

**A Practical Study of 1 JOHN  
“Fellowship With The Father”  
Study Number Ten**

**1 John 4:7-21**

**Fellowship is Generating “Agape” Love**

**INTRODUCTION:**

The epitome of God’s love is seen in the story of the prodigal son but I had never seen the prodigal son recorded like this:

Feeling footloose and frisky, a featherbrained fellow forced his fond father to fork over the farthings and flew far to foreign fields and frittered his fortune feasting fabulously with faithless friends. Fleeced by his fellows in folly and facing famine, he found himself a feed flinger in a filthy farm. Fairly famishing, he fain would have filled his frame with foraged food from fodder fragments. “Phooey, my father’s flunkies fare far finer!”

The frazzled fugitive forlornly fumbled, frankly facing facts. He fled forthwith to his family. Falling at his father’s feet, he forlornly fumbled. “Father, I’ve flunked and fruitlessly forfeited family favor.”

The farsighted father, forestalling further flinching, frantically flagged the flunkies to fetch a fatling from the flock and fix a feast.

**The fugitive’s faultfinding brother frowned on**

**fickle forgiveness of the former folderol.**

**But the faithful father figured “Filial fidelity is fine, but the fugitive is found! What forbids fervent festivity? Let flags be unfurled! Let fanfares flair!”  
(laughter)**

**Love is hard isn't it?**

**One frustrated father was heard to say:**

**WE SHOULD HAVE HAD RABBITS  
INSTEAD OF KIDS . . .  
AT LEAST WE WOULD HAVE GOTTEN  
ONE GOOD MEAL OUT OF THE DEAL!**

**(laughter)**

**One guy was saying to another one he says, “You told me it was love at first sight when you started going out with Jane, but I don't see you around together anymore.” He said “I took a second look.”  
(laughter)**

**She says, “He pays so little attention to me that if I died I don't think he'd be able to identify the body.”**

**Frustration of love but bring it down to the church.  
Listen to this:**

**A very wise old minister had kept on his desk for over a half century a notebook labeled COMPLAINTS OF MEMBERS. Whenever any member of his church came in to complain about somebody else's conduct, the old**

pastor would nod and pick up the notebook, saying, “Thank you, I’ll just write it down so I can take it up officially with the church board.”

The book and the poised pen worked. The opportunity was offered hundreds of times, but nothing was ever written in the book.

A man was a member of a church where they were having a lot of difficulty. He became so nervous that he couldn’t speak. He went to the doctor, and the doctor gave him some tranquilizers. Two days later he went back to the doctor and asked, “Doctor, what did you give me?”

He replied, “I gave you some tranquilizers.”

“Well, I don’t want any more of them.”

The doctor asked, “Why not?”

He replied, “They made me act friendly with people I don’t like at church.”

(laughter)

Oh we quit preachin’ and go to meddlin’ tonight. We are in some tough stuff here.

## FELLOWSHIP IS GENERATING “AGAPE” LOVE

Sometimes the hardest thing in the world is to show Jesus’ love to those who are the closest to us.

We are different and sometimes we let those differences come between us. It is my prayer that Jesus will ultimately draw us together.

**There are 3 Greek WORDS that describe LOVE so they never had any problem with definition.**

- 1. First of all there is the love EROS which means I love your body. It is the lustful, physical kind of love.**
- 2. And then there is PHILEO. I love you because you are my friend, because you care about me. I express my human emotions towards you. A family kind of love. Phileo.**
- 3. And then there is AGAPE. This is God's kind of love. It is a love that will sacrifice one's personal interest for the benefit of others and can only be produced by the Holy Spirit. And it is that love which binds a Christian marriage together.**

**I always remind couples who are going to go ahead and get married with somebody who is not a Christian that they are also giving up something else and that is God's kind of love on both sides coming together in a relationship.**

**Let me say it this way. This kind of love cannot be produced in a disobedient heart that is out of fellowship with God. That is how beautiful this love is.**

**Can I give you an illustration of it? In John 21 you have the most beautiful play on words and if you did not have Greek you would not really feel it but now that you know the definition of the three words, let me**

play the drama of John 21 before you.

