I John 4:7-21

Review…

- **LOVE of the Father…**
  - What KIND of LOVE does the Father give – AGAPE – He calls us His Children…
  - A LOVE that gives us VICTORY over SIN – as we ABIDE in Jesus!
- **The Test for LOVE…**
  - How do we KNOW we have received the LOVE of the Father – we are given a TEST…
  - If we act RIGHTEOUS - we are the SONS of God – is we SIN – we are the SONS of satan!
- **The Result of LOVE**
  - CARING – as we follow the example of Jesus LOVE – and lay down our lives for others…
  - CONFIDENT – because when we LOVE others – we know we have the LOVE of the Father!
- **LOVE is War…**
  - Being a CHILD of God – means we are at WAR – with the satan…
  - Therefore we are to TEST what people say – to see what SPIRIT they are form…
  - Knowing we have the VICTORY – because Jesus is GREATER – than the god of this world!

God is LOVE…

- **1st – Knowing LOVE… vs. 7-11**
  - 1st - The LOVE chapter…
    - The word LOVE [ἀγάπη] – is its various forms – is used **324x** in NT - [KJV]
    - When we talk about LOVE – we tend to think of the LOVE chapter - **I Corinthians 13**
    - But LOVE [ἀγάπη] is ONLY used **9x** - in all of **I Corinthians** - [16 chapters – 437 verses]
    - In contrast the word LOVE is used **52x** – in the book of **I John** - [5 chapters – 105 verses]
    - Which is MORE than any other book of the NT - [the next closest is the Gospel of John]
    - And it is used **29x** – just in our passage this morning – **I John 4:7-21**
    - Meaning more than HALF of the uses of LOVE in the whole book – are all right here…
    - So if there is a LOVE chapter in the Bible – this is it!
  - 2nd - LOVE one another… vs. 7-8
    - Beloved - let us love one another - for love is of God!
      - All THREE forms of the word LOVE - are used in this opening statement…
      - BELOVED [ἀγαπητός] - adjective – we who have received unconditional LOVE…
      - LOVE [ἀγαπάω] - verb – should [subjunctive] give unconditional LOVE…
      - LOVE [ἀγάπη] - noun – because unconditional LOVE is from God!
      - This is NOT a command [imperative] – it is a question [subjunctive]
      - John is bringing to a conclusion – what he has been building to for a past TWO chapters…
      - We SAY we BELIEVE in Jesus – and therefore have RECEIVED the LOVE of the Father…
      - But it is easy to SAY – the question is do we PROVE it by LOVING others daily [present]!
    - Everyone who loves is born of God and knows God!
      - When Nicodemus came to speak with Jesus at night - **John 3:3**
      - The Lord explained that in order to be saved – we must be BORN twice…
      - BORN of water - referring to physical birth – our birthday...
      - And BORN from ABOVE – referring to our spiritual birth!
      - We have already seen – those who are BORN again – do not LIVE in SIN – **I John 3:9**
      - But being BORN again – is not just about what we do NOT do – SIN
      - It is also about what we DO – we daily [present] are LOVING one another!

