

**Week 8 Sermon Notes: God is love**  
**1 John 4:7-21**

**Something that struck me from God's word to share with GG...**

## **Week 8: God is love**

### **1 John 4:7-21**

*Aim: To love other disciples of Jesus as God has loved us through Jesus. He has made the atoning sacrifice for our sins so we may be his children. Therefore, we no longer fear the coming day of judgement, but our confidence is anchored in his love for us. It is not possible to be a disciple of Jesus and not love our brothers and sisters in Christ. As we love each other, the sacrificial love of Jesus, indeed the love of the unseen God is visible in us.*

#### **Getting Started:**

Share ways in which you experienced and appreciated love from others.  
*Action love rather than just emotional love would be good to pursue here*

**Pray** for understanding as we read God's word.

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#### **What is God saying?**

#### **Read 1 John 4:7-12**

What are we commanded?

*V7, v11 Love one another*

What is our motivation to love (and the warning)?

*V7-8 God's love for us, it's part of the family likeness – being born of God, it's the outworking of knowing God. God is love*

*V9-11 God showed his love by sending Jesus the Son so we might live through him. He did this when we did not love him – he loved the unlovely at extraordinary cost, as an atoning sacrifice (therefore dying) for our sins.*

*V8 Warning – if we don't love one another it reveals we don't know God – neither his love for us, nor love him – that gives pause for thought!*

The first half of verse 12 is expanded in vv13-16 and the second half in vv17-21

#### **Read 1 John 4:12-21**

How is our relationship with God described in vv12-16?

*V13 His Spirit enables and sustains this relationship and so too gives us confidence that we know God. You might recall the Spirit has been prominent since 3:24*

*V12-13 It has this 'we live in him' he 'lives in us' shape – extraordinarily we're connected and each sharing ourselves with the other (by the work/presence of the Spirit)*

*V14-15 It's grounded in how we respond to Jesus, his identity and saving work (by the work/presence of the Spirit)*

*V16 It comes with assurance that we truly know God (by the work/presence of the Spirit!)*

How is God's love made complete in us in vv17-21?

*By the same Spirit as earlier....*

*V17 we're growing more and more into the likeness of Jesus*

*V17-18 We need not, are growing not to fear God's judgement*

*V19-21 We love our brothers and sisters in Christ, those whom God has loved in the way he has loved us. As we love each other we experience the love of God personally face to face*

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## **Why is God saying this?**

How are God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit, the one God at work in all this talk of love

*Notice too it's the one God – three persons Father, Son and Spirit – each with their particular emphasis – acting together in love - that we know and makes this possible*

Reflect on experiences and people at church where you find them difficult to love. What reflections would you make about the interplay of things that contribute to that?

*Encourage people to consider their own role and responsibility as much as or more than others. We can too easily think 'if only they acted differently*

*or were different'. The times we live in before judgement are a factor too – sin remains, even in the experience of God's children.*

How has this word from God challenged you today to view and approach such situations and people now?

*As God's children/church we're not immune from sin and its consequences, but it's what we do when we experience them that is revolutionary.*

*We must love each other as disciples first and foremost because the God who loved us when we were unlovely – and we need to feel the weight of that – has loved our fellow disciples, and what he loves, we ought to love too.*

*We may need to confess and repent of specific thoughts, speech and actions in the past and seek reconciliation, as well as continue to practice them in the future.*

### **Prayer Starters**

- Praise God that he is love, that he has loved us, and sent his Son as a sacrifice for our sin
- Ask God to enable you to love Christian brothers & sisters because he loves them
- Ask God to enable us to delight in the knowledge that he is in us and we in him

### **Growing Growth Group Suggestion**

**Are there any people I should follow up this week?**