

## **1 John 4:7-8 God Is Love**

**7 Beloved, let's love one another; for love is from God, and everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. 8 The one who does not love does not know God, because God is love. 9 By this the love of God was revealed in us, that God has sent His only Son into the world so that we may live through Him.**

John is going to show us a fruit that will be present in the life of the true believer; love for one another. Love toward our brothers and sisters in Christ is a genuine expression of faith in our lives as believers. Our love for us demonstrates our relationship with God, and this should be growing in our lives

### **7 Beloved, let's love one another;**

John begins by demonstrating His love by letting his congregations know that they are loved by him, calling them "Beloved". And he demonstrates his commitment to loving them, by saying "let's love", including himself in his encouragement to "love one another".

### **What kind of Love?**

What is this kind of love that we're supposed to have for our brothers and sisters especially, and for the lost? The love of Christ! The same kind of love that Jesus demonstrated toward us. Jesus loves unconditionally. **Romans 5:8 8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.** We should therefore make the conscious, willful choice and decision to love one another in truth and in action. The best description of the kind of love that we're supposed to have for one another is of course in 1 Cor 13:4-8. **4 Love is patient, love is kind, it is not jealous; love does not brag, it is not arrogant. 5 It does not act disgracefully, it does not seek its own benefit; it is not provoked, does not keep an account of a wrong suffered, 6 it does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; 7 it keeps every confidence, it believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 8 Love never fails;** In our flesh, we can no more accomplish this kind of love than to sprout wings and fly like a bird. This kind of love is inspired by the Holy Spirit.

### **Love is Central**

Love is central to the Christian life. Whatever we do in our Christian life is service to Jesus, Col 3:23-24 **23 Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord and not for people, 24 knowing that it is from the Lord that you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.** And, if everything that we do in all aspects of our life is for the Lord, and service to Him, then whatever we do must be done in love. 1 Cor 13:1-3 **1 If I speak with the tongues of mankind and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 If I have the gift of prophecy and know all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. 3 And if I give away all my possessions to charity, and if I surrender my body so that I may glory, but do not have love, it does me no good.** Why are even these amazing spiritual gifts like prophecy sufficient to know all mysteries and all knowledge, and faith strong enough to move mountains useless without love? Because the only legitimate use of Spiritual Gifts is in loving service to the Father's Will. Everything that we do in Christ must be done in love--agape love.

### **A Choice to Obey Christ by Loving**

Jesus gave instructions to the apostles, and us, to love one another. He even commanded us to "love one another" in John 13:34 **34 I am giving you a new commandment, that you love one another; just as I have loved you, that you also love one another. 35 By this all people will know that you are My disciples: if you have love for one another."** So, we see something really neat here: John gets to encourage himself and his congregation to love one another in obedience to Christ's command, out of love for the love for Jesus that was so central to John's life.

### **How can we increase in this kind of love?**

an outward flow from inward growth of the fruit of the Spirit according to Gal 5:22-23 **22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law** The Holy Spirit will produce this love in us for our Brothers and

Sisters. Love that is NOT an emotion or feeling, but a choice. Love must be demonstrated through a willful choice, a choice to obey Jesus.

### **for love is from God**

Jesus, God the Son, taught John to love. John's often called the Apostle of Love, because it's one of the major themes of his walk with Jesus. The love of Jesus transformed this Son of Thunder who wanted to according to Luke 9:54 **54 And when His disciples James and John saw this, they said, "Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, just as Elijah did** displaying a completely wrong attitude that had to be rebuked by Jesus in verse 55 into the apostle of love through the example of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit.

### **The Holy Spirit produces love in us teaches us to love**

The power to love like Jesus did was made possible by the work of the Holy Spirit in John's life, just like it is in ours. According to Galatians 5:22, **"The fruit of the Holy Spirit is love."** So, the Holy Spirit produces love in us. The Holy Spirit is God. He has the power to create love in our hearts through faith in Jesus. Galatians 5:6 says, **"In Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith working through love."** This means at least that love comes from faith. Faith **"works through love."** That's why love is a requirement. The Holy Spirit loves to glorify the all-satisfying dependability of Christ and his Word.

### **The character of God's love**

So, if it's God's love flowing through us that John is talking about, The Holy Spirit comes into our lives, making our spirit alive John 6:63 **63 It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh provides no benefit; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit, and are life.** Christ dwells in our hearts by the power of the Holy Spirit through faith, and allows us, as Eph 3:19 says **19 and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled to all the fullness of God.** God's love is immeasurable, surpassing even our ability to comprehend. John 3:16 **16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.** That agape sacrificial love that was so great that it caused God to give His only son to provide the perfect atonement, paying for our sins that we may be saved, and not perish in hell. And it's this self-sacrificial love that He is trying to bring out in us toward our brothers and sisters in Christ.

### **everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God.**

Since love is a demonstrated action, we return love to God through willful obedience to God's Word. John tells us that if we love God, we will obey God's commands 1 John 5:3 **For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.**

God requires us to love one another precisely so that we can show our brothers and sisters, and the world how much He loves them, by allowing His love to pour through us.

### **8 The one who does not love does not know God, because God is love.**

The one not loving has not known God. If we don't have the Holy Spirit stirring us up in love to let our faith in God work itself out in love for our brothers and sisters, then we need to as 2 Cor 13:5 says **5 Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you—unless indeed you fail the test?** So we must examine ourselves to see if we pass the test based on the evidence of the Holy Spirit's work within us. As true faith works itself out in the love that we show to our brothers and sisters in Christ, we know that we are In Christ.

### **"because God is love."**

Why will love for our brothers and sisters in Christ come about in our hearts automatically if we are Truly believers? Because it is a fruit that will automatically be produced by the Holy Spirit working through us. Our God will refine us and guide us into more revelation of Him, and His plan for our lives, as we allow Him to transform us into the very image of His son, by allowing His nature to love to be expressed through us, and reflect His image and passion for people.