- He who does not love does not know God - vs. 8
  - Anyone [πᾶς] who is not LOVING – does not KNOW [γινώσκω] God!
  - People who do NOT know Jesus – might still LOVE others – but it is CONDITIONAL…
  - They LOVE those who LOVE them back – but will stop LOVING those who hurt them…
  - Those who LOVE conditionally - show they do NOT know [γινώσκω] God…
  - Because God LOVES us unconditionally – no matter what we do – He never forsakes us…
  - And only when we LOVE like Him – do we KNOW [γινώσκω] we are BORN again!
  - **Luke 6:35** – "Love [ἀγαπάω] your enemies… and you will be [the CHILD] of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil."
- God is love!
  - [ὁ θεὸς] the God – [ἀγάπη ἐστίν] LOVE is!
  - This has to be one of the MOST powerful statements in the whole Bible…
  - This is NOT saying that God is LOVING – or that He LOVES us…
  - This is STATING that the DEFINITION of LOVE – is God!
  - If you wanted to describe the word ORANGE to someone – how would you do it…
  - You could TRY to describe it as WARM – or BRIGHT…
  - But the best way would be to show someone an ORANGE – it DEFINES the color!
  - If we want to KNOW what LOVE is – we just need to LOOK at God…
  - He is the very DEFINITION of the WORD – God is what LOVE means!
- The character of God…
  - The LOVE of God is of HUGE importance – because it is NOT the only word to DEFINE Him…
  - God is JUST – meaning He will always do what is RIGHT – **Revelation 16:7**
  - God is HOLY – meaning He will not allow SIN in His presence – **Leviticus 11:44**
  - God is SOVEREIGN – meaning His will always is accomplished – **Ephesians 1:11**
  - But if God was ONLY – JUST – HOLY – SOVEREIGN – He would be a TERRIFYING God…
  - In his JUSTICE He would cast us into HELL – because He is HOLY…
  - And in His SOVEREIGNTY – there would be nothing we could do about it…
  - But it is His LOVE – that give us HOPE – that He will give us GRACE!

o 3rd - Defining LOVE… vs. 9-10
- In this the love of God was manifested toward us…
  - The natural question we ask – what does it MEAN to LOVE one another…
  - The LOVE of God was REVEALED [φανερόω] to us – in TWO different ways!
- God has sent His only begotten Son into the world - that we might live through Him!
  - The FIRST definition – is in the MESSAGE He SENT [ἀποστέλλω] – APOSTLE…
  - The picture is that of an ambassador – a representative of God to a LOST world…
  - Who was His AMBASSADOR – the ONLY begotten [unique] SON…
  - The title Son of God - is used 45x in the New Testament…
  - It is often misunderstood - it has nothing to do with the Jesus being BORN...
  - It describes His relationship to the Father – the SECOND person in the Trinity!
  - When I was dating Jen – I was not always able to be here with her…
  - So I wrote her messages – LOVE letters – to show her how much I missed her!
  - God DEFINED His LOVE for us – even though He was far away…
  - By sending a LOVE letter - the SON coming to give us the MESSAGE of LIFE!
  - **John 3:16** – "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son - that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."
- In this is love - not that we loved God…
  - But that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins!
  - The SECOND definition - is what God DID…

- LOVE [ἀγάπη] – is NOT defined by us LOVING [ἀγαπάω] God…
- LOVE is DEFINED by how God LOVED us – He SENT Jesus as a SACRIFICE for our SINS…
- SACRIFICE [ἱλασμός] – Jesus came to DIE – so that we might LIVE!
- The way to find out how valuable something is - how much would you pay for it...
- If we were only willing to pay TEN pesos for a something - it is NOT worth very much...
- If we are willing to pay TEN million pesos - then it is a VERY valuable!
- How MUCH does God LOVE us – He was willing to DIE to save us…
- Meaning there was NOTHING – no PRICE to high He was not willing to pay…
- To REDEEM us from our SIN – give us the GRACE that would open the door to HEAVEN…
- That is how much LOVE God proved He has for us – through the CROSS!

o 4th – LOVE by example… vs. 11

- Beloved - if God so loved us - we also ought to love one another!
- BELOVED [ἀγαπητός] - we who have received His unconditional LOVE…
- SINCE [not if] God proved His LOVE [ἀγαπάω] for us – through the EXAMPLE of Jesus…
- We OUGHT [ὀφείλω] – to constantly [present] be in DEBT…
- The DEBT we owe is our LIVES – the LOVE of the Father compels us to LIVE for others!
- The world teaches us to live by the MANTRA – look out for number one…
- Every moment we are encouraged to ask what do WE want!
- But this is the OPPOSITE of LOVE – LOVE demands that we LIVE for others…
- We OWE it to Jesus – who PAID for all of our SIN – to follow His EXAMPLE…
- To live our lives in such a way as to CONTINUALLY be a blessing to those around us…
- This is the RESULT of having the LOVE of the Father in us!

