

“God is Love”

(1Jn 4:7-14)



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Overview of our passage



Theme: God is love

☞ 1Jn 4:7-14

Doctrine: There is only One Savior

Application: Since we received God's agapē, we are to emulate God's agapē to others, especially to believers

Scripture Reading



1 John 4:7-14 (NASB)

7 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 8 The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love. 9 By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. 10 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. 11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. 12 No one has seen God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us. 13 By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. 14 We have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.

Exposit: 1Jn 4:7



7 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.

- ❧ At this portion of the letter John repeats himself
- ❧ "Beloved": 5x out 6 times John calls us this
 - ❧ "beloved" along with John's other designations (little children, fathers, men, etc.) is also a good marker to know when John is reinforcing or introducing a new point
- ❧ "love is from God" [more on this]
- ❧ "let us love one another": 5x he exhorts us; 3x in chapter 4 (v.7, 11, 12)
- ❧ I believe God's Word repeating itself is by divine design
 - ❧ We all have some form of A.D.D
 - ❧ Short attention span
 - ❧ Lack of discipline
 - ❧ Lack of exercising our minds (through reading)
 - ❧ Lack of focus

“love is from God”



- ❧ ‘love’ is the familiar ‘agapē’
- ❧ “from God” can also be rendered “from heaven where God dwells”
- ❧ Man was originally made in the image of God
 - ❧ Man unconditionally loved (pre-Fall)
 - ❧ Adam loved Eve as his own body
- ❧ Post-Fall, man can only demonstrate moments of agape
 - ❧ Paul touches on that in Rm 5: 5:6-8

6 For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. 8 But God demonstrates His own love (agapē) toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.
- ❧ Point in v. 7 is: As believers we are to more frequently demonstrate agapē since we have God’s Spirit in us, especially towards believers

Exposit: 1Jn 4:7



(cont'd) 7b... everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.

- ❧ “everyone who loves is born of God and knows God”: evidence of salvation
 - ❧ If we have love for God and love for believers, that is evidence that we’re saved!
- ❧ Contrast is true in v. 8...

Exposit: 1Jn 4:8



8 The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

- ❧ If you do not love God or believers, no evidence of salvation
- ❧ You can't say you're a Christian, but don't love God or His children
- ❧ Because God Himself is love and loves His own and His own love Him back
 - ❧ Jesus spoke to His opponents on this:
John 8:42 (Jesus speaking to the scribes and Pharisees who tried to trap Him)
42 Jesus said to them, "**If God were your Father, you would love Me**, for I proceeded forth and have come from God, for I have not even come on My own initiative, but He sent Me.
 - ❧ Thus, if you are saying God is your heavenly Father, you would love Jesus His One and Only Son,
 - ❧ And because you love Jesus, you obey His command to love one another
- ❧ "for God is love" [more on this]

“for God is love”



- ❧ The Scriptures tell us many attributes of God (not exhaustive)
 - ❧ God is **with us** (Emmanuel)
 - ❧ God is our **helper** (helps us in our weaknesses)
 - ❧ God is our **refuge** (our safe haven)
 - ❧ God is a **fighter** (fights our battles)
 - ❧ God is **holy** (set apart, sinless, moral perfection)
 - ❧ God is **righteous** (God is Light, blameless and upright in conduct and speech)
 - ❧ God is **just** (will judge with equity)
 - ❧ God is a **consuming fire** (a jealous God, will not tolerate the worship of other gods)
 - ❧ God is **gracious and compassionate** (desires that none should perish, but repent)
 - ❧ God is **faithful** (will fulfill His promises; including punishing sin)
 - ❧ God is **Savior** (the Savior of all mankind)
 - ❧ God is a **tester** (tests those who dwell on the earth)
 - ❧ And last but not least, God is **love**

“for God is love”



- ❧ V.8 is a common verse to be taken out of context
- ❧ If we're going to speak about God, all of His attributes needs to be in balance
- ❧ Some will take this verse “for God is love” then say it applies to everyone!
- ❧ In context
 - ❧ This is not about God loving (agapē) everyone
 - ❧ It's about believers who were recipients of God's love and are now being reminded that God (who is love) loves them
- ❧ WARNING: Not to water down the gospel and make God a love sugar daddy!
 - ❧ “God loves you”
 - ❧ “God loves everyone”
- ❧ Likewise, if we say that we're a Christian, our attitude and life needs to be in balance with who God is
- ❧ Hence why John says,
“the one who does not love does not know God, for God is love”
- ❧ We can't claim Christianity and have no love for God or those whom He loves

Exposit: 1Jn 4:9



9 By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him.

- ❧ “this” is referring to the Father sending the Son in v. 9b
- ❧ When the Son came, we believed
- ❧ As a result, we were born again through the Holy Spirit
- ❧ God’s purpose for saving us:
 - ❧ God sent the Son, so that we might believe and live through the Son

Exposit: 1Jn 4:10



10 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.

- ❧ “this” again is still referring to the Father sending the Son
- ❧ God did not send the Son because He saw that we love God
 - ❧ This verse alone proves Armenian view is false
 - ❧ Proves Augustine view is false
- ❧ God didn't choose us because He saw that we would choose Him!
 - ❧ Jesus told His disciples “you did not choose Me, but I chose you” (Jn 15:16)
 - ❧ Same is true for those of us who came to faith

Exposit: 1Jn 4:10



10 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.

❧ God sent the Son because He loved us. Period!

❧ Again Paul's verse quoted earlier in Rm 5:

6 For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. 8 But God demonstrates His own love (agapē) toward us, in that **while we were yet sinners**, Christ died for us.

❧ And because God (the Father) loved us, He sent Jesus to save us

❧ And because God (the Father) sent Jesus to save us, Jesus became

❧ "the propitiation for our sins"

❧ We covered propitiation in our past studies

❧ Brownie points for those who can tell me what propitiation is

❧ The Father sent the Son, the Son came to save us, and to save us, God gave us grace to believe! (Eph 2:8)

Exposit: 1Jn 4:11



11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another

- ❧ “if” is better rendered “since”
- ❧ “ought” again is ‘opheilo’ which means indebted to, obligated
- ❧ John repeats that we are indebted and obligated to love believers
 - ❧ Not optional (you can’t opt-out)

Exposit: 1Jn 4:12



12 No one has seen God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us.

∞ “No one has seen God” [and for this I’d like to cross reference John’s gospel]

“No one has seen God”



John 1:16-18

16 For of His (Jesus) fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace. 17 For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ. **18 No one has seen God (the Father) at any time; the only begotten God (Jesus) who is in the bosom of the Father, He (Jesus) has explained Him (the Father).**

- ❧ “No one” cannot be referring to angels
 - ❧ The angels and Satan presented themselves before God in the account of Job
 - ❧ The cherubim/seraphim/living creatures are before the throne
- ❧ Thus, “no one” must be referring to man
- ❧ No man has ever seen the Father, except for the man, Jesus Christ
- ❧ Jesus came from the bosom (arms) of the Father
- ❧ Jesus came to explain the Father to us

“No one has seen God”



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- ❧ Jesus came from the bosom (arms) of the Father
- ❧ Jesus came to explain the Father to us
- ❧ This is precisely what Jesus told Nicodemus in John chapter 3...

“No one has seen God”



John 3:9-15 (Nicodemus questioning the necessity of the new birth)

9 Nicodemus said to Him, “How can these things be?” 10 Jesus answered and said to him, “Are you the teacher of Israel and do not understand these things? 11 Truly, truly, I say to you, we (the Father and Son) speak of what we know and testify of what we have seen, and you do not accept our testimony. 12 If I told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? **13 No one has ascended into heaven, but He who descended from heaven: the Son of Man.** 14 As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; 15 so that whoever believes will in Him have eternal life.

- ❧ “no one has ascended into heaven” is equivalent to “no one has seen God at anytime”
- ❧ Again “no one” has to be referring to man
- ❧ No man has ascended (gone up) into heaven, except the man Jesus who descended from heaven (came down to earth)

Exposit: 1Jn 4:12



☞ Back to v. 12

“12 No one has seen God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us.”

TRUTH: Only the man Jesus has seen the Father, came from the Father's bosom (arms), is from and seen heaven, and no other man came to earth to tell us about heavenly things

- ☞ Any man or religion that claims otherwise, is to be rejected outright!
- ☞ And when we believed the gospel message, God's lives in our hearts through faith and that love will be perfected in us... when?
 - ☞ In our glorification!

Exposit: 1Jn 4:13



13 By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit.

- ❧ “this” in v. 13 is in reference to the Holy Spirit
- ❧ “know” is ginōskō
- ❧ “abide” is remain (or belong)
- ❧ “Him” is the Father
- ❧ “He” is the Son
- ❧ “He has given us of His Spirit” [I’d like to reference John’s gospel on this]

“He has given us of His Spirit”



John 14:16-17 (Jesus comforting His disciples before He was arrested)

16 I (Jesus) will ask the Father, and He (the Father) will give you another Helper, that He (the Holy Spirit) may be with you forever; 17 that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you.

✧ In this passage, the Father is sending the Holy Spirit in response to the Son's request

But later in this same account, Jesus goes on to say...

“He has given us of His Spirit”



John 16:5-11

“But now I (Jesus) am going to Him (the Father) who sent Me; and none of you asks Me, ‘Where are You going?’ 6 But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. 7 But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper (the Holy Spirit) will not come to you; but if I go, **I (Jesus) will send Him to you.** 8 And He (the Holy Spirit), when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment; 9 concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me; 10 and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father and you no longer see Me; 11 and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.

✧ In this passage, the Son is sending the Holy Spirit

✧ Now back to v.13...

Exposit: 1Jn 4:13



Back to v. 13, when John says, “He has given us of His Spirit”

- ✧ He is referring to both the Father and the Son (who is One) who gave us His Holy Spirit
- ✧ God’s Promise: If we were given the Holy Spirit, we can be confident through our union with the Holy Spirit that we abide in God and God abides in us and God’s love will be fully perfected (matured) in us in our glorification!
- ✧ We might not have equated “He has given us His Spirit” in v. 13 and “His love is perfected in us” back in v. 12 to eternal security, but they certainly are!
- ✧ If God began a work in you or if God began to love you...
- ✧ God will finish that work, God will fully love you unto glorification!

- ✧ Now onto our last verse for today...

Exposit: 1Jn 4:14



14 We have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.

- ❧ “we” is in reference to the original 12 apostles (less Judas)
- ❧ “have seen” is in reference to eye witness account of Jesus’s works and miracles
- ❧ Jesus’s works is proof that the Father sent Jesus [John speaks on this in ch. 10]
- ❧ “Savior of the World” [we’ll end with this]

Jesus's Works



John 10:31-39

(Jesus after the Good Shepherd parable during the Feast of Dedication)

31 The Jews picked up stones again to stone Him. 32 Jesus answered them, "I showed you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you stoning Me?" 33 The Jews answered Him, "For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy; and because You, being a man, make Yourself out to be God." 34 Jesus answered them, "Has it not been written in your Law, 'I SAID, YOU ARE GODS'? 35 If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken), 36 do you say of Him, whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'? 37 If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; 38 **but if I do them, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father.**" 39 Therefore they were seeking again to seize Him, and He eluded their grasp.

“Savior of the World”



☞ John goes on to say “the Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world”

TRUTH: There is only One Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ

Acts 4:12 And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved.

☞ Another way to say this, there is no other Savior, there is only One Savior

☞ ‘name’ is ‘onoma’ which means authority (LORD)

Matthew 1:21 She (Mary) will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.”

☞ God’s ‘onoma’ (authority) is given to the man Mary named Jesus

1 Timothy 2:5 For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, 6 who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time.

☞ “one mediator” is equivalent to “one Savior”

“Savior of the World”



1 Corinthians 8:5-6

For even if there are so-called gods whether in heaven or on earth, as indeed there are many gods and many lords, 6 yet for us there is but **one God, the Father**, from whom are all things and we exist for Him; **and one Lord, Jesus Christ**, by whom are all things, and we exist through Him.

- ☞ “us” referring to believers
- ☞ All things exist “**for** the Father”
- ☞ All things exist “**through** the Son”
- ☞ “one Lord” = “one Savior”
- ☞ If we exist for the Father, then we can only live through the Son whom the Father has chosen to be THE SAVIOR OF THE WORLD!