

God is Love

Lesson for Sunday, April 6, 2025

TEXT: 1 John 4:7-12

INTRODUCTION:

- ⇒ How would you describe love? Someone asked a group of children one time to define love and here are some of their replies:
 - *Love is what makes you smile when you are tired.*
 - *Love is what is in the room at Christmas if you stop opening presents and listen.*
 - *You really shouldn't say "I love you" unless you mean it. But if you mean it, you should say it a lot. People forget.*
- ⇒ Children have a fresh way of saying things, but the most important perspective on love comes from God.
- ⇒ In today's text, John takes us to the very origin and source of love: God Himself. Love is His very nature, and acting in love is His essential character.

BIBLE STUDY:

1. Love has its origin in God (1 John 4:7-8).
 - a. The word love (agape) dominates 1 John 4:7-5:3. It appears over 30 times. John makes two observations about love in these verses.
 - b. First, loving others gives evidence we have been born of God (vs. 7).
 - i. John gives us a simple exhortation, "Love one another." Why are we to love one another?
 - ii. Because love is from God. Real love, true love, always has its source in God. And whoever loves with a "God kind of love" gives evidence that they have been born of God.
 - iii. Regeneration – salvation – unites spiritually dead, selfish hearts with God's living heart so that His life becomes our life and His love our love.
 - c. Second, loving others gives evidence we know God (vs. 8).
 - i. Not only do those who love with a God-like love give evidence that they have been born of God, but they also demonstrate in an on-going habit of life that they know God. They don't know about God – they know Him.
 - ii. Note John's logic in these verses:
 1. God is love.
 2. Those who have been born of God and know God are God's children.
 3. God's children have God's nature.
 4. God's children therefore will love.
 - iii. Love's source is in God, and as we love like God loves, we give evidence that we are connected to the Source.
2. Love is seen in the atoning death of Jesus (1 John 4:9-10).
 - a. It is one thing to talk about love. It is something else to show love.
 - b. First, God sent His Son that we might live (vs. 9).
 - i. John says that the love of God was put on full display – John actually saw it! He was an eyewitness.
 - ii. John had a first-row seat for the incarnation. And why did Jesus come? He came "that we might live through Him." What does this mean?

- iii. It means to be born of God and to know God. It means to experience God's love and to share that love with others.
 - c. Second, God sent His Son that He might die (10).
 - i. This verse reminds us that God took the initiative in loving us, and it addresses the magnitude of that love in the gift of His Son.
 - ii. God did not send an angel; He sent His Son. God did not send His Son to live; He sent His Son to die.
 - iii. John says, "Love consists of this."
 - 1. God loved us before we loved Him.
 - 2. God proved His love by sending His Son.
 - 3. God sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.
- 3. Love is perfected in us when we love others (1 John 4:11-12).
 - a. Often, the world's description of Christians is not "loving." While the world may never understand or accept Christianity, there is no excuse for Christians not being loving in all their interactions.
 - b. First, note that God's love for us inspires us to love others (vs. 11).
 - i. John is making a "greater to lesser" argument. "If God loves us in this way, then we ought to love one another."
 - ii. John's point: Loving others is what we are supposed to do.
 - c. Second, note that our love for others brings God's love to perfection (vs. 12).
 - i. John is saying that no one can see God in His essence, but we can see God through the lives of those who demonstrate His love to others.
 - ii. When we love one another, it is proof that God abides in us, and that His love is perfected – or brought to complete maturity.

APPLICATION/DISCUSSION:

- ⇒ Use your discussion time to discuss practical ways we should be showing the love of God in our everyday lives.
 - Make it practical! How do we treat people like waiters and waitresses when they get our order wrong?
 - Do we drive like we love the Lord? ☺
 - Do we treat guests to our class in a way that shows them God's love?
- ⇒ Most importantly, we show the love of God when we share the Good News!

NEXT WEEK'S TEXT: 1 John 4:13-21