Now remember, they have been fishing all night, they have not caught anything and the Lord has breakfast on the shores. This is after the resurrection. And so PETER jumps in, swims to shore. And then the eight of them are sitting there eating breakfast. And JESUS at the breakfast turns to Peter and He says to Peter (and I am going to use the Greek word):

1. Peter, do you AGAPE me?

Now listen, you can almost predict the response from Peter because he has always been totally adequate. Going down to the garden of Gethsemane he says “I don’t care who else flicks it in, I will always be there.” You can count on ol’ Pete. Usually anytime anybody asks him a question, his answer would be “I am adequate and I can handle it.” But between that encounter and this one, he has failed miserably in the denial of Christ. And in that failure his heart was deeply broken.

And you know the breaking of that self-sufficient, arrogant heart makes him respond this way:

“Lord, you know all things; I PHILEO you.”

You see you have to recognize your limitations before you are ready for the Spirit of God to produce it in you.

**2. Second question. “Peter, do you AGAPE me?”**

**Second response: “Lord, you know all things; I PHILEO you.”**

**You see he did not have the self-sacrificing love or he would not have done what he did at the crucial time in the denial. But this is the biggiee.**

**3. Third time: “Peter, do you PHILEO me?”**

**And I can see a grown man with tears coming down his cheeks. “Lord, you know all things; you know at least I PHILEO you, I am your friend.”**

**And so when we talk about love maybe you have the feeling inside that you are a very loving person tonight. Do you have this kind of love that is described here by John in this beautiful passage?**

**Peter is honest and he is transparent and following this experience, filled with the Spirit of God he preached a mighty sermon and several of them in fact. And was indeed the rock, he was the man who stood and preached the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and glorified the Lord Jesus in the remaining years of his ministry.**

**PAUL felt so strongly about this kind of love that to the CORINTHIAN ASSEMBLY filled with all kinds of problems and carnality and lawsuits and immorality**

and difficulty, right in the middle of it, that beautiful chapter, 1 Corinthians 13, “I want to show you a more excellent way” and then he describes agape love.

Now let’s jump right into the text and watch this come out of the pages of Scripture.

**v. 7 Beloved, let us be loving one another, because love is from God; [*these words are AGAPE*] and everyone who is loving has been born of God and is knowing God.**

You see when His life is flowing unhindered through me, His love will be seen “**BECAUSE LOVE IS FROM GOD.**”

What John is saying is that I am only manifesting my relationship to God when I am loving one another. Love is that which marks those who have “**BEEN BORN OF GOD.**” A genuine new birth experience will manifest itself in love.

Now that little phrase “**BORN OF GOD,**”

We have seen it in:

chapter 2:29

and chapter 3:9.

And it is going to be in:

chapter 5:1,

chapter 5:4,

and chapter 5:18.

Now let me kind of make a summary statement right here early so I can be sure to catch you before you doze off.

**LOVE STEMS FROM A REGENERATE NATURE AND ALSO FROM FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD WHICH ISSUES IN KNOWING HIM.**

**LOVE STEMS FROM A REGENERATE NATURE (I have been born of God) AND ALSO FROM FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD WHICH ISSUES IN KNOWING HIM (I get to know Him better and better as that love, which He produces, flows through me).**

Alright let me get a little more personal and make it applicable to this particular series of studies. Now this is me speaking again.

Flowing out of fellowship is going to be a love that will be revealed to those around me. Just maybe our inability in interpersonal relationships goes directly back to the fact that we do not know anything about fellowship in communion with the Lord. And that love is stifled and stopped in our selfishness.

