



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

1 JOHN 4:11 - "LOVE ONE ANOTHER!"

COLORADO MAY 11, 2021

Dan File, P.O. Box 1088, Lake City, CO 81235-1088/303-345-8830 / filefamily@centurytel.net

*The redemptive nature of God's love demonstrates for us the depth and breadth of it, made clear by the fact that He sent Jesus, His only Son. How could we ever measure the greatness of this great love of God? John helps us. God "sent His Son". God gave the very best there was to give and **nothing** could ever exceed that "incredible gift" as Paul would write in 2 Corinthians 9:15.*

God did not merely send Jesus as a great teacher to tell us about God, though that would have been great. If God had sent Jesus to just be our example, that would have been good, even though none of us could ever live up to His example. But the incredible thing is that God didn't just stop with those things, rather, He sent His Son to die the death of a felon, on a cross, that He might save us from sin and death. This fact is overwhelming and speaks to the depth of His love.¹ (Romans 8:31-32, 38-39)

I. 1 JOHN 4:11 - "LOVE ONE ANOTHER!"

(7) "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God." (8) "The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love." (9) "By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him." (10) "In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." (11) "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." 1 John 4:7-11

In 1 John 4:10 we learned that Christ's self-sacrifice for sin enabled God to pardon the sins for those who would believe in Him and to restore them to fellowship with Himself. It is important to note that the death of Jesus Christ did not change the heart of God, as if One Who hated us and now loves us. Rather it opened the floodgates so that the love of God for sinners could be poured out to them through Jesus Christ.²

John closes this verse bearing witness to everyone's personal need for the propitiatory sacrifice of Jesus Christ. It was for "our sins". Christ died for "sinners", for those who rebelled against God and hated Him, which includes everyone who has ever lived. God gave His Son to die for each of us, "sinners", and no one is any better than a sinner. Now John moves forward with what should follow in the lives of all who believe in Jesus Christ as their Savior.

A. "BELOVED, IF GOD SO LOVED US..." – 1 JOHN 4:11A

*"Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another."
1 John 4:11*

John has taken us to the cross in verse 10. There we have looked at the Son, Jesus Christ, dearly loved by the Father. It

was in obedience to the Father, the Son freely offered Himself as the sacrifice for our sins. How greatly God has loved us!! And so, John again reminds us of how dearly we are loved opening this verse with the endearing term of "Beloved". John cannot remind any of us enough of how dearly, how sweetly we are loved by God and thus how we are so to love one another.

John has reminded us of the nature of God's incredible redeeming love in 1 John 4:9-10, and now sets forth the resultant obligation for us to love one another. And we must notice that this obligation is distinctly Christian, based on who John addresses here. If you are a believer in Jesus Christ, this is your obligation, to "love one another".

The supreme motivation for godly living lies in believers grasping the wonder of God's love for us! That's why John has spent so much time on this truth. The sheer, undeserved grace and kindness of God's love for us should inspire us to "love one another".³

John uses a first class conditional clause when he writes, "Beloved, if God so loved us...". By this John isn't questioning God's love for us, rather this clause means, if and it is true, if and it is a fact, a reality that God so loved us. And this reality of God's love is at the heart of our Christian faith.

By using the words "so loved" here, John is referring back to the sacrificial love portrayed in 1 John 4:10 which expresses the manner, degree and extent of God's love! In reference to "God", it would actually read, "the God", stressing the majesty of the love shown by "the God" Whom they have come to know personally.

Then with the use of the personal pronoun in "loved us", John stresses the personal realization of this love on the part of John and his readers. And we know that God manifested, made visible His love for us in Jesus Christ because of our great need.⁴ We did not deserve it.

God Himself loved us in spite of our hatred toward Him, "not that we loved God, but that He loved us..." As Romans 5:8 says, "But demonstrated His own love toward us that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." There could be no greater difference between sinful human beings and the loving God. Fallen humanity is not naturally in love with the God Whom the Son came to reveal.

1 JOHN 4:11 – “LOVE ONE ANOTHER!”

B. “LOVE ONE ANOTHER!”- 1 JOHN 4:11B

“Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.”

1 John 4:11

So John says, “Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.” The “we” places the obligation on those of us who are believers and the recipients of God’s love. With the use of the verb “ought”, John immediately links Christ’s example of self-sacrificing love to that of the believer.

“ought”- Greek **“opheilomen”** not just a must, but rather refers to a continuing obligation.

All believers have a continuing obligation to that same kind of love. God’s love for us is the example as well as the motivation for our practice of mutual love. And Jesus Himself has already insisted that genuine love for God and love for our brothers and sisters cannot be separated. (Matthew 22:37-40)

We must always go back to the cross and reflect on His self-denying, self-sacrificing love of our Lord Jesus Christ. He died, “*the righteous for the unrighteous, that He might bring us to God.*” (1 Peter 3:18) It was for sinners that Christ died. He laid down His life for His enemies and not His friends. (Romans 5:8-10) May this summon us to love one another?

The love John speaks of can’t be understood apart from the cross. It is by the cross that the greatest of all love, agape love, is demonstrated fully. Christ was not killed as a martyr, but He willingly as an act of His own will, gave Himself for us. He acted in the interest of others and not Himself. Christ gave the

greatest possible expression of love for others by His death on the cross. Christ’s love was not mere sentiment or emotion. No His love was expressed by what He did.

John has taken us to the cross in 1 John 4:10 and we have looked at the Son Jesus Christ, dearly loved by the Father. In obedience to the Father, Jesus freely offered Himself as the only possible sacrifice for our sins. Only through Christ can we be saved. This salvation changes and transforms our sinful and murderous attitudes into loving ones that demonstrate genuine faith.⁵ (Colossians 2:11) Thus, all believers have, “*passed out of death into life*”. Christ’s atonement on the cross lifts us up to new life in Christ for all who believe in Him.

Is it possible for a Christian to be a believer while refusing to love someone who God loves and for whom Christ died? Saving faith brings us into union with Jesus Christ, the God Who is love. Likeness is the evidence of belonging. This is something we must ponder often.

Our world encourages self-satisfaction and not sacrifice. But this is the standard of love that we are obligated to give of ourselves as Christ did. This is what love really is. And this is our continuing obligation to our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Here then is how greatly God has loved us. How can we be recipients of such amazing love and continue to harbor grudges and resentments and engage in petty squabbles? No one who has been to the cross and seen God’s immeasurable and unmerited love can go back to a life of selfishness.⁶

¹ Boice, James Montgomery, *An Expository Commentary: The Epistles of John*. Baker Books: Grand Rapids, MI, 1979. Pg. 115.

² Pentecost, Dwight, *The Joy of Fellowship*. Zondervan: Grand Rapids; 1977. Pg. 109.

³ Hamilton, Ian, *Let’s Study the Letters of John*. The Banner of Truth Trust: Edinburgh, UK, 2008. Pg. 60.

⁴ Hiebert, D. Edmond, *The Epistles of John: An Expository Commentary*. Bob Jones University Press: Greenville, SC, 1991. Pg. 203.

⁵ MacArthur, John, *MacArthur Commentary Series on 1-3 John*. Moody Press: Chicago, IL, 2007. Pg. 133.

⁶ Hamilton, Ian, *Let’s Study the Letters of John*. The Banner of Truth Trust: Edinburgh, UK, 2008. Pg. 60.