



MESSAGE

STUDY GUIDE

GROUP MATERIAL

SONGS

Love: God's Definition Versus Ours

Bible Reading: 1 John 4:7-16

7 Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. 8 Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. 9 This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. 10 This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. 11 Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. 12 No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

13 This is how we know that we live in him and he in us: He has given us of his Spirit. 14 And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. 15 If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in them and they in God. 16 And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them. (NIV)

I. The command/exhortation to love 4:7-8

7 Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. 8 Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.

- A. Love – the defining characteristic of God
 - B. Love the mark of every person born of God
 - C. Love is the present result of being born of God in the past – v. 7b
- Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God.

II. Love defined 4:8-10, 16

8 Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. 9 This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. 10 This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. ... 16 And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love.

- A. God is love
 - 1. Not the way love is understood in the world.
 - 2. Biblical love
 - 3. All God's actions are carried out in love

- B. God sent his one and only Son
 - 1. As an atoning sacrifice for our sin
 - 2. So that we might live through him
 - 3. Freeing us from death
- The cross – the supreme expression of God's love

III. Loving others – 4:11-12

11 Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. 12 No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

A. God's love for us is the basis of our love for one another not our natural affinity to each other.

- 1. Love expressed is unselfish
 - 2. Love does not come naturally
- B. God's love focused its action on our greatest need.

C. Love is to meet the needs of others

D. Loving others is a sign God lives in us

E. Love is completed in us; it reaches its goal, when we love one another – v. 12

IV. Conclusion – 16a

16 And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love.

A. Knowing and relying on the love God has for us

B. Based on this we love others