

there is **NO FEAR** in
love, but perfect love
casts out fear



so we have come
to know and to
believe the love
that God has for us

OUTLINE ... 1 John 4:7–5:5

1. WE KNOW THAT WE HAVE BEEN BORN OF GOD AND KNOW GOD WHEN WE LOVE AS GOD LOVES US, 4:7-12.

- (1 John 4:7–12 ESV) Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. 8 Anyone who does not love does not know God, **because God is love**. 9 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. 10 In this is love, not that we have 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 also ought to love one another. 12 No one has ever seen God; **if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us**.

A. **We will love one another as God loves us because whoever has been born of God loves and knows God, 4:7.**

B. **If we do not love one another as God loves, then we do not know God as evidenced by the absence of his "image restoration" work in our lives, 4:8.**

WHAT DO I MEAN BY HIS "IMAGE RESTORATION" WORK IN OUR LIVES?

(1) We need to know that God created all humankind in his image, Genesis 1:26-27.

- (Genesis 1:26a–27 ESV) Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness."... So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

(2) We need a working understanding of what it means that we are created in the image of God.

MacArthur ... Man was created to be like God. **And what does that mean primarily? Primarily that means man was created for inter-personal relationships.** [John MacArthur, *Manifesting Perfect Love*, Part 1]

Grudem ... The fact that man is in the image of God

means that man is like God and represents God.

When God says, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness," the meaning is that God plans to make a creature similar to himself. ... **it simply would have meant to the original readers. "Let us make man to be like us and to represent us."**... [Grudem, W. A. (2004). *Systematic theology: an introduction to biblical doctrine* (p. 442-443). Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; Zondervan Pub. House.]

(3) And we need a working knowledge of what it means to be "recreated" into the image of his Son—to bear his image.

- (1 Corinthians 15:47–49 ESV) The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. 48 As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. 49 **Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven.**
- (Romans 8:29a ESV) For those whom he foreknew **he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son.**

(4) The next logical step then is ... **if we are to be like God and "God is love", then we should love as God loves—which is exactly what the Apostle John is teaching us.**

A person not loving his brothers and sisters in Christ gives strong evidence that the perfecting work of the love of God is absent in his or her life.

(5) And doesn't this fit perfectly with ... **a)** our Lord's teaching concerning what is the greatest, most important commandment, and ... **b)** Adam and Eve's great sin in the Garden of Eden? Not loving one another is the tragic decision in which the creation chooses to live counter to the purpose for which he was created—that being enjoying intimate love with God and the children of God.

- (Matthew 22:35–37 ESV) And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your

mind.” (See also Mark 12:28-31.)

When Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit, they rejected the love of God and irreparably severed humanity’s love relationship with God and our ability to love as God created us to love. In Christ our ability to love as God loves has been restored.

C. God makes known to us in Scripture the essence of the love with which we are to love, 4:9-10.

ESSENCE: The permanent as contrasted with the accidental element of being; the individual, real, or ultimate nature of a thing; the properties or attributes by means of which something can be placed in its proper class or identified as being what it is; the most significant element, quality, or aspect of a thing or person.

The love with which we are to love is the love of God. And this is where most people get it wrong and in their pride cling to their version of love. But God’s love is specific in essence and intent as described and defined in Scripture, and not general as seen in the imprecise, inexact terms of human emotion and natural expression. **In other words, the love of God is what God says it is. He defines love; we do not.** To obey God and to receive the blessing of God, we must love as God loves.

- (1 John 4:9 ESV) 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.

LESSON BY EXAMPLE: God chose to sacrifice what was dear to him to bring life to others. The essence of the love of God is tremendous sacrifice that brings life to others.

- (1 John 4:10 ESV) In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

LESSON BY EXAMPLE: God loved us first when we were unlovable sinners and could not “love back.” He loved us to deal with our sin. God’s love for humans is inseparable from his intent to do something about our sin problem.

- (1 John 4:19 ESV) We love because he first loved us.
- (Romans 5:8 ESV) But God shows his love

for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

D. If we love as God loved us, we will love our brothers and sisters in Christ, God will live in us, and he will perfect (accomplish, finish, complete) his work of love in us, 4:11-12.

- (1 John 4:11–12 ESV) Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. 12 No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.

2. WE KNOW THAT WE ABIDE IN GOD AND HE IN US BECAUSE HE HAS GIVEN US OF HIS SPIRIT, 4:13-21.

A. The believer knows that he abides in God and God in him because God has given us of his Spirit, 4:13.

- (1 John 4:13 ESV) By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.

B. The believer testifies to the truth of the gospel—that the Father sent his Son to be the Savior of the world, 4:14.

- (1 John 4:14 ESV) And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.

C. The believer confesses the truth of the gospel—that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God, 4:15.

- (1 John 4:15 ESV) Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.

D. Those who believe God, as evidenced—to God and an inner witness to ourselves—by our testimony and confession to the truth of the gospel, come to the place of truly knowing and believing the love God has for us, 4:16.

- (1 John 4:16 ESV) **So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love,** and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

This is what the Apostle Paul prayed for the Ephesians. This person is convinced by God, and as only God could do—“surpasses knowledge”—and filled with this surpassing knowledge in the deepest places of their heart, soul, mind and spirit of the love God has for him or her.

- (Ephesians 3:17–19 ESV) So that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, 19 **and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge**, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

E. By this—all the preceding—love is perfected (finished, completed, fulfilled) in us, 4:17.

- (1 John 4:17 ESV) **By this is love perfected with us**, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because as he is so also are we in this world.

When love is perfected in us we have confidence for the day of judgment because we now see who we truly are and we see ourselves as God sees us—that even while still in this world we are like Jesus.

- (Romans 8:31 ESV) What then shall we say to these things? **If God is for us, who can be against us?**
- (Romans 8:33 ESV) **Who shall bring any charge against God's elect?** It is God who justifies.
- (Romans 8:35a ESV) **Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?**
- (Romans 8:37 ESV) No, in all these things **we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.**

F. There is no fear in our lives as God convinces us of his love and casts out our fears, 4:18.

- (1 John 4:18 ESV) There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love.

The person who fears is unconvinced of the love of God because God's perfecting work of love is absent in his life. This person is either an unbeliever or a believer who is distant from—and disobedient to—God and so lives in fear and guilt.

G. Those who have been born of God and know God love because God first loved us, 4:19.

- (1 John 4:19 ESV) We love because he first loved us.

H. It is inconceivable and irreconcilable with the nature of God and the word of God that the

person who hates his brother in Christ loves God, 4:20.

- (1 John 4:20 ESV) If anyone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen.

This person may be a believer who for a time (but only for a time, not his life course) disobeys the commandment of God and does not love his brother.

I. Loving of our brothers and sisters in Christ is obeying thus loving God, 4:21.

- (1 John 4:21 ESV) And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.
- (John 13:34 ESV) A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.
- (John 14:15 ESV) If you love me, you will keep my commandments.
- (John 15:12 ESV) This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

3. EVERYONE WHO BELIEVES THAT JESUS IS THE CHRIST HAS BEEN BORN OF GOD AND SO LOVES THE FATHER AND THE CHILDREN OF GOD, 5:1-5.

- (1 John 5:1–5 ESV) Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of him. 2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. 3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome. 4 For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. 5 Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?