

## **God Loves, So We Love 1 John 4vs10-12**

### **10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us**

John emphasizes in this verse that godly love is not something which originated with man. Instead, it is an attribute of God that we understand only because He reveals it to us. It's His love that provides a way to salvation, not our acceptance of that love! Our love for Him is only a result of His love for us.

### **not that we loved God**

If God's love for us depended on something we have done, then grace would no longer be grace, we'd be saved by grace + works, which is a misunderstanding of God. If it depended on us, who are sometimes unfaithful to God, then our salvation would be conditional; it is not. We must walk in Him, because He is Life, and the Eternal Life. Ephesians 1:4-5 **4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love 5 He predestined us to adoption as sons and daughters through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,** A true understanding of salvation by grace through faith leaves God in control as author of salvation, and us surrendered to God's will, trusting by faith in Him alone. That's where we're supposed to live our lives as Christians. Scripture is clear that God does expect us to walk in the salvation that He has given us! 1 John 1:6 **"If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth."** Many people fool themselves into thinking that they have a relationship with Jesus, when they walk their own way, and "do anything they want". They think that this is freedom, but in fact it's just slavery to their sins. That path does not lead to heaven.

### **and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.**

God sent Jesus to our world as an act of love to be the "propitiation" for our sins. The word "propitiation" involves a payment or sacrifice to cover the cost of our sins. Christ provided the only sufficient payment, once for all, to cover the sins of the world. Jesus' life, and especially His death on the cross reveal God's love toward us. Rom 5:8-10. **8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.** Christ died for us, as a full expression of God's love toward us. God has sent His one and only son into the world, so that we might be saved, and so that we might live through Him.

### **11 Beloved, if God loved us in this manner.**

John's speaking of the agape, self-sacrificing, selfless love that pours out continually from our Heavenly Father. We should be motivated to love one another by the love-debt that we owe God. The proper response to God's demonstrated love is love for one another.

### **we also are obligated to love one another."**

This is the second obligation that John has mentioned in this epistle. The other was in 1 John 2:6 **6 the one who says that he remains in Him ought, himself also, walk just as He walked.** So, we have an obligation to imitate Jesus' walk, which of course was motivated by Love for the Father, and a desire to do His Will, and Love for us! It's the reaction that we should automatically have, if we really understand the Love that God has lavished on us, that we should be called His children. We should *want* to love one another, because God has loved us. This is not a passing obligation or one that is to be fulfilled occasionally. The Greek implies it is a "continuous obligation" to love, just as God has for us.

In Romans 13:8 8 when Paul says to **Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law** it is about the obligation to keep paying on the love-debt that we can never repay, because of God sending Christ to die for our sins. We are to always owe others our love. See Romans 12:9-13, Paul encourages us to be sincere in this love, genuine, not fake. We're to use the spiritual gifts and natural talents that we have to minister to each other's needs properly out of a spirit of love, serving and teaching one another, exhorting each other to good works. Everyone is to be loving everyone else, and to be the recipient of everyone else's love in turn. This is what the Body of Christ is supposed to look like! It's what it's supposed to be! This is the body of Christ at its best!!

### **12 "No one has ever seen God."**

John says “No one has ever seen God. Why does John bring up all this business about seeing God in the context of God Loving us, our love for God, and our love for one another? If we really love God, then we can’t help but love those who love Him; our brothers and sisters in Christ. 1 John4:20 **20 If someone says, “I love God,” and yet he hates his brother or sister, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother and sister whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen.** John wants them to understand that if they really love God, as they say that they do, then sincere, genuine love will develop between themselves and other believers, and this mutual love will result in unity in the church.

**“If we love one another.”**

Loving each other and ministering to each other’s needs is a choice, an act of will that demands some self-sacrifice. And this is in the present tense he indicates that demonstrating love toward our brothers and sisters in Christ is something that should be continuously practiced, and is a love that is in action daily. We are required by God to love one another, and it was the only new commandment that Jesus ever gave. John 13:34-35 **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.”** It is a love toward fellow brothers and sisters in the family of God which is mutually expressed in the community of the Church. And if we love the unseen God, we will love the members of His family that we do see, our brothers and sisters in Christ

**“God abides in us.”**

John affirms again that only those who whose love motivates them to action on behalf of other believers are truly born again. Or, said another way; those who are born again will have love for their brothers and sisters in Christ, born out of their love for Jesus. And so, loving other Christians becomes evidence to ourselves that the Holy Spirit is present and active within us.

As we learn to have faith in Christ and have sincere love for other believers in obedience to Him, because we love Him, then Christ dwells in us, abides with us. As Paul prayed for the Ephesians in 3:17-19 **so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.** As we allow the Holy Spirit to cause us to submit to the will of God, God’s abiding presence in our lives influences us more and more to love as we surrender to His will.

John 15:4 **4 Remain in Me, and I in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself but must remain in the vine, so neither can you unless you remain in Me. 5 I am the vine, you are the branches; the one who remains in Me, and I in him bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.** And so, our love in service for one another aids our abiding relationship with God, as we obey Him in this as in all things. We will not be fruitful for God’s Kingdom without abiding in Him. And God is in our midst, abiding with us, as we, as a Church serve each other. And as we live in Community and Unity as Jesus taught us to, this has the effect of causing the world to see God in us as a community of believers loving one another, and it causes them to say—“I want to be a part of that”.

**“His love has been made perfect in us.”**

As God’s love is expressed in our interactions and interrelationships within the body of Christ, we find the Presence of God more and more evident with us. As it is expressed in local congregations, God’s presence and love is revealed more. So, as we obey in love toward God and expressed toward one another, we increase both in fruitfulness and in confidence when we stand before God. When we love others, God’s love for us has reached its full effect in creating the same kind of love as his in us. Not only that, we get to act as Christ’s Hands and Feet on earth, continuing His ministry of revealing the Kingdom of God to a hurting world. It is God’s love that is expressed through us. Let us strive toward the goal of loving each other with the love which Jesus has already shown us.