

THE DEFINING SIGN OF LOVE

Sunday, November 14, 2021 -- 1st JOHN series -- Msg 19 -- Pastor Andrew Coleman

1st JOHN 4:7-12

English Standard Version (ESV)

7 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. **8** Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. **9** In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. **10** In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. **11** Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. **12** No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.

BACKGROUND and REVIEW:

- 1) The Apostle John is writing to churches that are being assaulted with satanic lies.
(gnostic spiritual elite -- arrogant, unholy and loveless)
- 2) He writes to refute the false teachers and reassure the genuine believers.
(last Sunday: *test the spirits for many false prophets have entered the world*)
- 3) He writes to clarify the defining signs of genuine saving faith.
- 4) He gives repeating defining signs involving doctrine/beliefs and morals/behavior.
 - The defining sign of a biblical view of Christ. 1:1-4; 2:18-27
 - The defining sign of a biblical view of sin. 1:5-2:2; 3:4-10
 - The defining sign of biblical obedience. 2:3-6; 3:4-10;
 - The defining sign of biblical love. 2:7-17; 3:11-24; 4:7-21

The true church has always maintained that God's Word clearly sets forth basic standards of BELIEF and BEHAVIOR as necessary marks of genuine, saving faith.

Do you believe the words of Christ?

Do you obey the words of Christ?

A key indicator of true salvation is do you genuinely love others with God's true love?

KEY OBSERVATIONS of 1 John 4:7-12

- 1) See the COMMAND to love vs 7 *Beloved, let us love one another,*
John 13:34 -- Jesus speaking...
*A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another:
just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.*
- 2) See the SOURCE of love: vs 7 *for love is from God,*
 - God is life. Psalm 36:9 (source of *eternal life*: 1 John 1:1-2; 3:1-2, 9; 5:12; 2 Tim. 1:1; Titus 1:2)
 - God is light. Isaiah 60:19 (1 John 1:5-7; 2:8-11)
 - God is love. vs 7 and 8

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KEY OBSERVATIONS of 1 John 4:7-12 *continued*

3) See what the presence or absence of love indicates: **SALVATION.** vs 7-8

and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. 8 Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.

John 3:1-21 (Jesus speaking to Pharisee Nicodemus)

*1 Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. 2 This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him." 3 Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is **born again** he cannot see the kingdom of God."*

4) See the **NATURE** of true love. vs 8-10 end of verse 8 '**...God is love**'.

Discussion among scholars as to whether this is an ontological statement about God's essence or rather a description of the loving nature of God as revealed in His saving self-sacrifice.

Verses 9-10 beautifully show us God's loving nature in action.

- **God's love is obvious!** vs 9
'the love of God was made manifest among us'
- **God's love is self-sacrificing!** vs 9
'God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him'
- **God's love is unmerited/undeserved!** vs 10
'In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son'
- **God's love is effective!** It DOES something!
'and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.' (satisfaction / payment)

Romans 5:8

but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

1 Peter 2:24

He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.

John 3:16

For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son that whoever believes in Him will not perish but have everlasting life.

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KEY OBSERVATIONS of 1 John 4:7-12 *continued*

5) See how GOD’S ACTION calls US TO ACTION. vs 11

Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

6) See that the CLOSEST YOU ARE GOING TO GET TO SEEING GOD is loving one another! vs 12

No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.

Loving others is what God looks like!

Ephesians 5:1-2

1 Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. 2 And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

We are never more like God than when we are sacrificially loving others.

KEY QUESTIONS FOR MEDITATION AND APPLICATION:

1) HOW does GOD love us?

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|----------|----------|
| 1) _____ | 4) _____ |
| 2) _____ | 5) _____ |
| 3) _____ | 6) _____ |

2) HOW can I IMITATE HIM in loving others?

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1) _____ | 4) _____ |
| 2) _____ | 5) _____ |
| 3) _____ | 6) _____ |

3) If I care enough to deeply consider these questions what may it indicate? _____.
If I don’t care enough to deeply consider these questions what may it indicate? _____.