

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 from...
 - 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 θεός] 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 [φανερώω] 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 [כֶּלֶס-טוֹבִי] 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 – [ιδιώτης] – 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 θεός] 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.”

o 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

o 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!

o 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.”