

That You May Know — 1 John 4:7-12 – Part 2

John flips the coin from talking about protecting against false teachers and now talks about love. We are called to defend against doctrinal error, but this cannot be divorced from love. We have been given an example of love in Christ. A sacrificial and others centered care and concern. John points out in these verses why love is important and the source of where we get it. In part 2 of this text, we look at some specific application points for the believers in the church.

Discussion questions — *do not feel the pressure to cover them all

1. We tried to work through 3 big questions impacting all believers and especially in the context of the local church. “What does this sacrificial love really look like?” “Why is it so difficult to live this out?” “What can we do to grow in this area?” What were your initial thoughts for each of these questions? How do you personally need to understand and grow in these areas?
2. Understanding what the sacrificial love looks like clearly is exemplified in Christ. We know that from the Scripture. We see in 1 Corinthians 13:1-10 the characteristics of this love pointed out to us by the Apostle Paul. Take some time and walk through the characteristics and discuss how those characteristics should be evident in the life of the believer and the church. Which ones do you most wrestle with and why? Discuss which ones you have seen other believers you know grow in.
3. We all should want to be loving as believers and may even make an effort towards that end. However, it can be a difficult thing. Why do you struggle to be loving towards other believers? Do you believe you are the most loving that you can be with the people you gather with? What hinders you from seeking to stir them up to love and good works or encourage them (i.e. don’t know them, never met them, I have my group, etc.)? Have you ever experienced a struggle or hardship that later led you to love more? Explain.
4. How might we grow in this area of love towards other believers? We pointed out that the key is not focusing on how we are loving or not loving but how we have been loved by Christ. What are some ways that you are able to meditate and focus on the sacrificial love of Christ? What hinders you the most from being overwhelmed by this life-giving love?
5. Who is someone that you can pray for who needs to experience the sacrificial love of Christ for the first time? How might you show love to that individual this week? Who is another believer that you know that could use prayer and encouragement this week?