

Love Each Other

Good Morning, Turn with me to 1 John 4:7,8. I am reading from the ESV this morning.

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

Now the same scripture in the CEV modern wording paraphrase

My dear friends, we must love each other. Love comes from God, and when we love each other, it shows that we have been given new life. We are now God's children, and we know him. God is love, and anyone who doesn't love others has never known him. God showed his love for us when he sent his only Son into the world to give us life. Real love isn't our love for God, but his love for us. God sent his Son to be the sacrifice by which our sins are forgiven.

First a few facts:

The word beloved here is actually the Greek word: "Agapetos" This word comes from the root word Agape or unconditional love and the direct translation of Agapetos means – Beloved, esteemed, dear, favorite, worthy of love.

We are told to love one another and the word used is: "Agapao" Once again we see Agape. In this word "Agapao" the meaning is that we are to love in a social and moral sense. The Strong's concordance lists two definitions for this scripture:

- To welcome, to entertain, to be fond of, to love dearly
- To be well pleased, to be contented at or with a thing

Next we read for love is of God. This word is actually "Agape" which in this context means:

- The showing of affection, benevolence and charity.
- This is a brotherly love and may be understood for our purposes as: affection, good will, love, and benevolence.

Moving on down, we see that everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.

- The definition in this context is to welcome, to entertain, to be fond of, to love dearly. To be well pleased or contented at or with a thing.

Now in this one passage of scripture we have seen that we are to esteem (respect) those around us. We are to hold them dear and we are to consider them worthy of

our love. Next we learned that we are to welcome people and care for them, we are to consider them worthy of our affection, good will, love and generosity.

Let's press on... Next we read that God sent his only begotten son. (and this is a great scripture reference for the false and abhorrent doctrine that Jesus was Lucifer's brother.) He did this so that we might live through him. I want to look at what this means: First let's look at the word live here in context: (Zao)

- To live, breath, be among the living
- To not be lifeless or dead
- To enjoy a true life; a life worth of the name life
- To be active, blessed, endless in the kingdom of God
- To live a life that reflects moral and character
- To live a life that has living water and vital power
- To live a life that is powerful

Can you see how easy it is to simply read the word and take the English meaning for life and potentially miss out on the full meaning?

Now let's look at the word "Through" here:

- a primary preposition denoting the channel of an act

We act through his authority and in his name; we each individually and collectively as a church are a conduit for his love into the world. We are blessed to bring his good news to a lost and dying humanity.

This is how we are to see each other. This is what He has said. Sorry folks, but loving people and making them feel worthy is not an optional thing.

Let me tell you a story about John:

The church father, Jerome, said that when the apostle John was in his extreme old age, he was so weak that he had to be carried into the church meetings. At the end of the meeting he would be helped to his feet to give a word of exhortation to the church. Invariably, he would repeat, "Little children, let us love one another." The disciples began to grow weary of the same words every time, and they finally asked him why he always said the same thing over and over. He replied, "Because it is the Lord's commandment, and if this only is done, it is enough" (cited by John Stott, *The Epistles of John* [Eerdmans], p. 49).

The apostle John emphasizes the importance of love more than any other point in the book. He does this because he is emphasizing how critical it is that this we as the church understand that Love is not optional. In fact, it is the way he say they will know Christians.

John 13:35 – *“By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, IF you love one another”*

Okay, so if love is how the church is to be recognized in the world... We all need to examine our own lives against this supreme standard. If we find ourselves wanting, we must take steps to correct this in our lives.

Hey... Here is a question. Have you ever wondered why John says: “Everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.” Have you ever wondered why he has stated this as two separate things?

He says: “Born of God” and then he says: “knows God”

Why am I emphasizing this?

It is because while love is the **inevitable** result of being born of God, it is not an **automatic** result.

Is anyone confused at what this is implying?

John is saying to us is that if we are truly sons and daughters of the King then the life that Jesus imparted to us at the moment of our new birth ALWAYS shows its fruit in love for others.

We are all on the journey of Christianity and the Holy Spirit is bringing about his restorative work in making us more Christ-like. Since this is the case and “God is Love” the makeup of the DNA of the Church is “LOVE!”

John in his not so subtle way is telling us that God’s true children, to whom he gives more abundant life display the nature of God.

God gave us 10 commandments. 5 relate to loving him and 5 relate to loving each other. If his top ten are all about love, well you do the math.

This morning we need to look deep. Today in North America there are many in churches today that claim to be born again, but they do not love others. There is no evidence of fruit from these barren vessels. They claim to be born again, but we just looked at what that means...

My friends, Today there are many who call themselves born again Christians who:

- Do not love others
- Who are impatient
- Easy to offend and very defensive
- Abusive in their speech to others
- Are self-centred (This one is a huge problem in NA)

- Are Judgmental of others

With what we have read today, how can a Christian reconcile these behaviors to what God has stated? Disciples of Christ, reflect Christ.

You know John says that Jesus came to this world so that we might live through him. I gotta be totally honest and straight up on this one folks:

- Being a Christian is NOT about a person simply deciding to stop engaging in sin.
- Being a Christian is NOT about simply doing the right moral thing in any situation

Being a Christian is about producing fruit. Fruit grown in love. Christianity is about recognizing that if you are born again you are a new creation in Christ Jesus. It is about recognizing that you have committed to dying to self and embracing his will.

John says that it is a matter of God giving new life to those who are dead.

Turn with me to Ephesians 2:1-5 ESV

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—

Let me close with this scripture once again: 1 John 4:7-8 CEV

My dear friends, we must love each other. Love comes from God, and when we love each other, it shows that we have been given new life. We are now God's children, and we know him. God is love, and anyone who doesn't love others has never known him. God showed his love for us when he sent his only Son into the world to give us life. Real love isn't our love for God, but his love for us. God sent his Son to be the sacrifice by which our sins are forgiven.