It is the fruitage of my union with the Lord Jesus

**Christ. This love will flow unhindered.**

**Now can I say something to you lest I increase your frustration level tonight? You cannot plan on being loving. This is one thing you cannot say, “You know I’m really not doing too good on this, I’m going to go out and start loving everybody.” Forget it.**

**Revelation 2:4 he says to the Ephesian church**

**I have this against you, that you have left your first love.**

**Now I will make it a little bit stronger:**

**This love is the result of a relationship. Your ability to love is a manifestation of your spiritual maturity and the intimacy of your fellowship.**

**It is possible to:**

**be drifting out of fellowship,**

**and to become:**

**lukewarm,**

**complacent,**

**and indifferent in this relationship in being a person who is known by love.**

Now John is a little bit stronger than I am right there. Look at verse 8.

**v. 8 The one who is not loving has not come to know God, because God is love.**

You cannot say out of one side of your mouth I am fellowshiping with God. I am having communion with God. I love God. I know God and God is a God of love and then not love. That is all he is saying there.

The absence of love is evidence that a person does not know God, John says. It is an indication of the lack of relationship.

You can see God's love in creation, we have seen it.

You can see God's love in providing for man with the free will.

You can see God's love in redemption's story and the sacrifice of His Son.

And you can see God's love in the life beyond the grave one of these days when you check out and you go there.

Do you really love with a passion of Jesus Christ? Do you really have that longing desire to manifest the love of Christ to others?

Barbara Johnson always hits a nerve and in her new book on *Pack Up Your Gloomees in a Great Big Box* she

**says this is some real honest hymn singing:**

**If I were entirely honest every time I sang a hymn or gospel song, here's how some of the old titles would come out:**

**I Surrender Some  
Oh, How I Like Jesus  
He's Quite a Bit to Me  
Take My Life and Let Me Be  
There Is Scattered Cloudiness in My Soul Today  
Where He Leads Me, I Will Consider Following  
Just As I Pretend to Be  
When the Saints Go Sneaking In**

**--Source unknown**

**\* \* \***

**YOU ARE NOT WHAT YOU THINK,  
BUT WHAT YOU THINK, YOU ARE.**

**\* \* \***

**And somebody put it this way:**

**May those who love us, love us.  
And those who don't love us,  
May God turn their hearts.  
And if He doesn't turn their hearts  
May He turn their ankles,  
So we will know them by their limping.**

**--Source unknown**

(laughter)

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Stanley Jones in his book *Victory through Surrender* says:

Jesus is the Great Affirmation. He affirms the most radical proposition ever made to the mind of man, the proposition that the present unworkable world order, based upon greed and self-seeking, be replaced by God's order—the kingdom of God based upon self-giving service and love.

**v. 9 In this the love of God was made clear in our case, because His Son the only begotten one God has sent into the world in order that we might live through Him.**

How do you know God is love?

John 3:16 It is almost the same there, isn't it?

John 3:16

God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son.

**“IN THIS THE LOVE OF GOD WAS MADE CLEAR IN OUR CASE,”** and then here is the statement **“BECAUSE HIS SON THE ONLY BEGOTTEN ONE GOD HAS SENT INTO THE WORLD IN ORDER THAT WE MIGHT LIVE THROUGH HIM.”**

**You know something? You now have 3 REASONS for the incarnation, did you just put that together in your thinking? You might have missed it if you have forgotten. Let me refresh you.**

**What was the first reason for the incarnation?**

**1. 1 John 3:5**

**And you know that that one was made visible in order that He might [*what?*] take away sin.**

**What was the second reason?**

**2. 1 John 3:8 It says:**

**God was made visible, in order that He might destroy the works of the devil.**

**And what is this one tonight?**

**3. So that “WE MIGHT LIVE THROUGH HIM.”**

**Boy, you talk about love. Put those three things together. He came:**

- 1. TO TAKE AWAY SIN,**
- 2. TO DESTROY THE WORKS OF THE DEVIL,**
- 3. “THAT WE MIGHT LIVE THROUGH HIM.”**

**What a fabulous manifestation of love.**

**And all the promises of God's love are signed in the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son.**

**One poet put it this way:**

**O, help me, Lord, to understand  
How great is Thy rich grace.  
I should have died upon the cross,  
But Thou didst take my place.**

