

IF GOD SO LOVED US,...

1 John 4:7-11

This morning's message is one of those messages that's so simple everyone can understand it.

There's nothing profound, complicated, or hard to understand! Yet every one of us will spend the rest of our life, trying to figure out how to live by these principles.

HOW CAN WE ENJOY FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD?

GOD'S HOLINESS 1:5-3:10

God is holy. 1:5

To enjoy fellowship with God, whose essential nature is holy, we must be holy!

GOD'S LOVE 3:11-5:10

God is love. 4:8

To enjoy fellowship with God, whose essential nature IS love, we must love one another.

SUMMARY 3:11 *"This is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another."*

CONTRAST BETWEEN THE WORLD & GOD'S CHILDREN 3:12-4:6

Hatred by the world 3:12-13

Love among brothers 3:14-24

One of the clearest evidences that we walk with God is love for God's children. 14

Response to the truth 4:1-6

Another contrast between the world and God's children is our response to truth.

Although God's message is superior to the world's (4), those who belong to the world will never receive it (5-6).

Only God's children accept God's truth.
 After dealing with contrast
 between the world & God's children, John addresses people who
 ARE God's children.

EXHORTATION TO LOVE 4:7-11

The reality that was intended to make God's children stand out
 as *different*, catch people's attention, & draw them to Christ,
 has become such a commonplace statement that *everyone*
 assumes it should be seen in us!

When we are less than exemplary in modeling it, EVERYONE
 sees the incongruity!

God's children are identified as "hypocrites" when we fail to
 model it consistently.

It's a given for Christianity!

God's children are expected to be marked by our love for one
 another!

Everyone else gets it!

**Since God has loved us, we ought to love one
 another.** [In summary,...]

**People characterized by a lifestyle of loving
 God's children are from God 7a**

**People characterized by a lifestyle of *not* loving
 God's children are *not* His children 8.**

EXHORTATION 4:7a

"Beloved, let us love one another"

**People who have been loved are exhorted to love
 one another.**

“Beloved ones”

= people who are loved

Why should we?

CAUSE 4:7b-8

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

Why is love such an important indicator that we are in fellowship with God?

Love comes from God. 7b

Everyone who is characterized by a lifestyle of loving God’s children, is *already* born of God

= new creatures

It’s an evidence of the present reality in us.

We don’t love *in order to* obtain it.

We love because we have *already* been born of God.

and knows God. 7c

This describes an *ongoing* relationship—We know Him!

We know the One who is the Source of love!

How does this love differ from a kind, loving person—or even loving our spouse?

How is this different from saying:

“Everyone who loves *somebody*?”

Becoming God’s children produces love for His family.

It’s not something we do to *become* members of the family!

Love is the *primary motivator* of Christian living.

NOT fear!

When love drives us, *it* results in love for one another, NOT legalism!

People characterized by a lifestyle of not loving God's children, don't know Him.

–have *NEVER* known Him!

They haven't experienced God's love!

Because God IS love! 8

That's His essence

–He's characterized by it.

If we're His children, we'll act like our Father.

Love flows from God.

Like electricity running through electrical wires, love comes from God, then flows through us to other people.

EXAMPLE 4:9-10

What's the best example of what our love for one another ought to look like?

"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.

¹⁰In 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"

How has God demonstrated His love in a visible way to us? 9

God's love *initiated* the sending of Jesus.

He sent Him for 2 reasons:

1. God sent His only Son, to give US life.
2. God sent His only Son, to be the sacrifice for our sins.

–to remove the offense

–& to renew the broken relationship

That's sacrificial, committed love.

That's what genuine love looks like.

What's the essence of genuine love? 10

It's NOT that WE love HIM!

Why not? Isn't that real?

Yes. But our love for Him is just a response to His love for us!

It IS HIS love for US!

–in spite of our sin.

How is that love different than OUR love for God?

We don't deserve it–never did!

He gave us everything.

We never had it to give up.

We haven't given up anything.

He accepted what we deserved.

IMPLICATION 4:11

What are the implications of God's display of love for us?

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

If God loved us that much, we should love one another.

Since we have experienced His love,

since we're in touch with the source of love, we're motivated
to pass on what we've received.

God's love for us motivates US to love.

It compels US to love one another.

If He has done this much for us, how can we do less?

WHAT WERE THE IMPLICATIONS FOR JOHN'S READERS?

What did it look like at the end of the first century?

What do you suppose John is asking them to change?

WHAT DIFFERENCE SHOULD THIS MAKE IN OUR LIVES?

What WILL it look like today?

What is John (*GOD!*) asking US to change?

When we're walking with Him,
we'll be loving His children.

If we're angry with His children (hating them), we can't be walking contentedly with Him at the same time.

The lack is resolved by abiding in Him—NOT by trying harder to love.

Love is a fruit of the Spirit

—HE produces it!

This is the key to "the hard part"

of applying the message we talked about at the start of this morning's message.

It doesn't come by trying harder!

God produces it in us, as we abide in Him!

When we're drawing from Him what sustains our life, =>

that leads to love for one another =>

that leads to enjoying fellowship with Him & with each other.