

1 John 4:13-16
“Love and sound doctrine”

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I. Intro

At the start of the 4th chapter, I offered an outline of the chapter starting in verses 7-21 and it was all based upon repeated phrases and words that form a chorus:

- 1. Vs. 7-12 The exhortation to “love one another”
- 2. Vs. 13-16 The connection between Love and sound doctrine seen in the words “abide in Him and he in us”
- 3. Vs. 17-21 The perfection of love seen in the confidence of the believer before God at the judgement. And her the words repeated is “perfected love”

John’s focus over the last few weeks has been on three aspects of God’s love seen in God’s gift to fallen humanity in sending His only Son, Jesus:

- 1. **THE GIFT**: “*God gave His best*” First, God gave His Son Jesus.
- 2. **THE PURPOSE OF THE GIFT**: “*God gave His Son to die*” Second, the measurement of this great love of God in sending God the Son as a gift is seen in Jesus’ cost to accomplish the mission for humanities reconciliation, HIS DEATH! God’s love didn’t stop at a teacher or an example in sending Jesus instead He went all the way to Jesus’ death. And not any death, a death reserved for the worst of sinners.
- 3. **WHO THE GIFT WAS FOR**: “*God gave for sinners*” Finally, we realize that Jesus was willing crucified for those who did all that they could to crucify Him. The measure of God love is realized in those three aspects:
 - **THE GIFT**: “*God gave His best*”
 - **THE PURPOSE OF THE GIFT**: “*God gave His Son to die*”
 - **WHO THE GIFT WAS FOR**: “*God gave for sinners*”

These three aspects underscore the greatness of God’s love as we recognize that God’s gave His best to make the ultimate sacrifice for the worst of humanity! We saw last week that this “Love of God” has six aspects to that must find its way in our love of one another:

- 1. It is spontaneous in its source
- 2. It is universal in its scope
- 3. It is long-suffering in its intensity
- 4. It is self-sacrificing in its character
- 5. It is aggressive in its action
- 6. It is constant in its duration

All of that brought the reader to the understanding that “loving one another” with God’s Love is far more than a mere “**OBLIGATION**” it is instead an expression of our **DEVOTION** and “**APPRECIATION**”. The reason for this is that as believers we have been impacted by the love of God three ways:

- **God’s love has done something to us**

- God's love has done something for us
- God's love has done something in us

And because of those facts **God's love has no choice but NOW MUST do something THROUGH US to love one another!**

II. Vs. 13 How to know if you have received God's gift

Vs. 13 You may recognize the words "*by this we know that we abide in Him*" as they were very similar to what John wrote in 3:24 where he wrote "*by this we know that He abides in us.*" The first time we saw this chorus it was Jesus making His home with us that John wrote about offering the assurance of this was the indwelling of the Holy Spirit that was visible reality to us when we loved one another with God love! Now John's 2nd use of this phrase is also an assurance of our relationship with the Lord. The word "abide" in the Greek is such an intimate word as it means "*to live in the home of another*". I pray that we can understand that the proof of a relationship with the Lord was not to be found first in what we intellectually know but instead it was to be found in where we LIVE! A may be a few years before a child can tell anyone where they live but their lack of being able to give their address has nothing to do with not knowing where they LIVE! Of further interest to me is that same word speaks for abide in the Greek speaks of fellowship between two or more individuals. The phrase "of His Spirit" speaks of each and every believer His gifts as John uses the word "OF" and this is evidence of the abiding relationship that the believer enjoys. The point of bring this up is to reinforce that for the Christian there must not be any separation between their inner life and their outer life.

"Loving one another" WILL PRODUCE two things in the life of the believer:

1. Vs. 12 *We Grow in knowledge*: God's love being perfected in us.
2. Vs. 13 *We Grow in faith*: Whoever lives in God's love, will have the assurance that they have changed addresses and are indeed living with the Lord.

The more we grow in the love for God, the more we will understand the Love of God. And the more we understand the Love of God, the easier we will find it will be trust God. Which is what John well say in 4:18 as he says that “*perfect love casts our fear*”. **Experiencing God’s love destroys our insecurities**: *When we know Jesus intimately, we will love Him sincerely and that will cause us to put all our confidence in Him supremely*! The negative of this is that if a person speaks of experiencing the Love of God and yet remains bound in their own **insecurities** it is obvious that they have not spent enough time in His Love and instead being living in their own self love! Because God IS love, we CAN love. His love is NOT PAST history, its PRESENT REALITY. This is why “love one another”:

- Began as a COMMANDMENT in verse 7
- Grows into a PRIVILEGE in verse 11
- But becomes a CONSEQUENCE in verse 12 as “*loving one another*” isn’t something that we “**ought to do**” or “**must do**” it is instead something that we “**want to do**”!

III. Vs. 14-15 Knowing and loving

Vs. 14-15 At the time John wrote this a phrase like “the Father sent the Son as Savior of the world” instead of the Emperor of Rome was a capital offence punishable by death. The Christian would have been called an “atheist”. It would be good to realize this today as the world is religious, worshipping themselves and it is the Christian that is the “atheist” as we are against worshipping the religions of the world and have instead worshipped THE ONLY true and living God. John wants the reader to understand that “Love and Truth” are not to separate things they are connected. The more we live our God’s Love the more we will grow in our comprehension of God. Biblical knowledge is not obtained in a “classroom” it is instead gained by personal

encounter with God who is by His very nature, Love. Any “personal devotion” with God that doesn’t make us behave more like God suggests that we have spent time in only an action instead of an encounter. The phrase in verse 15 that we must agree with is that “Jesus is THE Son of God and as such God the Son...very God of very God”. This is confession of the deity of Jesus the Messiah and implies surrender and obedience to Him and not just lip service. This was being said to a culture that understood a mere mortal being worshipped as a god in the Emperor and Joh is declaring that Jesus is NOT a merely a “good man”, “created teach” “prophet” etc. No Jesus is God the Son!

The Bible’s revelation of God’s love MUST cause in us not only a better understanding of God’s love, but it also MUST make it easier to obey His word to love one another. The Christian can NOT fall into the false view that our “WITNESS” is only “verbal”! Without LOVE demonstrated our words are useless. Jesus demonstrated what he declared and that is how the gospel will be effective today when what we declare is demonstrated. The gospel must be an expression of love. I think it is for this reason that God allows the world to hate Christians, so that we might return God’s love for the worlds hate! Our confession of Jesus as God the Son is not mere lips service or an intellectual theory, instead it is a personal and spiritual truth to where I agree with God as to God the Son coming in the flesh! The result of this is that we have a “reciprocal relationship” with the Lord where we live together in mutual love for each other.

IV. Vs. 16 Growing more in love

Vs. 16 John speaks of the Love of God as something that the Christian has experienced personally and is not just a theological point but instead of reality that they have enjoyed! This is further brought out in the words “Known” and “believed” as those words suggest both

“recognition” as well as “persuasion” of this love! John starts that this experience is grounded in the truth that God as to His very nature is LOVE and this love is active and cause us to change our address back to Living with Him and enjoying this relationship!