**“IN ORDER THAT WE MIGHT LIVE THROUGH HIM.”**

**v. 10 In this is love, not that we have loved God, but that He Himself loved us and sent His Son to be the satisfaction for our sins.**

**Same word that we had back in chapter 2, verse 2, He is the mercy seat, He is the place where justice is satisfied by the death of His Son and the blood sprinkled on the mercy seat.**

**John says in this verse if you want to see a real picture of love, it is not in our love for God but in His love for us. He is showing that love by sending His Son into the world to take care of the sin problem by making a sacrifice of Himself.**

**v. 11 Beloved, if God so loved us also, we ourselves are [what? There is the third time for that phrase too] under moral obligation to be loving one another.**

**You see if God loved us like this then the response on our part is we have something that is demanded of us in return. And that which is demanded of us in return is that we love one another. That is all that God asks of us, that we love one another. That is our assignment.**

**Now can I refresh you also on this little phrase “UNDER MORAL OBLIGATION” because as a believer walking in fellowship with God now I have 3 MORAL OBLIGATIONS so far?**

**1. Chapter 2, verse 6**

**we are “under moral obligation” to be walking around even as Christ walked around.**

**2. Chapter 3, verse 16**

**we are “under moral obligation” on behalf of our brethren to lay down our souls.**

**3. And here**

**we are “UNDER MORAL OBLIGATION TO BE LOVING ONE ANOTHER.”**

**I homilitized it for you to make it easy, we are under moral obligation to be:**

**LIVING like Jesus,**

**LAYING down our lives like Jesus,**

**And LOVING just like God in Christ has done for us.**

**We are to be LIVING, we are to be LAYING down and we are to be LOVING just like Jesus Christ.**

**You cannot plan it. It is the level of your maturity that is revealed as a fruit of your fellowship with the Father.**

**Now let me say just a couple of more things about this love from the standpoint of definition.**

**This love is IMPARTIAL, it is INNOCENT, and it is INVOLVED.**

**First of all, it is IMPARTIAL in that it does not play favorites.**

**It is INNOCENT in that it does not have some ulterior motive.**

**And it is INVOLVED in giving itself sacrificially for others.**

**And I want to tell you those three things right there are the illustration of a godly marriage. That is what a Christian marriage ought to look like.**

**It is IMPARTIAL, it is INNOCENT and it is INVOLVED in giving itself sacrificially to the one loved.**

**Steve, I think that is the material for next year's marriage conference. Steve and I work on our marriage conferences every year and we formulate the curriculum and he and I have so much fun doing this and then I get to share with him what I have done in the teaching. But these thoughts just came to me that this might be something we want to track on for a while.**

**v. 12 No one has beheld God at any time; if we are loving one another, God is abiding in us, and His love has been brought to its fullness in us.**

**Isn't that a great verse? Now in relationship to the build up, there is your KEY VERSE tonight. Oh man, just feast on that.**

**Concentrating on my fellowship with the Father in turn produces a self-sacrificing type of love through me for brothers and sisters in the family, as well as those who do not know Jesus Christ as Savior.**

**You see I meet so many people who are concerned over their lack of love for their brothers and sisters in the body of Christ and for their lack of passion for a lost**

and dying world. Could it be that you are out of fellowship and you have not concentrated on it to the point that the level of your maturity has caused you to realize the most important thing in the world is giving yourself sacrificially in love for others.

This verse tells me something. The capacity to love grows with the depth of fellowship. The capacity to love grows with the depth of my fellowship and intimacy with Jesus Christ.

I have yet to hear a believer say “oh I am having such a hard time loving, I guess I better get more intimate with the Lord.” You know and that is really the bottom line. That is the problem and that is the right response. “Oh I am having a problem with love. I must intensify my communion and my fellowship with the God of love so that my love reaches beyond these shallows where I am at this moment into the depths of the ocean and I become a person characterized by God’s kind of love.”

