

Origin of Love
1 John 4:7
Laurel Center
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Main Idea: because God taught us to love, we demonstrate love toward one another.

Introduction

we live in a culture that worships love. From the 60s and the hippie movement to the sexual revolution to even beer commercials that coin the phrase, “I love you, man” we are inundated with different people’s interpretations of the word love. Most of us just don’t know what love really is. The Greeks even had four different words to detail different types of love. From sexual love to unconditional love they nailed their versions of understanding.

But in English we only have the one word and we have to clarify with adjectives. John is talking about love and how we even learned as human beings to do it. Because of the fall and the sin that is in the world we had to learn how to love from God. He taught us the deepest forms of it. Let’s take a look at what John has to say about love and how we learned how to do it.

Text – 1 John 4:7–12

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.

I. God is our example in love (vv. 7 – 9).

A God teaches us how to love.

- 1 For the first time in the book of first John, the elder uses the term “beloved.” As the letter progresses the relationship between the elder and his children grows. They start out as his trainees and they are growing in the face so much that the relationship becomes more intimate with John.
- 2 Another possible view is that the relationship has never changed at all because John loves teaching these believers and enjoys the Fellowship between them.
- 3 Throughout the letter John has encouraged brotherly love between the believers in this church. Once again, he tells them that this is one of the most important parts of Fellowship.

4 Remember that this type of love is unconditional. There is no reason other than the fact that we have a common Savior that we need to have the love one another.

5 This showed up as one of the keys to Christian Fellowship. 4

B God loved by sending Jesus.

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II. We demonstrate love in our lives (vv. 10 – 12).

A God loved through sacrifice.

1 The second time that John uses the same construction, “in this is love,” is to build on Jesus’ ministry. Not only did God love us enough to send us his son to teach us about himself, but that’s son would also sacrifice himself to save us.

2 John describes our relationship before we even met Jesus or saw the cross. Before we met God we were hostile toward him and his ways. We did not want to be righteous. Sending was fun and readily available to us.

3 We offered little resistance to the idea of sitting against God. When we came to the cross we saw Jesus and his sacrificial love for the first time in our lives.

4 Not one of us understands how to truly love another person. Oh we call it love and we think it looks like love, but it is selfish. We love as sinners only one that makes us happy or gets us something.

5 The love of a person who does not know Jesus is filled with strings attached. There are reasons to love, and if not, there are reasons not to love.

6 But when we see the sacrificial love of Jesus and we read in the Gospel of John, where Jesus said, “greater love has no man than this that he lay down his life for his friend,” then we are left in the cross and Jesus’ love sacrifice.

7 Amazingly enough, it is the first time we see the kind of love that is no strings attached, unconditional, sacrificial love. It is the ultimate message of God’s love for us. We are so unaccustomed to seeing true unconditional love that we don’t know what to do.

8 It needs to be explained to us why Jesus would die for us when we didn’t deserve it. Not only did we deserve it, but we were not friends of God. It would be understood if a friend was that sacrificial. It would touch our hearts and we would tear up a bit.

9 But the kind of love that is so sacrificial and unconditional that would be offered from the cross not for friends but for enemies and those who hate you, now that is a love note of us had ever seen before.

10 For the second time in John's letter we see this word "propitiation." I have explained this in the sermon where we sought show up elsewhere. It refers to the specific, ultimate, unique sacrificial love that put Jesus on the cross. Because of his ability to be sinless when he died (with sin being the reason humans die), he opened a new door to eternal life for anyone who would take his sacrifice and put it in their place.

11 **Illustration:** one of the best ways to explain this is through mathematics. Let us put it this way: if a positive number represented my sinfulness, and a negative number introduced sinlessness, then Jesus' sacrifice would be like $1,000,000 > +1000$. Thus, Jesus' sinless life pays for more than my life. I am more than saved. However, the only issue with this illustration is that there is no number high enough to show Jesus' sinlessness. It is so much that the entire human race in every time period would be eligible to make Jesus their stand-in sacrifice.

B God's love lives in us.

- 1 This sacrificial, unconditional love is not only transferable in the sense that it brings eternal life to all who choose Christ and take his sacrifice as their stand-in sacrifice for their sin, but it goes so far as to teach everyone who does this that they are to treat others in the same way Jesus treated them.
- 2 Jesus' sacrificial, unconditional love is transferable to the person who receive salvation from sin and into eternal life. Every single one of them who have seen this sinless sacrifice and seeing this powerful sacrificial love is called to use that same unconditional love for every person on this planet.
- 3 Every single person who is saved by Jesus' sacrifice, excepting the challenge to walk in his footsteps, must show that same unconditional and sacrificial love to every person they meet.
- 4 John tries to put it another way for us to understand. A long-standing doctrine of the Bible is that no one can ever see God. Moses is told what he asks to see God's glory that any human being who sees God will automatically die because he is so much greater than us.
- 5 John simply says this: no one has ever seen God. The closest is Moses who got to see God's back as he moves throughout the mountains. But, those who will never see God, the whole human race, can see God in the flesh when they see the sacrificial love demonstrated by Jesus' disciples and followers.

- 6 Although no one has ever seen God, when they see the sacrificial love first demonstrated by Jesus, it is so revolutionary in our world today that they have seen God in his loving nature.
- 7 **Application:** God's love is demonstrated to them by those who follow Jesus. When we love others the way Jesus loved us, we are God with skin on. We are the closest representative of God that unbelievers will ever see. The question we must ask ourselves is if they see God in us, if they see Jesus in our actions and words and thoughts and lifestyle.
- 8 When we become born-again, a new creation, children of God, God actually comes in and lives in us by the power of his Holy Spirit. This means that he is teaching us in the person on the job training how to live like he did when he was here on the earth.
- 9 He is transposing his image and the image of Jesus on to us through a process called sanctification. This is the conforming to Jesus' image that we will do for the rest of our lives here on earth.
- 10 One of the things that the Holy Spirit begins to work in us is a love for everyone that is much like the sacrificial, unconditional love of Jesus. This process is called the perfecting or the completing of that image. This is how God's love is perfected in us. It becomes a complete picture of Jesus as we live for him and as he teaches us how to be like him.

Conclusion

we can see how important the love of God is to us. It is the lifeblood of our existence as Jesus' representatives pure honors. We love others because we have been taught by the Holy Spirit to be conformed to Jesus' image. This means that Jesus' unconditional, sacrificial love demonstrated for us on the cross, that had the power to transform our understanding of love, is being worked into us.

We didn't really know love until we met Jesus Christ. His love transformed us and changed us in such a way that we could no longer keep this unconditional love bottled up inside. We have to share with everybody because that's what Jesus did and that's what we do. We show the world one thing that's lacking in our society and in them, that used to be lacking in us, the eternity granting powerful love of Jesus.

This is what the world does not have. So every moment that they tried to push our buttons and drive us nuts, that is the moment in which the Holy Spirit is perfecting God's eternal and sacrificial love in each of us. We must demonstrated to this world and when they spit in our face, we must impart only Jesus' sacrificial love to them. Let us risk our own selfishness and desires to demonstrate God's love and the moment that they are used to seeing human hate. This is the challenge set before us as the Holy Spirit works God's love into our hearts.