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Gods Love Proclaimed and Exemplified

I John 4:7-16

INTRO: If I Corinthians 13 is Paul's hymn of love, then I John 4:7-5:5 is John's. Think of it! In I John, the word "love" occurs twenty-six times. We could say that love is the theme of I John. John was without a doubt, one of the most loving of the disciples. In the Gospel of John, he refers to himself as "the disciple whom Jesus loved." Listen to the words of John 13:23: "Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved." John is talking about himself. The love of God so affected John that it became the theme of his life. It is said that when John was old and unable to stand and preach, he would sit in the congregation and remind the believers to love one another!

I. VSS 7-8, WE ARE URGED TO LOVE

A. Vs 7, We are loved by God, and we are to love one another.

1. We are urged to love because of our natural degeneracy.
 - a) We are to love those who love the Lord.
 - (1) Not just those who we favor.
 - (2) Not just those who are good to us.
 - (3) Not just those who are useful to us.
 - (4) Not just those with whom we are close friends.
 - b) We are to love one another.
2. "Beloved"— if you are one of "the beloved," those who are born again, those who are God's children, you are to love others.
 - a) "Beloved" is the Greek word *agapeto* and means "divinely loved ones, loved by God."
 - b) Without this divine love, this special love, no one could ever be a child of God (Vs 19). Without this divine love, this love from a higher source, this artesian well, we could not and would not love as we should.
3. Love has its origin, its source, in God: "For love is of God."
 - a) The presence of continuous love in a person's life is an evidence that he or she is a Christian. "Everyone that loveth is born of God."

- b) John Gill said: "To love one another is the command of God. It is His revealed will, and is well pleasing in His sight; it comes from Him as a gift of His grace, and a fruit of His spirit, and which He teaches regenerate ones to exercise" (902).
 - 4. "Knoweth God"– he that loves is acquainted with God.
 - a) By loving we learn to know God in a greater way.
 - b) When we love, we draw closer and closer to God.
- B. Vs 8, This is plain and to the point. The unloving know nothing of God. They are not acquainted with Him.
 - 1. "Knoweth" is in the past aorist meaning that the unloving person has not once known God, has never met Him, contrary to what he might say.
 - 2. Some folks know about God, but they do not know Him personally.

II. VSS 9-11, LOVE DEMONSTRATED

- A. Vs 9, God demonstrated His love for us by sending His Son into the world.
 - 1. "Manifested" means to make visible, to reveal, bring to light.
 - a) When Adam fell, it did not take God by surprise. God in His foreknowledge knew that man would fall and need a Savior. In the fullness of time, God sent His Son to be the captain of our salvation (Gal 4:4-5).
 - b) Jesus was "delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God...." (Acts 2:23-24).
 - 2. "Toward us." This means that God's love sent Jesus to dwell among us (Jn 1:14). It means Jesus was sent "in regard to us, in our case."
 - 3. "God sent"– Christ was sent on a mission, a mission of love.
 - 4. God "sent his only begotten Son...." In Jesus, we see the love of God fully displayed.
 - a) This love holds nothing back. "God sent his only begotten Son into the world." God gave His dearest possession. No sacrifice can go further.
 - b) This love is totally undeserved. It is not a wonder that I can now love God because of all He has done for me. The wonder is that He ever loved me (Rom 5:6-8).
 - 5. "That we might live through him"– That we might come to life through Him that He might bring us to life (Eph 2:1).
- B. Vs 10, God's divine love restored our relationship with God.
 - 1. By "nature we were the children of wrath even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins hath quickened us..." (Eph 2:3-5).
 - 2. "Propitiation" is a word that means to satisfy.
 - a) God sent His Son to satisfy our sin debt. This was a costly sacrifice for God the Father.
 - b) "The same God whose righteous nature required a sacrifice is the God whose love provided that sacrifice" (Vaughn 106).
- C. Vs 11, Here we have the obligation of love to love.
 - 1. "Ought" can be expressed as "we are bound."
 - 2. "So loved" means "in such a manner" (Jn 3:16).
 - a) God's love for us was "drawn forth by our need, not by any good within us" (Vaughn 107).
 - b) "In my hand no price I bring, Simply to thy cross I cling" (Toplady).
 - 3. We are to love one another (Eph 4:32).

III. VSS 12-16, LOVE IN ACTION

- A. Vs 12, It is by our love one toward another that God is known.
 - 1. We cannot see God because He is spirit. What we can see is the effect of God (II Cor 5:17).
 - a) We cannot see the wind, but we certainly can see what the wind can do.
 - b) We cannot see electricity, but we can see the effect of it.
 - c) The effect of God is love– “If we love one another, God dwelleth in us...”
 - 2. “Real love cannot help but express itself in practical conduct” (Phillips 142).
- B. Vs 13, We know that we dwell in God and that He dwells in us “because he hath given us of his Spirit.”
 - 1. The Spirit:
 - a) Draws us– making us seek after God.
 - b) The Spirit makes us aware of God’s presence.
 - c) The Spirit assures us that we are at peace with God.
 - 2. The Holy Spirit, dwelling within our hearts, gives us the right to address God as Father (Rom 8:15-16).
- C. Vs 14, John was an eye witness to what Jesus did for sinners.
 - 1. God’s love in action is shown by His sending His Son to be our Savior (Lk 19:10).
 - 2. John 3:17.
 - 3. “Savior” – not just fire insurance, but deliverance from ourselves!
- D. Vs 15, John wants us to get the message that salvation is in the Lord Jesus Christ (4:9, 10, 14).
 - 1. Do you believe that Christ is the only way to heaven? (Jn 14:6).
 - 2. Jn 5:24; 3:36; 3:18.
- E. Vs 16, John knew and all believers know that “God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God....”
 - 1. God loves us; God is love; we love one another.
 - 2. “We have known and believed.”
 - a) Perfect tense–“We have come to know [and still know] and we have come to believe and still believe,” speaking of a lasting experience.
 - b) “Dwelleth” speaks of communion. “God lives in us, we live in God, and therefore we are in an atmosphere of love” (Vines 165).

CONCLUSION: Believers are to exemplify the love of God.