- **2ND – SEEING LOVE… VS. 12-16**

o How to see God… vs. 12

- No one has seen God at any time!
  - No one [who is alive] has EVER [at any time] looked at God…
  - Moses wanted to see the FACE of the Lord – **Exodus 33:18**
  - God would let His GOODNESS [כָּל־טוּבִי] pass before Moses - and He would call out His name...
  - But no man can look on His FACE and live - **Exodus 33:20**
  - FIRST - God is so HOLY - sinful man would perish in the pure light of God!
  - **Isaiah 6:5** - "My destruction is sealed - for I am a sinful man and a member of a sinful race."
  - SECOND - Upon seeing God - who would want to go back to an ordinary life!
  - **II Corinthians 12:4** – "He was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words - which it is not lawful for a man to utter." [NLT]
- Evidence of God…
  - But if not one can SEE God – how do we KNOW that God exists…
  - John gives us FIVE ways - that we can SEE God!

o 1st – Through our LOVE… vs. 12

- If we love one another - God abides in us!
  - FIRST - if [subjunctive] we LOVE [ἀγαπάω] each other continually [present]
  - It is PROOF that God is ABIDING [μένω] in us – because we are NOT easy to LOVE!
  - LISTEN – there are MANY days when it is very HARD to LOVE me – just ask my WIFE…
  - I am SINNER – and given the chance – I will PROVE it to you…
  - So in order to LOVE someone like me – DAILY – it takes a supernatural effort!
- His love has been perfected in us!
  - Which allows the LOVE of God to be PERFECTED through our lives…
  - PERFECT [τελειόω] – meaning to be COMPLETE!
  - **Colossians 1:24** – "[I] fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ."

- There was NOTHING lacking in the sacrifice of Jesus – the cross…
- When the work was done Jesus said – it is FINISHED – nothing needed to be added!
- But we were NOT there to see the cross – we did NOT see Jesus die…
- Therefore we are to LOVE one another - so others can see the LOVE of God is us…
- If we LOVE conditionally – like the world - no one notices…
- But when we LOVE unconditionally – like Jesus – people see something different…
- People take notice – through our LOVE they see Jesus in us!

o 2nd – Through the Spirit… vs. 13
- By this we know that we abide in Him - and He in us - because He has given us of His Spirit!
  - SECOND – we KNOW [γινώσκω] that God ABIDES [μένω] in us – because of His SPIRIT…
  - The NUMBER one result of being FILLED with the SPIRIT – is BOLDNESS for Jesus!
  - When Peter and John healed a LAME man – a crowd gathered - FIVE thousands were saved…
  - But then they were arrested – and brought to the Sanhedrin [rulers]
  - These RULERS told them to NEVER to preach in the name of Jesus again…
  - Peter – filled with Holy SPIRIT – replied:
  - **Acts 4:10-12** – "Let it be known… that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth - whom YOU crucified - this man stands here before you whole… Nor is there salvation in ANY other - for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we MUST be saved."
- Boldness shows people Jesus…
  - When the RULERS saw the BOLDNESS of Peter – **Acts 4:13**
  - UNLEARNED – [ἀγράμματος] – literally illiterate…
  - IGNORANT – [ἰδιώτης] – literally idiots…
  - In spite of their ACCURATE estimation of these very ORDINARY men…
  - They were very IMPRESSED at their BOLDNESS - and SAW the men had been with Jesus!
  - When was the last time we were BOLD for Jesus – stood up for the GOSPEL…
  - We are called to be a LIGHT in a dark world – **Matthew 5:14**
  - What we NEED is to ask for the Holy Spirit - to STRIKE the match - light us on FIRE!
  - **Luke 11:13** -"Your heavenly Father [will] give the Holy Spirit to those who ask..."