**“NO ONE HAS BEHELD GOD AT ANY TIME; IF WE ARE LOVING, GOD IS ABIDING IN US, AND HIS LOVE HAS BEEN BROUGHT TO ITS FULLNESS IN US.”**

They can see Jesus Christ in us as our maturity continues to grow, the level of maturity.

Can I give you two illustrations? I was chasing through my computer files and I came up with a couple of stories that really kind of touched me.

In 1765 John Fawcett was called to pastor a very small congregation at Wainsgate, England. He labored there diligently for 7 years, but his salary was so meager that he and his wife could scarcely obtain the necessities of life. Though the people were poor, however, they compensated for this lack by their faithfulness and warm fellowship. Then Dr. Fawcett received a call from a much larger church in London, and after lengthy consideration decided to accept the invitation. As his few possessions were being placed in a wagon for moving, many of his parishioners came to say goodbye. They realized that a man of his abilities could not soon be replaced. Others would gladly take the pastorate in the city, but few would sacrifice to work in their needy community. Even though the farewell sermon had already been preached, some of the people refused to accept the decision of their pastor. Once again they pleaded with him to reconsider. Touched by this great outpouring of love, he and his wife began to weep. Finally Mrs. Fawcett exclaimed, "O John, I just can't bear this. They need us so badly here." "God has spoken to my heart too!" he said. "Tell them to unload the wagon! We cannot break these wonderful ties of fellowship."

You see we do not see that today, that intimate, deep love. Other than here on the mountain, we sure do feel it here.

But this story also touched me deeply.

**Years ago the ship known as The Express of Ireland sank, and many passengers were drowned. Among those who perished were 129 Salvation Army officers. When their bodies were recovered later, not one had on a lifebelt! Survivors told how these servants of God had reacted with calmness and courage when informed that the vessel was sinking. There were not enough life preservers to go around, so they bravely removed theirs and gave them to people they felt were not prepared to meet the Lord. Some witnesses told of hearing those gallant crusaders say, “We know the Savior, so we are ready to die!” Prayerfully, the courageous soldiers of the cross remained on deck until the waters engulfed them and they were welcomed into God’s eternal Haven. No wonder General Booth’s slogan, OTHERS, took on special significance when he sent that one-word telegram to every Salvation Army outpost in the world.**

**We do not see a lot of that and it was refreshing to see again some things that speak of this kind of love.**

**Alright the questions we are raising in this particular study so we can stay on track are:**

- 1. Are you walking in fellowship with the Father?**
- 2. Is your heart open before the Lord?**
- 3. Is your life generating AGAPE love?**

**And those are really the three big issues I am laying before you tonight in the exposition of these verses.**

**Are you walking in fellowship with the Father.**

**Is your heart open before the Lord?**

**And is your life generating AGAPE love for others?**

**v. 13 In this we are knowing that we are abiding in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit.**

**And that is the secret to the love. The fruit of the Spirit is AGAPE, the very first word.**

**v. 14 And we ourselves have beheld and we are bearing witness that the Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world.**

**Do you know where that phrase occurs?**

**“SAVIOR OF THE WORLD”**

**That is in John 4:42. You talk about the greatest manifestation of love in the earthly life of Jesus Christ it is when he confronts an outcast Samaritan woman, reveals to her Himself as the Messiah and many come to know Christ because of her witness and many more because of the Savior’s Word. A great manifestation of love. And they called him “the Savior of the world” the very same phrase.**

**v. 15** Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God is abiding in Him--he is abiding in God.

**v. 16** And we ourselves have known and have believed the love which God is having in our case. God is love, [*he said it in verse 8 he is saying it again in verse 16*] and the one who is abiding in love is abiding in God, and God is abiding in Him.

How did God manifest His life? Well I just made a list.

