

Knowing God: Studies in 1, 2, 3 John

The Measure of Love I John 4:7-21

1. The Call to Love

Love for brothers and sisters in Christ is a mark of genuine faith in Jesus.

The love we are called to exercise for each other is based on the desire to care for those God cares for, because of who God is and what we have received from Him in Christ. It is a choice we need to make to invest our time, and our lives, in each other as the family of God.

Christian love involves taking the initiative to know, to care, to encourage and to help fellow believers.

2. The Character of Love

Christian love is to be genuine, practical, and in truth.

John is telling his readers that it is not loving to allow false teaching about the holiness of God and identity and necessity of personal saving faith in Jesus into the church.

Biblical love is never divorced from truth about God and truth about us

3. The Cost of Love

God loved us first and sent His Son to take our place on the cross.

The cost of God's love was immeasurable. And it is this costly love shown to and received by everyone who has turned from their sin and acknowledged Him Lord of their lives that we as believers are called to reflect in our love for each other.

4. The Confidence of Love

God's abiding in the believer and the evidence of love gives us confidence to stand before God on the Day of Judgement.

The love of God finds its perfecting in believers, as it gives us confidence that we are forgiven and accepted before Him.

Study Questions

1. What reasons does John give to motivate believers to love one another? (vv. 7, 11)
2. How are love for the brothers and personal assurance connected? (vv. 8, 20-21)
3. What are the practical implications of the fact that God is love? (vv. 9)
4. Words like “rely” and “confidence” are words of great importance in our present world where so many are filled with doubt and insecurity. How does this passage enable us to lay a foundation for true spiritual confidence? (vv. 17-18)
5. In what way does God’s initiative-taking love in Christ challenge our thinking about who we should love and how we should express such love?
6. According to this passage, how would you define “The Complete Christian”? (vv. 12-16)
7. How does this passage enable us to evaluate the validity of claims to know God?
8. In what way does this passage undermine Christian elitism?