o 3rd – Through the Son… vs. 14
- And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world!
- THIRD – we have SEEN [not the Father] – but John did SEE Jesus – **Colossians 1:15**
- We might ARGUE – we have NOT seen Jesus – but we do have a TESTIMONY…
- TESTIMONY [μαρτυρέω] – a life TRANSFORMED by Jesus who is our SAVIOR [σωτήρ]
- We cannot SEE the WIND – it is INVISIBLE to our eyes…
- But we can SEE the RESULTS of what the WIND does – a TYPHOON is undeniable!
- People cannot SEE God – but they can SEE the results of God in our lives…
- Who wants to be a TYPHOON – an undeniable FORCE – so people can see Jesus…
- Our TESTIMONY may be the only BIBLE people ever read…
- But it can also be the PROOF they are waiting for – to show them God is REAL!
- **II Corinthians 3:3** – "You are a letter from Christ… written not with pen and ink - but with the Spirit of the living God. It is carved not on stone - but on human hearts." [NLT]

o 4th – Through confession… vs. 15
- Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God - God abides in him - and he in God!
- FOURTH - SEEING God – is about what we SAY…
- If we CONFESS [ὁμολογέω] – to AGREE with what the Bible says…
- That Jesus is the SON of God – the SECOND person of the TRINITY!

- **Romans 10:9** – "If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead - you will be saved."
- RELIGION tries to make SALVATION hard – lots of RULES…
- In order to be SAVED – you must go to our CHURCH – give so much MONEY…
- You have to ACT a certain way – WORSHIP a certain day - DRESS like we do!
- God does NOT make SALVATION hard – He wants EVERYONE to be saved – **I Peter 3:9**
- All that we NEED to do – is CONFESS with our MOUTH that Jesus is LORD…
- Then God will come and ABIDE [μένω] in us – and we will ABIDE [present] in Him…
- And then we can SEE that God is real – EXPERIENCE the LOVE of God in our lives!

o 5th – Through faith… vs. 16

- And we have known and believed the love that God has for us.
  - FIFTH – we SEE God – because we BELIEVE…
  - We have KNOWN [perfect] and BELIEVE [perfect] the LOVE [ἀγάπη] God has…
  - BELIEVE – verb form of [πίστις] – to have FAITH!
- God is love - and he who abides in love abides in God - and God in him!
  - What do we BELIEVE - [ὁ θεὸς] the God – [ἀγάπη ἐστίν] LOVE is…
  - If we ABIDE [μένω] in LOVE [ἀγάπη] – we are ABIDING [μένω] in God – and Him in us!
  - The universe was made of microscopic atoms…
  - It would be easy for to doubt that – because no one had NEVER seen them…
  - But because people BELIEVED – they created microscopes capable of SEEING atoms!
  - It has been said SEEING is believing - but that is NOT true...
  - It is when we BELIEVE in that God is LOVE - that we can finally SEE Him!
  - **II Corinthians 5:7 –** "For we walk by faith - not by sight."

- **3RD – THE END OF LOVE… vs. 17-19**

o 1st – Boldness… vs. 17

- Love has been perfected among us in this:
  - PERFECTED [τελειόω] – to COMPLETE – or bring to a CONCLUSION or END…
  - The END of LOVE [ἀγάπη] in our lives – is for us to have BOLDNESS!
- That we may have boldness in the day of judgment - because as He is - so are we in this world!
  - May have [subjunctive] BOLDNESS [παρρησία] - fearless confidence or assurance…
  - On the DAY of JUDGEMENT – referring to the Great White Throne – **Revelation 20:13**
  - Because we LOVE [present] – the same way Jesus LOVES – while we are still in this WORLD!
  - We know in our hearts that we make mistakes - a LOT of them – EVERYDAY…
  - The thought of coming before a righteous Holy God can be terrifying…
  - But do NOT miss that because of LOVE - we can come BOLDLY to the Throne…
  - Because it is NO longer the THRONE of judgement - it becomes the THRONE of GRACE!
  - **Hebrews 4:16** – "Let us therefore come BOLDLY [παρρησία] to the Throne of Grace…"

o 2nd – No FEAR… vs. 18

- There is no fear in love - but perfect love casts out fear - because fear involves torment!
  - The END of LOVE – is the END of FEAR [φόβος] – to have dread or terror
  - COMPLETE [τέλειος] LOVE [ἀγάπη] – throws away [present] FEAR [φόβος]
  - Because what we FEAR [φόβος] is the TORMENT [κόλασις]
  - **Matthew 25:46** – "These will go away into everlasting punishment [κόλασις]."
  - People live their whole lives in FEAR of the TORMENT…
  - The ETERNAL judgement that is the REWARD for all who have SINNED – **Romans 6:23**
  - But we have NO reason to FEAR – the LOVE of Jesus paid for ALL our SIN…
  - Our FEAR was THROWN away – along with our SIN – through the CROSS…

