**IF WE LOVE ONE ANOTHER**

1 John 4:7-5:21

Key verse 4:12

No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

**Introduction:** As we have studied 1 John, we may know that there is something in common in all 5 chapters. In chapter 1, apostle John proclaimed what he has seen and heard through his personal experience with Jesus Christ, the Word of life and he encouraged others to have the same fellowship among believers in the church. In chapter 2, he encourages them to do what is right as those who have been born again, that is to obey Jesus’ command to love each other. In chapter 3, he repeated Jesus’ command that is to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ and to love one another. In chapter 4, he pointed out that he has given us this command; whoever loves God must also love his brothers. In chapter 5, everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God and everyone who loves the Father loves his child as well. This is how we know that we love the children of God by loving God and carrying out his commands. So the key verse of our 2019 Summer Bible conference is “No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.” God is unseen to our eyes. But Jesus’ command is in our hearts and we can love each other according to His command and His living example as our resources. God lives in us and His love is made perfect sense to us and others. May the Lord help us to put into practice what love is through Jesus Christ who laid down his life as an atoning sacrifice in order to give us eternal life. Help us to obey His command out of our love for God and promote our loving fellowship as a ripple effect for the world.

**This is love**

1. Read 4:7-12. What does it show when believers love one another? (7-8) How did God show us his love? (9-10) Why should we love one another? (11-12)

*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.*

1. When believers love one another it shows that they are born of God and know God
   1. Love comes from God
      1. God is the source of love (agape: the highest form of love)
   2. God is love
      1. God’s nature is characterized by love
   3. The Greek word for God’s love is agape
      1. Agape is the highest form of live. It is selfless, complete and unfailing love
2. God showed his love by sending his one and only son into the world
   1. A lot of people are confused about what love is. They could not experience love and could not show love to others. But God showed us what love is.
   2. We could not love God because of our sins, but God sent Jesus to be an atoning sacrifice for our sins
   3. As a result of this love we can live a new life through Jesus Christ and we have eternal life
   4. God’s love has the purpose of removing sins
      1. Sacrificial and attoning
3. We should love one another because God so loved
   1. God’s love for us is the reason we should love one another
      1. Through loving one another God lives in us and his love is made complete in us

**Living in God’s love**

2. Read 4:13-21. Why is it important to acknowledge that Jesus is the Son of God? (13-15) What does it mean to know and rely on the love God has for us? What outcomes can we experience when we know and rely on God’s love? (16-18) What must we do in response to God’s love? (19-21)

*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. 17 This is how love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment: In this world we are like Jesus.18 There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. 19 We love because he first loved us. 20 Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen. 21 And he has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister.*

1. When we acknowledge that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in us and us in God through the Holy Spirit
   1. The apostles, including the Apostle John testified that God sent his Son to be the Savior of the world
      1. When we believe the apostles testimony, we can also acknowledge that Jesus is the Son of God
2. To know and rely on the love God has for us means:
   1. To know God’s love means to know it personally through the message of the gospel, and to experience His love
      1. Ultimately, It means to know that God is love
   2. To rely on His love means to live in His love
      1. When we know that God is love and we live in His love, we no longer rely on our own love or strength to love others
3. When we know and rely on God’s love:
   1. God’s love is made complete among us.
      1. God fills us with his perfect love
   2. we will have confidence on the day of judgment.
      1. Our confidence on the day of judgement is that *In this world we are like Jesus* (having the same love as Jesus)
   3. God’s perfect love drives out fear
      1. There is no fear in love, because fear has to do with judgment. When we are filled with God’s perfect love there is nothing left to be condemned

D. We must love our brothers and sisters in response to God’s love.

1. We love because he first loved us.
2. Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother and sister is a liar. Whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, can not love God, who they have not seen. - It should be matched between our words and our love(action) in light of loving God. When we love our brothers and sisters, we can love God who is unseen.
3. *Jesus has given us this command*: Anyone who loves God MUST also love their brother and sister.

**Victory Through Keeping God’s Commands**

3. Read 5:1-5. How can we love God? (1-3a) Why is it not burdensome for us to keep His commands? (3b-4a) How can we overcome the world? (3-5)

*Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well. 2 This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands. 3 In fact, this is love for God: to keep his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, 4 for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. 5 Who is it that overcomes the world? Only the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.*

1. We can love God by carrying out His commands
   1. When we believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, we can restore our love relationship with God--with both the Father and the Son.
   2. When we restore a love relationship with God, we are able to carry out God’s commands
2. It is not burdensome to keep God’s commands because everyone born of God overcomes the world
   1. In order to restore our love relationship with God, we need to overcome the world
      1. The world is under the power of sin and death. There is no love of God (godly love) in this world.
      2. When we overcome the world and restore our love relationship with God, His love becomes our source of joy and strength to carry out his commands.
      3. We can carry out God’s command to love our brothers and sisters through the love God puts in our hearts
3. We can overcome the world through faith in Jesus Christ
   1. When we believe that Jesus is the Son of God who overcame the world, we can overcome the world in and through Jesus.

