

Life That Is Real
“Love One Another”
I John 4:7-13
Pt. 12

Introduction - John comes now to his third cycle of tests:

- The moral test of obedience - Righteousness
- The social test of - Love
- The doctrinal test of - Believing the truth.

John comes back to the subject of love. The first time He spoke of love as proof of our fellowship with God, 2:7-11. The second time love was the proof of our sonship, 3:10-14. But now, in our text, John gets down to the very foundation of the matter of love!

Why is love so important? John answers that love has its very source in God. The life that is real is a life of love and real love, comes only from God. At this point the epistle reaches a climax. Robert Law says, “Within these verses I John rises to its sublimist height.”

John in this text is not so much testing us as He is exhorting us! John exhorts us three times to “love one another,” see vs. 7, vs. 11 and vs. 12. This is in the present tense. So a habitual practice.

So John give us three reasons to “love one another”. All three based on a fact about God!

I. Because of What God is - Love, vv. 7-8.

“Beloved” - John was exemplifying what he wanted them to do! The appeal, vs. 7, “love one another”, it’s fellow Christians. Illus.: The Church father “Jerome”,.. when John became so infirm that he could not preach. Why? Because it is the Lord’s command, and if only this be done, it is enough.

John gives two reasons for carrying out this appeal to love one another.

1. Love is of God, vs. 7. “for love is of God.” So John is saying that true agape love has its origin and source in God.

Illus.- As light radiates from the sun. So love is is a distinctive aspect of God’s being and flows forth from Him.

So John’s two-fold conclusion, “that everyone that loves is:

1. Born of God, vs. 7- God is your Father..
2. Knoweth God, vs. 7- God is your friend.

II. Because of What God Did - Sent His Son, vv. 9-11.

These three verses teach us three important truths.

1. How we know that God is love, vs. 9.

“In this was manifested the love of God.” Manifested” is “disclosed” or “made visible”. N.I.V. “this is how God showed His love.”

“Toward us”, literally, “among us.”

How did God make visible His love? He sent His only begotten Son into the world.

God gave the greatest gift! His only begotten Son. What does that mean? It speaks of his uniqueness. N.I.V. “His one and only Son.”

- a. John tells us who God the Father sent. (His son)
- b. He also tells us where God the Father sent Him. (Into the world)
- c. He tells us why He sent Him, vs. 9. (that we might live through Him.)

2. The greatness of His love, vs. 10.

“The greatness of God’s love is seen in that it was self-initiated”. Our love did not call it faith, see vs. 19.

- Eph. 2:4 - It’s great.
- It’s infinite - You can’t exhaust it. You can’t understand it.
- It’s unchanging - James 1:7
- It’s eternal - Jer. 31:3, “I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefor with loving kindness have I drawn thee.”
- It’s amazing - “....sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins” vs. 10.

God’s love is amazing in that it was not my love, but rather my sin and my need that called it forth. So, God’s love seen at the cross, not only a work, it was a “Word”.

3. Our obligation to love, vs. 11.

- a. “Beloved”
- b. “If” meaning “since” (John has no doubts)
- c. “We ought to love (agape) one another.” In Greek it’s in the present tense.
- d. Two very important words.

“So” and “also” vs. 11.

The words “so” and “also” are significant. The first gathers together all of the characteristics of divine love as John has described them in verses 9-10. The word “also” lays upon us the responsibility for manifesting similar characteristics. We are to love with Godlike love.

III. Because of What God is Doing; “Abiding In Us” vv. 12-13.

“No man hath seen God at any time.” What does that mean? John 4:24, “God is Spirit.” So God in His essence cannot be seen by human eye.

How do we see God?

1. “His love is seen in us” vs. 12.

- God dwells in us!
- His love is perfected in us!

2. His Spirit dwells in us, vs. 13.

- We are in Him.
- He is in us.

How do we know? He’s given us His Spirit. Love is the fruit of the Spirit. It’s the evidence of His indwelling.

A. John in this text explains the source of love. It’s God. The triune God of the Bible.

1. The Father’s nature - God is love.
2. The Gift of His Son- Cross.
3. The Holy Spirit - Present activity of dwelling in us.

B. How does it happen?

- You believe.
- God regenerates you.
- The love of God is shed abroad in your heart.
- You live righteously.
- Love sacrificially.
- Believe biblically.