God manifested His love in creation.

He manifested His love in giving you a free will to choose.

God manifested His love in His constant care for you.

He manifested His love in the death of His Son.

He manifested His love in the life beyond the grave.

So I put it this way. His love is manifested to you:

IN CREATION,

AT THE CROSS,

IN HIS CHOICE,

IN HIS CARE,

## **AND IN HIS COMING AGAIN.**

**Manifestations of a sovereign God's love for you and I as hell bound sinners.**

**v. 17 In this the love has been brought to completion which is in us, that as a result we are having boldness in the day of judgment; because just as that one is, also we ourselves are in this world.**

**Now we run into that phrase BOLDNESS. When are you going to need boldness? When you stand at the judgment seat of Christ and your life is assessed.**

### **2 Corinthians 5:10**

**We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ.**

**Did you realize that part of that assessment is the level of your love that is produced by the Spirit of God. That is what this is telling me. And I can know if the passion of Christ beats within my breast that I am one who can have boldness in the presence of the Lord, because the Lord knows my heart and that He is producing that kind of love in me so I can stand there boldly before Him.**

**v. 18 Fear is not in love; but perfect love is casting out fear, because this fear is having to do with punishment. And the one who is fearing has not been brought to completion in this love.**

You see FEAR has the thought of punishment. Fear has the thought of a lack of trust. Fear is an anxiety that we are going to have a judgment. And mature love casts out fear.

**Proverbs 29:25**

**Fear of man brings a snare,  
but whoever puts his trust in the Lord shall be safe.**

Fear casts out or suppresses the love which once you had for yourself and for others.

**v. 19 As for us, let us be loving because He Himself first loved us.**

Just a little command from the inspired pen of the apostle,

**“LET US BE LOVING”**

**Bill Hybels in his book *Who You are When No One's Looking* says:**

**I did not realize how much I had bought into today's misplaced values until, during my junior year in college, I was shocked awake by a professor's statement: "True personal fulfillment never comes through self-gratification."**

**"That is the boldest, most radical, most countercultural statement I have ever heard," I thought. "It flies in the face of everything I've been taught." But, I began to realize, it does not fly in the face of Jesus' teachings.**

**Do you want to hear that one more time?**

**"True personal fulfillment never comes through self-gratification."**

**True personal fulfillment comes in sacrificial service to others.**

**v. 20 If anyone should say, "I am loving God," and is hating his brother, he is a liar; for the one who is not loving his brother whom he has seen, he is not able to go on loving God whom he has not seen.**

**John paints the picture, black or white, there is no grey in between where you kind of float around in a mystical sense that you are doing the best you can. He draws the line and makes it clear and the sword creates great conviction.**

**“IF ANYONE SHOULD SAY, ‘I AM LOVING GOD,’  
AND IS HATING HIS BROTHER, HE IS A LIAR;  
FOR THE ONE WHO IS NOT LOVING HIS  
BROTHER WHOM HE HAS SEEN, HE IS NOT ABLE  
TO GO ON LOVING GOD WHOM HE HAS NOT  
SEEN.”**

**Do you really love others? Do you have a passionate  
desire to see others come to know Jesus Christ as  
Savior? Are you a good friend?**

**Somebody said, “A friend never gets in your way unless  
you are falling.” I love that.**

**Another friend wrote:**

**A friend is a person of great understanding  
Who shares all our hopes and our schemes,  
A companion who listens with infinite patience  
To all of our plans and our dreams,  
A true friend can make all our cares melt away  
With the touch of a hand or a smile,  
And with calm reassurance make everything  
    brighter,  
And life always seem more worthwhile--  
A friend shares so many bright moments of  
    laughter  
At even the tiniest thing--  
What memorable hours of lighthearted gladness  
And pleasure this sharing can bring!  
A friend is a cherished and precious possession**

Who knows all our hopes and our fears,  
And someone to treasure deep down in our hearts  
With a closeness that grows through the years!

