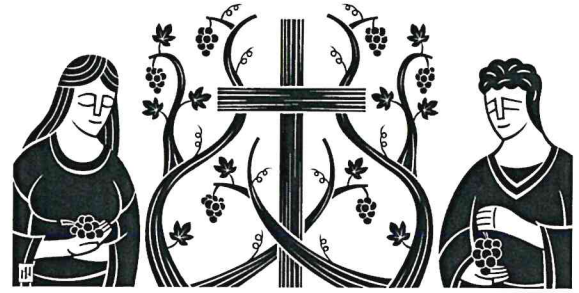


Love Comes from God

- 1) Love for the Truth
- 2) Love for One Another



Love Comes from God

- **Vs. 7a.** We use word love lot diff ways, don't? W/same word I can talk re how love: wife (celebrating 15th ann in few wks). Or mom (M-Day). Or certain foods; some: food from McDon's (slogan: I'm lovin it). Some go shopping, see clothes, say: love this. And word love even used w/ref to sexuality. So lot diff ways use word love. Way I love spouse obvly diff: mom/dad. My prefnc for certain foods/clothes obvly diff: how feel re my loved ones.
- But then there's love/God: from/for God. 1 Jn: book/Bible that's all re love/God. Wrd love used in 1 Jn almost 50x; over 10x in les alone – not re loving fam membs, foods, clothes. No, this: much deeper love: God's love to us, thru us. It's true, real, perfect, holy, divine love. **Vs. 7a.**

Love for the Truth

- Love for truth. The love that comes from God is a love for truth: of GW. That's what opening vss/les all about: **vs. 1.** J taught very same thing: **“Watch out for false prphts. They come to you in shp's clthng, but inwrldly they are fercs wolves” (Mt 7:15).** There is great danger in false doc! Jn & J teachng us: be very concrnd re doctrnl accrcy! Jn writes: **vs. 2-3a.** That's the litmus test: getting J right! And that's not just limited to his **“coming in flesh,”** incrnion. This talking re entire body/Xian doc, evthng Bible teaches. Nothng: unimp or insgnfcent. GW: truth. So we have: take it sersly & make sure we have it right. Makes me think: Bereans. Remem from bk/Acts: **“Now the Berean Jews were of more noble chrctr than those in Thsslnca, for they received the msg w/great eagerness and examined the Scriptrs ev day to see if what Paul said was true” (17:11).** They had love for truth; compared Paul's msg to truth/GW. Now w/Ap Paul, I'm sure they found evthng he said lined up fine. But we have do same thing, bec there are many msgs in this wrld that do not line up w/truth/GW.
- So we must **“test the spirits”** and recgnz diff btw (vs. 6) **“Sprt/truth & sprt/falsehood.”** Doctrnl accrcy is imp! Is evthng RCC teaches doctrnly accrt? No! Not saying evthng wrong. But our Luthrn history is rooted in strong desire to be doctrnly accrt, which why we broke from RCC. How about other ch bodies: is evthng in Baptst, Methdst, Presbtn doctrnly accrt? No! For that matter, is evthng in Luth ch doctrnly accrt? I bel is; otherws I'd've nvr become Luth pr. And if our ch body ever ceases stand firmly on truth, I'll stop being pr. But point: we need test spirits; compare teachings; love truth.
- It's not just ch bodies, either; it's also contmp philspchs, modern mvmnts. Does LGBTQ agenda promote biblical, doctrnl accrcy? No! Are there any other philspchs/mvmnts of our time that demand be accepted as truth, but when honestly comprd GW, found inaccurate? Yes! And unfortntly, when you lovnly stand up for truth & point out error/false tchngs, often called unloving for doing so. But what our les teach us? Test spirits, compare tchngs, love truth – bec love from God is love for truth.

