

## Day 1

**Sermon Sentence: Learning how God loved us empowers us to love other people.**

### 1 John 4:7

We all know that there is a superficial idea that passes off as love in the world at large but this is not the idea of love that John is trying to get across in this passage. Our English Bibles did not do the concept of love the justice that the original Greek language did. The Greek language offers 6 words that all translate into a “form” of love we find three of these used in the Bible. Unfortunately most translations blanket translate all three as “love” with only the context to help the reader along. In 1 John 4:7, John is using the word “agape”.

**Agape** - supernatural love as in God’s love.

**Eros** - a sexual, physical or sensual love so named after the Greek god of love.

**Phileo** - a casual or friendly type of love.

Right away you can see that most “love” that we encounter in the world would fall under the Greek word phileo and you can also see what an injustice the translation to a single word “love” in English has had on the original Greek meaning of scripture.

- Why is it so important for us to understand what type of love John is talking about?
- If we were to accept the modern concepts of love, is it easy to come away with the concept that we are doing a good job loving?
- What do you think after you have realized the concept is a higher love by the definition of “agape”?
- Do you see this agape type love often in the world?
- How about in the Church?



# Love Like God

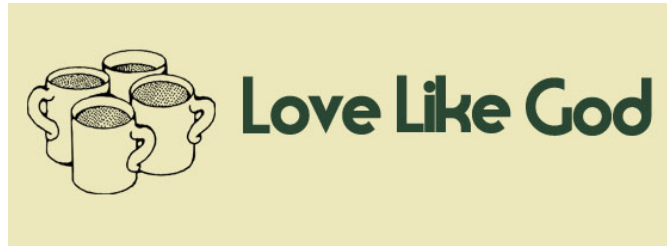
## Day 2

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### 1 John 4:8

We have to stop and consider the nature of God. God is not just displaying love, God **IS** love. So what John is saying quite literally is, if you have no concept of love, you have no concept of God because by God's very nature He is love. This is also true for the other characters of God. We must remember God is perfect because He is the source of these things, He defines them by His very nature. God does not break His character because He is the very definition and pure source of those characteristics.

- It is often said that God of the Old Testament seemed angry. If you view God through His true nature, can you see Him consistently acting in love towards all of mankind?
- In previous chapters John has stated that if you hate you are not of God, can you see why this is an opposite characteristic and barrier to knowing God?
- Can you think of specific OT examples of God acting in love towards mankind or can you even see the love of God in acts such as Noah's flood?
- Why is it so important for us to understand the love of God?



### Day 3

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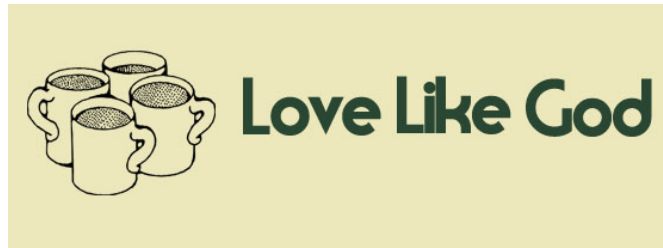
#### 1 John 4:9

It can be challenging to think of the loving nature of God in the OT, but only because of a relational difference caused mostly by the rewards and punishment system under the Law Covenant. Even so, we do see God's love on display in the OT. However, in the NT there can be no mistaking His love. It is made known in the greatest fashion the world has ever seen in that He sent His own Son to die a substitutionary death for our sins.

#### John 15:13

#### John 3:16

- If you start at Genesis and read to the Gospels, can you relate to God still wanting to save mankind?
- Does this server to illustrate God's unchanging nature, in the fact that He has never given up on His creation?
- If you consider that there are no secrets to God, can you grasp the full picture of what He sent His Son to Earth to endure on our behalf?
- How early in the Bible can we find evidence of the plan of God concerning our salvation? Again, does this display the unchanging loving nature of God?



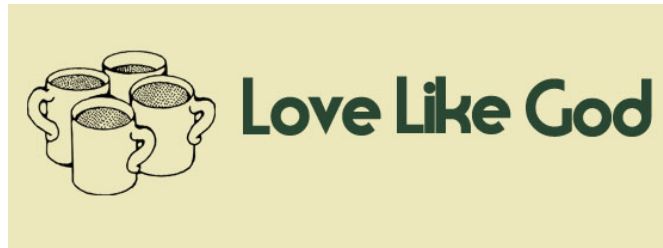
## Day 4

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### **1 John 4:10**

We haven't earned it, we don't deserve it but God has given us the gift of salvation anyway. The Bible states it very clearly that we are unable to earn salvation and if anything in our lives has given us the idea that we are living in a way that earns it by works we have missed the entire point of what Jesus has done for us. We are utterly bankrupt and without the love of God opening the way of salvation through His sacrificial work and spilling of His own blood for the remission of sins, we would be doomed to damnation because of sin. God offers this salvation as a free gift, we can not earn it because we have no means to do so because of our fallen nature.

- Do you truly understand God's love displayed at the cross?
- What is the significance of Jesus' literal shed blood applied for our sins?
- Why did it have to be God to accomplish our salvation?
- Why does it always require death and shed blood for the atonement of sins?
- Why doesn't animal sacrifice provide true atonement?
- Even in Genesis, do you see this idea when God replaced Adam and Eve's fig leaves with animal skins?
- Do you see other examples throughout the Bible? (Hint such as Passover)



## Day 5

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### **1 John 4:11-12**

So what is the summary of what John is trying to express about God's Love? That if God's "agape", that is supernatural love, was displayed through Jesus Christ and His work at Calvary than we must try to live up to a standard of love for one another that mimics that example of love. It is easy for us to show the superficial "phileo" love that the world calls love but to love like God it must be "agape" love! John says "No one has ever seen God", and he says this to make them realize that the world sees God through us when we love like God loves.

- After reading these scriptures do you come away with a deeper understanding of the different types of love?
- Can you see how God sets a standard of love that must be labeled higher (agape) than other types of love?
- How can we learn to love like God?
- What can we learn about self sacrifice that will help us understand how God loves?
- Would you sacrifice yourself for a fellow Christian?
- How about for an enemy? (Remember we were all enemies of God prior to the Cross)