That is Christian love and friendship.

To wrap it up, verse 21.

**v. 21** And this commandment we are having from Him, that the one who is loving God should also be loving his brother.

A commandment straight from the throne, you ought to have vertical love that manifests itself in a horizontal love.

Stephen Covey feeling so strongly about this in *Principle-Centered Leadership* says:

Interpersonal quality means giving those twelve hugs a day--physical hugs, emotional hugs, verbal hugs to the people around us--so that those deposits are constantly being made.

How many lessons did I get? Eleven.

## **CONCLUSION:**

**LESSON #1: Love for one another is a normal outgrowth of a relationship with the God of love.**

**LESSON #2: Love is a manifestation of the fact that we have experienced the new birth.**

**LESSON #3: The absence of love is an indication of the fact that we have never come to know God.**

**LESSON #4: We have learned that Jesus Christ came to take away sin, to destroy the works of the devil, and so that we might live through Him.**

**LESSON #5: Because of God's unconditional love for us, we have a moral obligation to be loving one another.**

**LESSON #6: The way people see God residing in our lives is by the love they see flowing from our lives.**

**LESSON #7: Fellowship with the Father is generating the fruit of agape love.**

**LESSON #8: Love is a fruitage of the Spirit who indwells us when we become His children.**

**LESSON #9: As we live with Christ, our love grows more perfect and complete.**

**LESSON #10: Fear is a manifestation of incomplete or immature love.**

**LESSON #11: If love is filling and flowing from our hearts, we can have boldness in the day of judgment.**

**Don Hawkins who is a radio personality has written a book called *Never Give Up*.**

**What a tragedy! Sir Winston Churchill--the man whose encouraging words, "Never give in, never, never give in" galvanized and motivated a nation--lay on his deathbed. As he thought about the conditions in the world in which he had played such a heroic role, he sighed, "There is no hope."**

**And with that he died.**

**There is hope and hope comes in healing in interpersonal relationships, in being freed up to forgive to be people who can turn around and be Jesus to people who desperately need your love.**

**Dan Allender wrote a book called *Bold Love*. It was just released this last year. And he says:**

**To forgive another means to cancel the debt of what is owed in order to provide a door of opportunity for repentance and restoration of the broken relationship.**

**There are many elements of forgiveness, including three aspects that will be highlighted in the next three chapters. Forgiveness involves hungering for restoration, revoking revenge, and pursuing goodness. If we are to understand what it means to forgive another person, we must be clearer what it means for**

**God to express these three elements of mercy to us.**

**Forgiveness is far more than a business transaction; it is the sacrifice of a heartbroken Father who weeps over the loss of His child and longs to see the child restored to life and love and goodness.**

**If forgiveness, fulfilled in reconciliation, is to occur, evil must repent with clarity and conviction.**

**Fellowship is generating AGAPE love.**

**And our KEY VERSE, verse 12:**

**“NO ONE HAS BEHELD GOD AT ANY TIME; IF WE ARE LOVING ONE ANOTHER, GOD IS ABIDING IN US, AND HIS LOVE HAS BEEN BROUGHT TO ITS FULLNESS IN US.”**

**One of my all time favorite authors and one whom I tried to read if he has written on the passage is that dear pastor who was kind of lost to the limelight to men like Spurgeon and G. Campbell Morgan and some of the other great preachers but this man writes with a depth and a clarity that gives great spiritual understanding. F.B. Meyer says:**

**When there is faith in the Lord Jesus, there will always be love toward all the saints, because faith is the faculty of taking God into the heart. Faith is God-receptiveness. Faith appropriates the nature of God as the expanded lung does the mountain air or as the**

child does the parent's gift. Faith, like a narrow channel, conveys God's ocean fullness into the lagoons of human need. Wherever, therefore, faith links the believer to the Lord Jesus, His nature, which is love pure as mountain dew begins to flow into the waiting, expectant heart, and to flow out then towards all the saints. The love of God knows no favorite sect, singles out no special school, but as the sun and wind and nature breathed and shine alike on all, it is cosmopolitan and universal. You cannot imprison it within the walls of any one Christian community. It laughs at your restrictions and with equal grace raises up witnesses and standard bearers from all parts of the church. Thus, as we become more like God, our love overleaps the barrier of our little pond and passes out to greet all saints and to extend itself on the great world of men.