Love for One Another

- But always do so in lvng way! **Vs. 7a.** Love from God involves loving truth and loving oa! I think so often we Xians (we're all guilty of this) either cave to / accept falsehood (which not loving bec not truth); OR so brashly defensive of truth that we make selves look unloving. Story: phone call: your ch hate gays? Short conv; wish wasn't. Wish I'd had opptnty talk that indvl, w/love, way J talked to Smrtn woman at well, w/love. He didn't approve of her sin, but did engage her in loving convrstn re truth/GW. And it moved her; she came faith in J as Sav! That's what makes truth/GW so special; changes hrts/lives! Truth: points out sin, also forgives sin! Truth: shows ppl need for Sav, also connects to Sav. Stn uses falsehood to draw ppl away from Sav. So there's nothing more loving than sharing love/J, truth/J, in loving way. Love comes from God: love for truth and oa.

- **Vs. 7a.** So then why are we so often so unloving to oa? Why are husbs/wives often mean to eo? Why don't prnts/chldrns get along, or bros/sistrs? Why friends have fights w/eo? Why are fellow Xians, fellow ch membrs often unkind/unloving to oa? I get that wrld is filled w/hatred. But why among Xians? Answer same in evry case: it's sin. Sin creates divisions, hatred, disunity, distrust. And we are all guilty of this sin; none of us is innocent of hatred; we have all contributed to the division. So what is the solution? How can we love oa?
- We love oa when realize: love comes from God. And this is the love that comes from God, to us: **vs. 8b-9.** God gave us J, and J is true love! J came into this wrld of drknss, hatred, division, sin for purpose of rescuing us from it, and from ourselves. All the drknss, hatred, division, sin that we carry within us, J carried to cross, for us. **Vs. 10.** J was sacrfc in sense: J gave life, shed blood, suffrd/died on cross, much like how animals in OT were sacrfd to forgive sins/ppl; except J's sacrfc forgives all sins of all ppl forever. So he's sacrfc, for atoning. J death on cross & res dead make us at one w/God. That's atmnt: being at one w/God, having peace w/God. W/o J, we're enemies/God. But J: **"atoning sacrfc for our sins,"** incl our sins: hatred & division. J has forgiven us for evthng! In fact, J loved you even when he knew terrible sins you'd commit; J suf/died for you even when could see hatred in your heart. That's how much J loves you! That's how much God Fr loves you: sent beloved Son into wrld/hatred, to save you, knowing exactly what his Son would face.
- **Vs. 11; 11b.** J taught same thing in today's Gos: **"My command is this: love each other as I have loved you" (Jn 15:12).** Smtms that's hard to do, bec we're surrdd by so much hatred. But remem: **vs. 4b** – means J is within you, by faith, w/his love. And that's pwrfl! More pwrfl than Stn's hatred. Later, in 1 Jn 4: **"We love bec he first loved us" (19)** – means J's love for us motvts, insprs, prmpts our love for oa. We want to be loving, bec we know how much J loves us! Earlier in 1 Jn, in ch 3: **"See what great love the Fr has lavished on us, that we should be called children/God! And that: what we are!" (1).** On this M-Day we're celebrtng our mothers, and we're grateful to be her son/daughter. How much more do we cherish fact that we are sons/daughters of God Fr, our perf parent, who's adopted us into his fam, and thru baptism calls us his children, so that J is our brother, and we his sisters/bros. That's lavish love – love that comes from God.

Conclusion

- We use word love in lot diff ways: I love wife, mom, good food, those clothes. But those loves are not all the same. And they pale in comprsn to the love that comes from God – love that is true, real, perfect, holy, divine – God's love for us, and our love for him and for oa. **Vs. 7a** – love for truth and love for oa. May our loving God bless us richly w/both.

1 John 4:1-11

Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. ² This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, ³ but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world.

⁴ You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. ⁵ They are from the world and therefore speak from the viewpoint of the world, and the world listens to them. ⁶ We are from God, and whoever knows God listens to us; but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. This is how we recognize the Spirit of truth and the spirit of falsehood.

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.