

1 John 4:7-21

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

¹³By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. ¹⁴And^(I) we have seen and testify that^(J) the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of^(K) the world. ¹⁵Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. ¹⁶So^(L) we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us.^(M) God is love, and^(N) whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. ¹⁷By this^(O) is love perfected with us, so that^(P) we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because^(Q) as he is so also are we in this world. ¹⁸There is no fear in love, but^(R) perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not^(S) been perfected in love. ¹⁹We love because he first loved us. ²⁰If anyone says, "I love God," and^(T) hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot^(U) love God^(V) whom he has not seen. ²¹And^(W) this commandment we have from him:^(X) whoever loves God must also love his brother.

Opening question:

1. What did you apply from last week's study?
2. What challenged you from this week's message?
3. Looking back on the first three chapters of 1 John, what are some of the key themes John is teaching?

Getting into the text

4. Read through the entire text, circle the word "love" every time it appears; underline the word "abide" when it appears.
5. Where is the Gospel message found in this passage? Write down the verse and how John describes the Gospel message.
6. Why is verse 12 statement, "No one has ever seen God" significant?
7. What does it mean to "abide in God". What is a synonym for abide?
8. What does it look like in practical, daily situations to "abide in God"?

9. From verse 17 and following, John talks about the results of God's love made complete in us. What are some of the results he mentions?

10. Give a definition of "perfect love" that John is describing that could be short and sweet and placed on a bumper sticker or marquee.

11. According to v. 19, what is our motivation to love? Generally speaking what other motivations to love do we have? Specifically in your life, what motivates you to love others?

12. Verse 18 speaks of fears. How do your fears inhibit your ability to love others?

13. Who are the people in your life that are difficult to love? Why?

14. Thinking back before the study of 1 John, what would you have said are 3 or 4 attributes of a follower of Christ? Through the study of 1 John, what would you now say are 3 or 4 attributes of a follower of Christ? Are those evident in your life?

15. How do we respond to this passage corporately? How should "love one another" be lived out in the biblical community you are in?

16. This section concludes with verse 21: "And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother." This statement is practical yet challenging to live out. Complete this verse with the personal application: "And this commandment _____ (your name) has from him: if _____ (your name) loves God must also love _____ (the person difficult for you to love"
- a. How does the Gospel motivate you to love this person
 - b. What steps do you need to take to have "perfect love" for this person?
 - c. How can your group hold you accountable to this?

Close your time in the group praying through the personal application (fears, loving a difficult person, etc.) of this passage.