

“But the greatest of these is LOVE!”



Part 3: “Is God LOVE ... or is LOVE God?”

I John 4:7-21

Introduction: “*GOD IS LOVE*” is where people worship the “god” they have created: the “god” of “LOVE!”

Mankind’s dilemma: How to believe in a God who is “love” when so much of the world HE created is NOT love!!

I John 4:1-4: “Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for He who is IN you is greater than he who is in the world” (vs. 4).

GOD separates the people of the world into two groups.

God’s love is revealed in Christ and experienced and shared only in the context of the Church, Christ’s Body.

I John 4:5-6: “We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us; whoever is NOT from God does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error” (vs. 6).

I. God’s love is revealed in Christ ...

I John 4:7-10: “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!” (vs. 9).

“Propitiation” (vs. 10) means “to appease,” and in the case of God, to remove His wrath in order to gain a position of FAVOR!! (See Romans 5:8-9).

The idea of a “loving God” who is not just or holy or righteous is a LIE from Satan intended to deceive.

II Corinthians 4:1-6: “... the ‘god’ of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ ...” (vs. 4).

I John 2:15-17: “If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him” (vs. 15).

II. God’s love is experienced in Christ ...

Declaring God’s LOVE apart from Christ and the cross is confusing, frustrating and misleading.

John is writing about the relationship he and all believers have with God in Christ. (See I John 1:3)

The “god of LOVE” is a counterfeit, a cheap imitation, an unworthy replacement for the God of grace who sent His Son!

I John 4:13-16a ... You know God’s love and experience God’s love when your heart is turned by His Spirit to trust in Jesus.

Ephesians 3:18-19 ... God’s love in Christ is a “life-transforming love” because His Spirit changes our focus from ourselves to God.

I John 4:17-19 ... If you separate God’s love from Christ and forgiveness and salvation all you have left is an empty shell of a word without meaning!

III. God’s love is shared in Christ ...

I John 4:11-12, 20-21: “Beloved, if God so loved US, we also ought to love one another” (vs. 11).

God intends that the love He gives to each of His children will be shared with the rest of the Body of Christ, His family.

Throughout the New Testament the “one another’s” are directed at brothers and sisters in Christ ... those in “fellowship” those in whom the Spirit is at work.

God’s desire is for us to GROW ... to be transformed and to become more like Christ!

II Timothy 3:16-17: “All Scripture ... is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training ...”

“LOVE” and “TRUTH” go together to produce accountability!

“Love one another” is a reciprocal love that those who do not know God’s love in Christ cannot and will not do.

GOD's love in Christ points to new life NOW and to a new
world when Jesus returns!!