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Dr. Kevin Horton

I. A telling characteristic of belief in Jesus

1 John 4:7

Agaped ones... People who are deeply loved by God. What are they to do?

They are to agape each other. This love for each other is a trademark of what a person who is born of God looks like. It is a trademark of salvation and maturity. It is our goal.

1 John 4:8

II. Love redefined

What is this love (agape) like since the New Testament was written?

He gives us two parallel examples for us to grasp the concept of agape:

- 1) He was born in a manure-infested cave and laid in a slobbered up feeding trough.
- 2) He loved us so much that he sent his son to be a propitiation for our sins

Romans 5:6–11

1 John 4:11

Why don't we experience Christian Kumbaya?

- 1) **We are in a battle and the church is in the center of the battle**

Ephesians 6:10-12

- 2) **Prickly people**
 - a. **Love is the Christian shock absorbers for prickly people**

Matthew 18:15-20

- b. **Go to the person who you have a problem**
 - i. **Not gossip!**
 - ii. **Not build a team of people who have a problem!**
 - iii. **Solve the problem by manning up and going to the person directly**

1 Timothy 5:19

- c. **Don't start, don't listen to any complaints against church leadership**
 - i. **This text implies a tribunal... in other words... this is not a complaint... this a big sin that an elder has been part of**

Follow the scriptures when dealing with problems in the church and the church will maintain it witness and you will experience the love (agape) type of fellowship that you deeply desire

1 John 4:12

When we actually begin to accomplish this kind of love, people will see God through us!

Notes:
