

# That our joy may be complete – 1 John

1 John 4:7-21

“Love that drives out fear” – April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2020



## Introduction

In Ephesians 2, Paul reminds us we all begin ‘dead in our sins’ ([Eph. 2:1](#)) but are made ‘alive together with Christ’ because of His great love ([Eph. 2:4-5](#)). How can we know we have passed from death to life *spiritually*? God wants us to live in confidence – to know with certainty where we stand with Him. Today, John shows us how love can drive out fear.

## Pray

Before you begin, take some time to ask God to help you understand His word, to reveal what needs to change in you, and for the grace to follow Him in response. To help, use [Psalm 119:33-40](#) as a prayer for God to open His word up to you.

## Sermon Outline

- I. Where does love come from? (4:7-8)
- II. What does God's love look like? (4:9-10)
- III. What is the result of experiencing God's love? (4:11-21)

## Read & Discuss

- 1) Read [1 John 4:7-8](#)

John says love comes *from* God and God *is* love. How can this be? Sometimes we can do something as ‘checking it off the list’ or because ‘it’s our duty’ – we may even do the right things but it’s not what we *want* to do or our heart is in. What does the fact that God *is* love say about His heart toward the child of God?

As 4:8 shows us that “God is love,” 1:5 reminds us that “God is light.” Are there ways you tend to focus on one of those attributes of God at the expense of the other? Why is it important we see God as *He* reveals Himself in Scripture instead of what we *think* or *feel* like God should be?

Additional Reading: Romans 1:18-19, Isaiah 6:1-6

- 2) Read [1 John 4:9-10](#)

The world is filled with definitions, opinions, and confusion about love which means we need to listen carefully to what God says love is. Take a moment to read vv9-10 again – how does God ‘manifest’ (make visible) His love for us? It’s easy for us to gloss over what John says (especially if we’ve a Christian for a while) and assume ‘we get it.’ For us to know and *believe* God’s love for us ([4:16](#)) God’s Spirit must open our eyes. What does the fact that

Christ had to *die* for us say about the seriousness of our sin and the depth of His love for us? Ask God to open our eyes to *taste and see* the truth about His love and goodness. One of the tools God gives us to meditate and connect our head with our heart is bible-saturated music. Take a moment, listen and sing the song "All I have is Christ" – you can access the song by [clicking here for Sunday's playlist](#).

Additional Reading: Romans 5:8, John 3:16

3) Read 1 John 4:11-21

The result of experiencing God's love and being 'born of Him' (v7) is that we *will* love others. In talking about this result, John describes Christian love in three ways:

*Christian love is active* - 'Perfect love' is not love without flaw – it is love put into action. Perfect love is not just *talking* about loving others but getting off the couch and loving someone in practical ways ([3:17-18](#)). In this sense love is *completed* or *reaches the goal* for which God has for it (see [1 Peter 2:24](#) as an example of this). If you've *received* God, are you being a cul-de-sac of His love or a conduit of it? What are ways you can love others today?

*Christian love is rooted in truth* – Remember the false teachers ([2:26](#)) who sought to deceive. They claimed to have access to God, to know God by a special knowledge of mystical experience. Not so John testifies! We have a relationship with God *through* Jesus His Son ([v14-15](#)). What is the relationship between what we *believe* and how we live? Note in [v17](#), that 'by this' (the tool) which gets off the couch to love is to 'know and believe the love God has for us' ([v16](#)). What are ways we can better *know and believe* God's love for us?

*Christian love builds confidence* – The more we rely on God, step out in faith, and love others in practical ways, the more evidence we have that proves to us and confirms the genuine nature of our faith. In that sense, perfect love (us *actually* loving someone) casts out fear. Why? Because we see we are hidden 'in Christ.'

Additional Reading: 2 Peter 1:10

### **Prayer of Response**

1) After hearing God's Word, what sin do I need to *confess*? From what do I need to *repent*?

2) How should my life be lived this week based on what I have heard? What should I *understand, believe, desire, or do*?

Spend time praying together in response to God's word asking for His help and greater faith to follow Him in the week to come.

If you missed the sermon on Sunday or would like to listen again, visit our website at <https://fbcum.org/sermons-new/>

**\*Next week's sermon text:** we turn to **1 John 5:1-5 "Overcoming the World"**