**The Testimony of God**

4. Read 5:6-12. What are three that testify about Jesus Christ? (6-8) In what respect is God’s testimony greater than human testimony? (9-10) Why is it important to believe God’s testimony about his Son? (10-12)

*6 This is the one who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ. He did not come by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. 7 For there are three that testify: 8 the[*[*a*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20John+5&version=NIV#fen-NIV-30633a)*] Spirit, the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement. 9 We accept human testimony, but God’s testimony is greater because it is the testimony of God, which he has given about his Son. 10 Whoever believes in the Son of God accepts this testimony. Whoever does not believe God has made him out to be a liar, because they have not believed the testimony God has given about his Son. 11 And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. 12 Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.*

1. We must respond to God’s love by loving others.
   1. We love because he first loved us.
      1. God took the initiative.
   2. Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar
   3. Whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen
   4. God has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister.
2. The three that testify about Jesus Christ are the Spirit, the water and the blood.
   1. The water refers to Jesus in bodily form (incarnate God).
      1. When Jesus was punctured in his side, water came out
      2. Also the environment for development is water (embryonic fluid)
      3. The human body is over 90%
   2. The blood refers to Jesus’ death on the cross
      1. After preaching repentance, Jesus died on the cross to pay the full penalty for our sins (Jn 19:30).
      2. Jesus’s blood testifies to the cost of our sins and the price Jesus paid for our sins
   3. The Spirit refers to the Holy Spirit
      1. After Jesus rose from the dead and ascended into heaven, he sent the Holy Spirit into our hearts to testify to the truth of God. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth (Jn 16:13)
3. God’s testimony is greater than human testimony because …
   1. It is God’s testimony.
      1. God is greater, so His testimony is greater (John 3:31)
      2. God testifies directly through the word of God and the illumination of His word by the Holy Spirit
   2. It is the testimony God has given about his son
      1. The words of God in the Bible testify about Jesus (Jn 5:39). God’s words testify about Jesus' ministry, his death and resurrection, his word and the pouring out of his Holy spirit.
4. It is important to believe God’s testimony about his Son because through believing we have eternal life.
   1. The Bible is God’s testimony about Jesus Christ. When we believe God’s testimony in the Bible we have eternal life, but if we do not accept what the Bible says about Jesus, we make God out to be a liar, and do not have eternal life.

**Jesus The True God and Eternal Life**

5. Read 5:13-21. What was John’s purpose in writing these things? (13) How can we be confident in our prayer life? (14-15) What should we do if we see our brother or sister commit a sin? (16-17) What did he remind them of in order that they may not continue to sin? (18-19) How can we keep ourselves from idols? (20-21)

*13 I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life. 14 This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. 15 And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.*

*16 If you see any brother or sister commit a sin that does not lead to death, you should pray and God will give them life. I refer to those whose sin does not lead to death. There is a sin that leads to death. I am not saying that you should pray about that. 17 All wrongdoing is sin, and there is sin that does not lead to death.*

*18 We know that anyone born of God does not continue to sin; the One who was born of God keeps them safe, and the evil one cannot harm them. 19 We know that we are children of God, and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one. 20 We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true by being in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.*

*21 Dear children, keep yourselves from idols.*

1. John wanted those that believe in the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of God to know that they have eternal life.
   1. God gave eternal life through his Son (Acts 4:12)
      1. John wanted the believers in the Church to have assurance of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.
   2. John wrote this letter to address the heresy of Gnosticism that rose up within the church community
      1. The Gnostics denied the incarnation of Jesus, the Son of God
         1. They believed in the transcendence of knowledge (special knowledge) for salvation
         2. They denied the importance of the body in salvation, claiming that all matter is evil and all spirit is good.
            1. They were full of pride and hidden sins of the flesh
      2. What influence did the Gnostics have on the church community?
         1. They disrupted the fellowship of believers within the church (1 John 1:3)
            1. God the Father and the Son Jesus Christ were not at the center of their fellowship (1 John 1:3)
            2. They failed to love one another in the Lord (1 John 3:11, 23; 4:7, 11-12)
2. We can be confident in our prayer life when:
   1. We pray according to God’s will
      1. When we pray according to God’s will, God hears us
      2. When we pray according to God’s will he answers our prayers
         1. Whatever we ask, we know we have
3. When we see our brother or sister commit a sin, we need to pray for them
   1. Here, John is speaking about prayer for believers, not prayer for unbelievers
      1. To pray for our brothers and sisters when they sin is prayer according to God’s will
         1. It is prayer that is consistent with God’s love and loving them in God’s love
      2. The sin that leads to death could refer to blaspheming the Holy Spirit (Mk 3:28-29)
         1. Consider a church member that denies the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives and the lives of others, leaving the church fellowship and calling evil good and good evil (Isa 5:20)
            1. We can’t always know when to stop praying for someone, but God knows and the Holy Spirit knows
4. John reminded that believers that no one born of God continues to sin
   1. We need to remember that we are born of God. We are children of God, not children of the devil. We need to live like children of God not children of the devil.
      1. When we live as God’s children (children born of God), God keeps us safe from sin and the evil one
         1. God watches out for his children like a good father
         2. The Holy Spirit living in God’s children is greater than the evil one in the world (1Jn 3:24, 4:4; Jn 14:17)
5. We can keep ourselves from idols by knowing the true God.
   1. God has given us understanding to know the true God through the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us
      1. We need to pray for understanding to know the true God better (Eph 1:17)
      2. We need to struggle to live in His Son Jesus Christ to know the true God better (Php 3:10; Rom 8:17)

**Conclusion:** In today’s passage, we have learned what love is. In this world, it is not easy to find true love, because people are looking for love in the wrong place and they have no idea about where love is. God is love. God showed his love powerfully through sending His One and Only Son, Jesus who showed us what love is. When we were born again thanks to His atoning sacrifice, we as the children of God came to KNOW what true love is and what true life in Jesus Christ is. Then this love is not supposed to be confined to ourselves. Rather, it is natural for us to show the same love among our brothers and sisters first. May the Lord help us to know and RELY on God’s love daily so that God and His love is vividly shown among us and the sin-sick, fallen and dark world. Daily we may see young people coming to Jesus through seeing our loving fellowship in the fall semester!

**One word: If we love one another!**