

## Proof of Life: Loving is Knowing Love

1 John 4:7-21

### Introduction

- Last week we saw that one way we love one another is by testing the “spirits” together to see if those teaching us are of the truth or not.
- Today, we look at loving one another once again. Our emphasis today is on knowing the Love of God as the basis for our assurance and source of love as well as the doctrines that undergird that love
- How this connects with 5:1-12
- “Love” is *agape* every time

### Loving is Knowing God (vv.7-12)

- **Loving One Another (v.7-8)**
  - Why? Because love is from God AND loving one another confirms our own relationship with God through Christ
  - This is a statement of nature (as we saw in I John 3:7): His nature overcomes our sinful nature and increasingly becomes the nature of our behavior (cause and effect of Him, His presence)
  - Why? Because if we do not love we bear evidence that we do not know God
  - God is love and His character resides in His children
- **Knowing the Love that is of God (vv.9-10)**
  - God’s love cannot be known apart from Christ (flies in the face of our inclusive culture) – Deals with the secessionists again by asserting what we saw last week (Christ’s deity and incarnation...essential truths)
  - God’s love in Christ, gives us life through Him
  - **John 17:3**, “*And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.*”
  - God’s love is NOT rooted in our love for Him nor is it rooted in our being lovable

- God’s love is rooted in Himself (Holy) and extended to us through Jesus Christ
- The manner (“so”) in which God loved us was through the penal substitutionary atonement (“propitiation”) of Jesus Christ for us (“our sins”)
- **2 Cor.5:21**, “*For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*”
- How is “propitiation” the driving force for our love for others having experienced this as His love for us?

- **The Purpose of Knowing the Love of God is to Love One Another so that the God of love is on Display in His people (v.11-12)**

- The Duty – Loving one another (this “ought to” is rooted in a beautiful display of God-oriented love given to His children)
- The Delight – putting on display, God! (this is not merely exemplary – YOU ARE SAVED FOR GOD!)

### Loving is Knowing (and loving) the Doctrine of the Love of God (vv.13-21)

- **Assurance of the Love of God**
  - Assurance of evidence of the indwelling Spirit
- **Love of the Trinity (vv.13-14)**
  - Flowing out of v.12...
  - The Spirit who leads us into all truth (instructs believers in their love for one another)
  - God the Father who sent the Son
  - God the Son who is the only Savior available for the world
- **Love of the Good Confession (v.15)**
  - Last week we mentioned listening for the good confession in teachers to determine whether or not they are false teachers
  - He has come in the flesh (incarnation) – **v.2**
  - He is God (divinity)
- **Love of Abiding in Truth (vv.16-19)**

- Realizing we Believe because the Spirit was given us: Sealing us for good – **Eph.1:13-14 (v.16a)**
  - Nature of imputed righteousness (**v.16**)
  - Preservation of the Saints: Eternal security with the twist of hope in the face of Judgment – connected with imputed righteousness (**vv.17-18**)
  - **John 3:36**, *“Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.”*
  - Sovereign Grace (**v.19**)
- **Love in case you didn’t get it the First Time (vv.20-21)**
    - Taking the doctrine of the love of God and willingly living it out in obedience to His command to “flesh out” His nature in the body of Christ
    - As a result...
    - Those who teach poor doctrine in the church are at best unloving, perhaps even lost
    - Those who are just mouthpieces without the evidence to abide are unloving if it’s for a season and lost if it’s the cadence of their life
    - This “must also” is more a natural result because of Christ’s indwelling nature, rather than some effort-filled acquisition!

<b>RESPONSE &amp; REFLECTION</b>
----------------------------------

- **To those in Christ...** Do you love the body? The most tangible expression is in the local body of believers. So, in this body, do you hold to biblical truth? Do you have a love for sound doctrine? Do you want that doctrine lived out in your life so that you, in turn, will effectively love your fellow believers and put the unseen God on display before a lost world?
- **To those without Christ...** To know love you must first know the God of love, the God who IS love. This love is rooted in the penal substitution of Christ. Meaning, you deserved God’s wrath (the cross and death) because of your sin. Instead, He poured that wrath on His son for sinners like you and me. If you trust that only Christ is your Savior, dying in your place and taking God’s punishment for you, then you know Christ died for you. By the power of the Holy Spirit, confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, turn from trying to live your own way and go Christ’s way.