

**Welcome Home
God's Love...
09/23/2018 Sunday AM**

Scripture: 1 John 4:7-21

Introduction

- Last week we discussed **Love Is Hospitable**.
- Throughout this series we have learned that it is God's will for us to be welcoming to all people.
- This goes beyond our circle of close family and friends, but also to strangers as we have seen previously.
- Not only should we open our arms to people, but at times our doors also.
- This morning we will discuss **God's Love...**

1 John 4:7-21

⁷Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. ⁹This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. ¹⁰This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. ¹¹Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. ¹²No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

¹³We know that we live in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. ¹⁴And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. ¹⁵If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in him and he in God. ¹⁶And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him. ¹⁷In this way, love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment, because in this world we are like him. ¹⁸There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

¹⁹We love because he first loved us. ²⁰If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. ²¹And he has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother.

I. God's love is an agapē love.

- In this passage the English word "love" is used 27 times.
- Every time it is used it is a form of the Greek word *agapē*.
 - *Agapē* – Is the word for love that is almost always attributed to how God loves us.
 - It is different from the *philadelphia* – "brotherly love" that we spoke about two weeks ago or the *philoxenia* – "love of strangers" that we looked at last week.
 - It expresses the deep and constant "love" and interest of a perfect God towards an entirely unworthy creation. It is a love without conditions or limits.
- This passage teaches us that love is not an option for believers.
- V.1 tells us that, "...Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God."
- V. 2 says, "Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love."
- John lays it out simply, believers love and unbelievers do not love.
- This is why it is so important to understand what the Bible is teaching us about "love."
- We cannot simply "love" each other in the way that we want to.
- God expects us to have an agape type of love toward everyone.
- That means we should be sacrificially loving others even when they don't deserve it.

II. God's love is an atoning love.

- How do we know that someone loves us? Love can be known only from the actions it prompts.
- Vv. 9-10 – God showed us that He loved us by taking action. He sent his one and only Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins.

- We know that when mankind fell into sin, that we were on a path of death and destruction.
 - **Romans 3:23** – “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,”
 - **Romans 6:23** – “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
- The penalty for our sins was death. V. 10 tells us that Jesus was the “atoning sacrifice for our sins.”
- This means that Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross PAID IN FULL the debt that you and I owed.
- Only through the sinless sacrifice of Christ are you and I able to be reconciled back to God.
- God did all of this for us so that he could show us clearly what love looked like.
 - **Romans 5:8** – “But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”
 - Does this verse teach that we “deserved” this act of love that God demonstrated for us?
- We cannot atone for others. The suffering and work of Christ is unique.
- However, we are called to model lives of self-sacrificial love.
- Our love should be more than a reactionary love.
- We must seek out ways to help others find their greatest joy in Christ, despite the cost to ourselves.

III. God’s love is an independent love.

- V. 19 says, “We love because he first loved us.”
 - What does this verse mean to you?
 - It may be a short verse, but it is powerful. We are to love, because he FIRST loved us.
 - God’s love for us is not grounded in our beauty but His great love. He loves us freely.
 - He loved us before we loved Him.
 - This is such wonderful news because it means our efforts are not what made God love us, nor are our efforts able to make God stop loving us.
 - His love is independent of any external factors.
 - That is exactly how he expects that we should love.
 - Our love for others should not be based on what they did to us or what they can do for us, we should love people because God first loved us.
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- God has given us his love and in turn he commands that we reflect that love to other people.
 - When you examine yourself, how does the way you love stand up to God’s expectations?
 - As Christians, we should be intentional in how we love, not reactionary.
 - Let’s make sure that we are modeling our love after God, and not this world.

Wednesday Night Bible Study

Study of the Book of Romans Romans 2:12-16