

1 John 4:7-21, "Love of Another Kind"

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"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these." Mark 12:30-31

Introduction: For Christ, true religion centers around relationships. True religion centers around loving God and loving others.

I. Love starts with God. 4:7,10

Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. 1 John 4:7

This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. 1 John 4:10

A. God's love (agape) is unconditional.
Grace means there is nothing we can do to make God love us more – no amount of spiritual calisthenics and renunciations, no amount of knowledge gained from seminaries and divinity schools, no amount of crusading on behalf of righteous causes. And grace means there is nothing we can do to make God love us less – no amount of racism or pride or pornography or adultery, or even murder. Grace means that God already loves us as much as an infinite God can possibly love." Philip Yancey, What's So Amazing About Grace.

B. God's love is an underserved love.

C. God's love holds nothing back. 4:10

"Father, forgive them for they do not know what they are doing." Luke 23:34

II. Our love for God is always in response to God's love for us.

"We love because he first loved us." 1 John 4:19

III. In this passage, love for God is demonstrated by love for others.

"Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another." 1 John 4:11.

A. "Agape" love is an unnatural love for people

B. We can only love others as God loves us through the gift of the Holy Spirit.

"This is how we know that we live in him and he in us: He has given us of his Spirit." 1 John 4:13

1. The Holy Spirit refined John's personality.

"Lord, do you want us to call fire down from heaven to destroy them?" Luke 9:54.

2. The Holy Spirit reshaped John's priorities.

"Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him. 'Teacher,' they said, 'we want you to do for us whatever we ask.' 'What do you want me to do for you?' he asked. They

replied, 'Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory.'" Mark 10:35-37.

IV. It is this love that sets us apart.

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."
John 13:34-35

A. This love is a giving love

"This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth."
1 John 3:17

B. It is a forgiving love

*"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, **just as in Christ God forgave you.**" Ephesians 4:32*