

1 John 4:11-12
“God’s love perfected”

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I. Intro

We are still examining God’s love in 1st John chapter 4:7-21 and specifically the exhortation to love one another. The apostle’s style of writing was very lyrical as he repeated words and phrases like a song writer would repeat a chorus and that is what we have been studying in the three-time repeated chorus: “**LOVE ONE ANOTHER**”, where what changes in the chorus is the three reasons for the command to “*love one another*” which is seen in the words:

- Vs. 7-10 “**Let us love one another**”: The first point we examined is in the two words “let us” and it is that since we have been born again and LOVE is God’s own nature we must exhibit that same nature of God’s love to each other.

Now this week we will move on to the next two parts of this repeated chorus:

- Vs. 11 “**We also ought to love one another**”: Since LOVE is God’s gift to His children than we must be sharing that gift with each other.
- Vs. 12 “**If we love one another**”: Since God’s LOVE is God’s current activity in and through His children than it must be our activity.

As it related to the first phrase “**Let us**” in the Greek is literally “*Let us be HABITUALLY loving one another.*” This along with the Greek words “one another” indicate the practice of exchanging LOVE with others for mutual benefit. Last week we finished our study through verse 10 where we specifically looked at the two phrases: “**for love is of God**” and verse 8 “**God is love**” as John stated two truths:

1. **First**, Vs. 7 “**For love is of God**”: The source of Love is God, and **the only true definition of what love is and behaves like.** And in that we noted that **love’s “source” is the Divine nature.** And because it is a part of God’s Divine nature **this Love of God is transformative:** According to verse 8 the absence of God’s love in the life of a person who professes to have been in contact with the love of God indicates the absence of the knowledge of God, as verse

8 in the Greek reads, "*The person who does not love with this kind of love has NEVER known God.*" *This reveals to the reader that to experience God's love through faith is transformative!* To have experienced the love of God that changes us through New Birth WILL cause that person to exhibit that which they have come into contact with the love of GOD, with others!

2. **Second**, Vs. 8 "*God is love*": John is NOT declaring the worldly definition that ALL "LOVE IS.. GOD". John makes two points are made in this verse. In *the Greek the article is placed on the word God and NOT on the word love which means that these two words are NOT INTERCHANGEABLE*. A proper translation of this phrase would be "*God, as to His nature is love and because of this it is always His nature to be loving.*" The second point John makes is that *you cannot sperate His nature from other aspects of His nature!* *God's word reveals to us even in First John that God is also Holy. What this indicates is that God's love is always a Holy Love and that His Holiness is always loving!* Vs. 7-8 The definition to God's Love is from the vantage point of **God the Father**.

The final aspect of God's love that we examined was in verses 9-10 where the focus was on "*What God did*". The point was because God is love, He communicates not only in words but in action. Our attention was upon the atonement as the greatest demonstration of God's love towards humanity as we noted *three aspects of God's love seen in God's gift to fallen humanity in sending His only Son Jesus:*

1. **THE GIFT**: "*God gave His best*" First, God gave His Son Jesus. That is the best there is to give as nothing could ever come close to the Gift of God the Son. Paul said it this way in 2 Corinth 9:15 "*Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift*".
2. **THE PURPOSE OF THE GIFT**: "*God gave His Son to die*" Second, the measurement of this great love of God in sending God the Son as a gift is seen in Jesus' cost to accomplish the mission for humanities reconciliation, HIS DEATH! God's love didn't stop at a teacher or an example in sending Jesus instead He went all the way to Jesus'

death. And not any death, a death reserved for the worst of sinners. It is this truth that Paul writes of his confidence in found in Roman's 8:31-39 why he bold proclaims that *"Nothing can separate us from the love of God"*.

3. **WHO THE GIFT WAS FOR:** *"God gave for sinners"* Finally, we realize that Jesus was willing crucified for those who did all that they could to crucify Him. God demonstrate His love for ALL of humanity who were not lovely "good people" but instead the most vile of all people. The measure of God love is realized in those three aspects:

- **THE GIFT:** *"God gave His best"*
- **THE PURPOSE OF THE GIFT:** *"God gave His Son to die"*
- **WHO THE GIFT WAS FOR:** *"God gave for sinners"*

II. Vs. 11 Since God so loved us

Vs. 11 It is now that the Apostle moves further into the commandment. The word "IF" is an unfortunate translation as it would be better "SINCE" as the word reaches back to the act of the Father in sending His only Son as a sacrifice for our sins. This is the "chief cornerstone" on the building that expresses God's nature of love. The heart of God the Father is in view who sent His Son and placed Him upon the cross and it was His holiness that demanded what only His love could satisfy as He abandoned fellowship as our sin was placed upon His Son. Because of God's action if we have truly been impacted by this love towards us we an obligation to be constantly loving one another with God's love which is NOT a love that is called forth by the virtues in another but is *spontaneously the initiator* in loving one another! There are six truths with regards to God's love towards one another:

1. It is spontaneous in its source
2. It is universal in its scope
3. It is long-suffering in its intensity

4. It is **self-sacrificing in its character**
5. It is **aggressive in its action**
6. It is **constant in its duration**

With this as the context of the definition of the love of God comes the action required by God to those to whom have experienced this love; “We ought to love one another”. Based upon what God has done for us comes the increasing and permanent obligation that comes from being a recipient of God’s love, we are to love one another the way that He has demonstrated His love towards us in the above six ways! Our loving one another must never be seen as a mere “OBLIGATION” but rather as an expression of our devotion and “APPRECIATION” of having been recipients who continually enjoy that same love! Paul wrote of this “APPRECIATION” in Romans 13:8 when he wrote “*Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law*”. Such love must be as John has already wrote of in 3:18 not in “*word or tongue but is deed and in truth*”. Not just with the words that can be empty “love you” as “sentiment is feeling without responsibility”. Instead:

- The MIND must understand the truth
- The HEART must appreciate the truth
- The WILL must act upon the truth

The greater we abide in God’s love and do what Paul wrote of in Eph 3:18-19 where he said that being rooted and grounded in God’s love would cause us to “*comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.*” As this takes place the natural outcome is that we will love greater one another!

III. Vs. 12 God’s love perfected in us

Vs. 12 Because of the believer being impacted by the love of God we note that He has done so:

- **God's love has done something to us**

- **God's love has done something for us**
- **God's love has done something in us**

And because of those facts **God's love NOW MUST do something THROUGH US!** There are three ways in which the revelation of God's love is made known to humanity:

1. **God's love is PROCLAIMED in God's Word.**
2. **God's love is PROVED at the cross.**
3. **God's love is PERFECTED in the believer.**

John states the need for this perfection in the manifestation of His love through His children by reminding them that His nature is invisible to mortal eyes. How does God manifest His nature to those who are blind to Him? John says it's through how we Christians love one another. As we demonstrate God's love His nature becomes visible! It is made possible because John declares here that "God abodes or has made His home within us". Finally, when we act upon what is ours through the indwelling Holy Spirit this love matures and our fellowship with God is manifested towards the world. The proof of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit isn't in the Gifts of the Spirit but rather in the love of God being poured through the life of the believer.