in our relationship with God.

We cannot simply talk about love. We must live it.

Because when we love one another, the world gets a glimpse of the God we profess to serve.

Encouraging One Another – Homily Presentations

As each minister shares their five-minute homily, please take a moment to offer a few words of encouragement in the Zoom chat.

Here are some examples:

1. “I really enjoyed your message!”
2. “You gave me something to think about.”
3. “I appreciated how you explained the Scripture.”
4. “Your message was encouraging and easy to understand.”
5. “One thing that stood out to me was _____.”

Remember: We are here to learn, grow, and encourage one another. A short, thoughtful comment can mean a great deal!

Please wait until the presenter has finished before sharing your comments in the chat. We want to give each minister our full attention and respect, allowing everyone the opportunity to share their message without distractions.