## Study Number Ten

### Fellowship is Generating “Agape” Love

#### 1 John 4:7-21

#### **KEY VERSE 4:12**

**v. 7** Beloved, let us be loving one another, because love is from God; and everyone who is loving has been born of God and is knowing God.

**v. 8** The one who is not loving has not come to know God, because God is love.

**v. 9** In this the love of God was made clear in our case, because His Son the only begotten one God has sent into the world in order that we might live through Him.

**v. 10** In this is love, not that we have loved God, but that He Himself loved us and sent His Son to be the satisfaction for our sins.

**v. 11** Beloved, if God so loved us also, we ourselves are under moral obligation to be loving one another.

**v. 12** No one has beheld God at any time; if we are loving one another, God is abiding in us, and His love has been brought to its fullness in us.

**v. 13** In this we are knowing that we are abiding in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit.

**v. 14** And we ourselves have beheld and we are bearing witness that the Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world.

**v. 15** Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God is abiding in Him—he is abiding in God.

**v. 16** And we ourselves have known and have believed the love which God is having in our case. God is love, and the one who is abiding in love is abiding in God, and God is abiding in Him.

**v. 17** In this the love has been brought to completion which is in us, that as a result we are having boldness in the day of judgment; because just as that one is, also we ourselves are in this world.

**v. 18** Fear is not in love; but perfect love is casting out fear, because this fear is having to do with punishment. And the one who is fearing has not been brought to completion in this love.

**v. 19** As for us, let us be loving because He Himself first loved us.

**v. 20** If anyone should say, “I am loving God,” and is hating his brother, he is a liar; for the one who is not loving his brother whom he has seen, he is not able to go on loving God whom he has not seen.

**v. 21** And this commandment we are having from Him, that the one who is loving God should also be loving his brother.

#### NOTES

**QUESTIONS:**

**1. Read 1 John 4:7-21 and in your own words pull out the main thought of this passage.**

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**2. What are we commanded to do in verse 7 and why?**

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**3. Why did God send His Son into the world, according to verse 9?**

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**4. What is our “moral obligation,” according to verse 11?**

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**5. What does John mean by the phrase “His love has been brought to its fullness in us” in verse 12?**

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**6. What does a confession that “Jesus is the Son of God” prove, according to verse 15?**

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**7. What does John mean when he says “fear is not in love” in verse 18?**

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**8. What command are we given in verse 21?**

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**9. Which verse in the study has meant the most to you?**

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**10. What lesson have you learned from this study?**

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## **LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:**

**What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?**

**LESSON #1: Love for one another is a normal outgrowth of a relationship with the God of love.**

**LESSON #2: Love is a manifestation of the fact that we have experienced the new birth.**

**LESSON #3: The absence of love is an indication of the fact that we have never come to know God.**

**LESSON #4: We have learned that Jesus Christ came to take away sin, to destroy the works of the devil, and so that we might live through Him.**

**LESSON #5: Because of God's unconditional love for us, we have a moral obligation to be loving one another.**

**LESSON #6: The way people see God residing in our lives is by the love they see flowing from our lives.**

**LESSON #7: Fellowship with the Father is generating the fruit of agape love.**

**LESSON #8: Love is a fruitage of the Spirit who indwells us when we become His children.**

**LESSON #9: As we live with Christ, our love grows more perfect and complete.**

**LESSON #10: Fear is a manifestation of incomplete or immature love.**

**LESSON #11: If love is filling and flowing from our hearts, we can have boldness in the day of judgment.**

**ADDITIONAL NOTES:**

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