

LOVE IS ABIDING IN GOD

MARCH 10, 2024

WORSHIP

We Give Thanks, This Is Amazing Grace, Amazing Love (My Lord What Love Is This), This I Believe (The Creed), Cornerstone

WELCOME

Search the internet for the definition of love. Share the most interesting one that you've found.

WORD

1 JOHN 4:15-16, 19 (ALSO READ VERSES 7-21 FOR CONTEXT)

¹⁵ Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.
¹⁶ We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.
¹⁹ We love, because He first loved us.

Our world is obsessed with love. We love "love"! Why? You and I are created in God's image. God is a God of love, so we were made to love. The internet gives us billions of possibilities of what love is.

In this series Love Rediscovered we've learned from Jesus that we should "be known by love"; from Paul that "love is action"; from James to "love radically"; and from Peter to "love fervently". What are we going to learn from John?

In **1 John 4:7-21**, the word "love" is mentioned 27 times. In all those times, it is "agape" love. It is the highest form of love: selfless, sacrificial, unconditional; seeking the well-being and welfare of others without expecting anything in return. The word "God" is mentioned 21 times. The word "abide" is mentioned 6 times. It means "to stay" (in a given place, state, relation or expectancy), continue, dwell, endure, be present, remain, stand, tarry. Putting all these words together, the message is LOVE IS ABIDING IN GOD. We can't love if we don't abide in God.

The application is to love one another (**v.7, v.21**). Love is not just theoretical. It's something that can be experienced. It's tangible. It can be seen and felt. Love is more than just words.

I. SOURCE OF LOVE (vv.7-10)

True love is from God (**v.7**). Everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. If we refuse to love, are we really born of God? Do we really know God? There's 2 tests for Christians in the book of John: Do you believe in Jesus? Do you love like Jesus? John answers the questions. The one who does not love does not know God (**v.8**).

This is not to make us doubt whether we're saved or not but may this give us the confidence in where we stand before Christ!

One of the most profound phrases in the entire Bible is "God is love". Before the foundation of the world, there was already love. God and love have existed for all eternity (**John 17:24**). The relationship between God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit is defined by love. They're in perfect love with one another. God did not create people because He needed people to love Him. God was fully complete. He created us out of His love for us. We have such a longing for love because we were created in God's image. His essence is love.

Love is tangible, it can be seen. God revealed and proved His love through Jesus (**v.9**). Love is not defined by us and love doesn't begin with us. Love is from God and He shows us what love is. He manifested it in Jesus. Jesus is the propitiation ("to appease") for our sins (**v.10**)—reconciling God's holiness and love. God is loving and gracious. That's why He made a way to have a relationship with Him. On the cross, we have the amazing work of Jesus Christ. Jesus died on the cross on our behalf.

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II. SHOW GOD'S LOVE (vv.11-12, v.19)

We have been loved completely by God and now God calls us to love others (v.11). We love, because He first loved us (v.19). For us to be able to love this way that God loves us, we need to abide in Him. We need to experience it. Then we can give it. God may not be visibly seen but His love and presence is felt through us (v.12). "God's love comes to you, and it comes through you" (Colin Smith). We were never meant to just keep God's love to ourselves. It's perfected when we allow the love of God to come to us and allow it to come through us. "Perfected" means completed. God's love is completed when we receive it and love others with it. There are so many people that need love around you. Will you allow the love of God to flow to you and flow through you?

III. STAY IN GOD'S LOVE (vv.13-18, 20-21)

Abide in God's love. God wants us to have the assurance that we are in Him. As we abide in Him, He has given us His Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the assurance of God's invisible Presence in us, and He empowers us to love (v.13). Love is abiding in God (v.16). We all have a "fragrance". If God were to have a fragrance, it's love. We know God is present in a group of people through their love. If we are abiding in Christ, we have confidence in Christ (v.17). We have no fear because we are completely loved (v.18). If you are in Jesus, you are God's child. You are free. No fear. You can be used by God in the capacity He made you to be used (1 John 3:1). When you are born of God, something changes in you. Your deepest desire is to love God, to please Him, and to love others. The application is to love one another (vv.20-21).

John lived to be one of the oldest apostles. He wrote this letter in his older age. He has seen this Jesus who he was talking about (v.14). He is testifying that we need Jesus in our life. Will you confess Jesus (v.15)? If you don't have Jesus in your life, you can't love this way.

God is love and to love like God we need to abide in God. Develop the relationship we have with God and people (your family, be part of a Dgroup, etc.) in our life because God made us for community and for one another.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. Self-Check.

What is my understanding now of God's love?

2. Setting It Right.

How will this impact the way I relate to God and to others?

3. Living It Out.

To who and how can I show God's love this week?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray for people to experience God's love through Jesus Christ and in the power of the Holy Spirit. Demonstrate love in more tangible ways. Share God's message of love to others as we abide in Him.

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives.

II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of public servants; repentance and salvation for government leaders and citizens for a Christ-centered Philippines.
- God's help and comfort, salvation for Israel, wisdom for their leaders in government, military and their soldiers as they defend themselves against terrorists' attacks. PRAISE GOD for the release of hostages so far! Continue to pray for the release of the remaining ones.
- War in Ukraine to end, loss of lives prevented; conflict in African, East Asian and Middle East countries to stop. Pray for Christians from different countries who have been persecuted, attacked and killed in recent weeks.

III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples.
- Elders, pastors, dleaders, and families (holy, humble, harmonious, happy, heart-working).
- Ministries and churches expansion worldwide.

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God.
- Righteous living.
- Salvation of family and friends.

MEMORY VERSE

1 JOHN 4:19

¹⁹ We love, because He first loved us.