        - The END of LOVE – is the END of FEAR – because we are FORGIVEN!
    - But he who fears has not been made perfect in love!
        - But anyone who still FEARS [present] what will happen on the Day of Judgment…
        - Has not yet experienced the PERFECT [τελειόω] LOVE [ἀγάπη] of God!
        - If someone is here today – and you are NOT sure happens when you DIE…
        - If there is even a little FEAR – doubting if God will forgive you…
        - Today is the DAY – this is the TIME – to CONFESS and BELIEVE in Jesus…
        - So that His LOVE can fill you – FEAR will leave you – as God comes to ABIDE in You!
        - **II Corinthians 6:2** – "Now is the accepted time. Behold - now is the day of salvation."
- 3rd – Relationship… vs. 19
    - We love Him - because He first loved us!
    - The END of LOVE – is we have a RELATIONSHIP with God…
    - We LOVE [ἀγαπάω] Him – in RESPONSE to Him LOVING [ἀγαπάω] us!
    - When God created MAN – He put TWO trees in the garden of EDEN – **Genesis 2:17**
    - The tree of LIFE and tree of KNOWLEDGE - to eat of the SECOND tree meant certain death…
    - Why put THIS tree in a world that was VERY good - why even give Adam the CHOICE…
    - It all comes down to LOVE – there can be no LOVE with a CHOICE!
    - God DESIRES to have a RELATIONSHIP with us – but it is our CHOICE…
    - Jesus DIED for us – while we were still SINNERS - to show us God is LOVE…
    - God does not want anyone to go to hell – but we can CHOOSE to – by rejecting His LOVE…
    - Or we can RESPOND to His LOVE - and CHOOSE to LOVE Him back…
    - We LOVE Him – because we see how much He first LOVED us!

- **4TH – OBEDIENCE FROM LOVE… VS. 20-21**
- 1st – No HATRED… vs. 20
    - If someone says - I love God - and hates his brother - he is a liar!
        - If [subjunctive] someone says – I LOVE [ἀγαπάω] God…
        - But at the same time – HATES [present] his BROTHER – he is a LIAR!
        - Because it is NOT about our WORDS – it is about our ACTIONS…
        - WORDS do not reveal what is in our HEART – but our ACTIONS do…
        - LOVE is an EASY word to SAY – but the HARDEST word to LIVE!
    - If we do not love our brother whom we has seen - how can we love God whom we cannot see!
        - We are TESTED to see if we have LOVE in our hearts – by ONE another…
        - LOVING each OTHER is HARD – people hurt us – say mean things to us…
        - But when we are FILLED with the LOVE of God – it allows us to do the IMPOSSIBLE…
        - We can LOVE the UNLOVABLE – and FORGIVE every wrong!
        - And that LOVE is how we KNOW we can do something even more IMPOSSIBLE…
        - We can LOVE someone we have never SEEN – we can LOVE God!
- 2nd – The COMMAND… vs. 21
    - This commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also!
    - The COMMAND – to LOVE [ἀγαπάω] God – we should [subjunctive] also LOVE each other!
    - This CHAPTER – this BOOK – arguably the BIBLE – is all about LOVE…
    - FIRST - how much God LOVES us – SECOND - how we should LOVE others…
    - Not just when we FEEL like it – or when people DESERVE it…
    - The COMMAND is that we ALWAYS love EVERYONE…
    - We are IDENTIFIED as children of God – through our LOVE…
    - Because we have RECEIVED the unconditional LOVE that comes from God!
    - **John 13:35** – "All will know that you are My disciples - if you have love for one another."