

**DEVOTED**  
*"One Another" 1 John 4:7-12*  
May 4, 2025

**INTRO.:** I really enjoy coaching track and cross country, and I particularly enjoy coaching middle school young people. You never know what you're going to get any given day. Currently, we are in track season and one of the things we like to stress is that this is a team sport. This is a challenging concept because in all events, except the relays, it is you competing. You are not dependent on someone else for your results. When they aren't competing in one of their events, we encourage them to cheer on their teammates. You score individually but, in the end, they total all the individual points and the relays to come up with a team score. We ask them to stay for the entire meet if at all possible to encourage the team concept. We are a team, and we need to function as a team. There are times when we ask them to do an event that may not be one of their favorites to help the team. It's not just about their individual success and accomplishments and we want them to see the bigger picture. We want them to be willing to encourage their teammates, to sacrifice for the sake of the team, to work together to achieve greater success together, to be there when a teammate doesn't get the results they would like, and to develop friendships. This morning, we are looking at the theme, *One Another*. Why is it such a big deal that fellow believers love one another. Do I really need others in my life? Why can't I just do this Christian life on my own. Relationships can be difficult and challenging. We are all sinners, and we are so prone to sin against one another. Wouldn't my life be so much easier if I could just be my own team? As we do every Sunday, we are going to look at what the Word of God has to say about this theme of *One Another* and the need for us to love one another. This is a follow up to what Jeff Denlinger, President of World Venture, shared last week. The passage we will be examining is 1 John 4:7-12 and we will be looking at four main points, **THE SOURCE**, **THE SERIOUSNESS**, **THE SACRIFICE**, and **THE SIGNIFICANCE**. Let's begin by standing and reading this passage together.

**1 John 4:7–8** 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. **12** No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

**THE SOURCE**                      v. 7a

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

*"Dear friends:"* Other translations translate the first word of verse 7 as *"beloved."* John uses this word six times in this letter, expressing his heart felt love and concern as a shepherd to the recipients of this letter. It is a form of the word *"agape."* Before he gives them this challenge, he wants to assure them of his love for them. As a shepherd it is so important that the sheep know that you love them. Look at what Peter has to say in his first epistle.

**1 Peter 5:2–3** Be shepherds (this is a command) of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; **3** not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.

*"let us love one another:"* this is a present tense form of the verb, *"agape,"* God empowered love. This is to be ongoing in the life of a follower of Christ. It is not optional. John also uses this phrase, *"love one another"* in verses 11 and 12.

Why should you and I love one another. The first point he makes is that *"love comes from God."* God is the source of love and since this love comes from God, it is impossible to have unless a person has a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ. If you are trying to do this on your own strength and power you will fail miserably. John points out the need to be connected with God.

**John 15:1–5** "I am (I, I am: present tense) the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. **2** He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. **3** You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. **4** Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. **5** "I am (I, I am: present tense) the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains (abides: present tense) in me and I in him, he will bear (to bear, to bring forth: present tense) much fruit; apart from me you can (present tense) do (present tense) nothing.

What we are talking about this morning you CANNOT do without knowing Christ as Savior and Lord! If you know Christ as Savior and Lord you CANNOT do this unless you are walking with Him!

Believers are called to continually love one another, knowing that the source of love is God. The second thing we want to look at is:

### **THE SERIOUSNESS**

v. 7b-8

**1 John 4:7-8** 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.

*"Everyone who loves **has been born of God**"* "has been" is a perfect tense (action in the past with ongoing results). It is also a passive verb which means someone else is doing the action. We don't come to faith on our own for God needs to work in our heart, convicting us of sin and the need of a Savior.

**Ephesians 2:4-5** But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, **5** made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.

*"have been saved:"* is a perfect tense (action in the past with ongoing results). It is also a passive verb which means someone else is doing the action.

God gets all the glory in our salvation, in our being born of God!!

*Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God:* "knows:" this is a present tense verb signifying an ongoing action of knowing God. Our relationship with God is secure.

*"Whoever does not love does not know God:"* to not love one another indicates that you really do not know God. The word "know" is in the past tense indicating this person has never known God. I would say this is very serious! Why does not loving one another indicate that the person doesn't know God?

*"because God is love:"* this is in the present tense. John is not saying here that God is loving, although He is loving. He is communicating that this is the very essence of God. To accurately define *agape* love you must look at God.

God defines love, love does not define God (John MacArthur). You can't begin with man to define love. Many people determine God is not loving because they have come up with their definition of love and rate God on that definition.

From John Stott: Not only is God the source of all true love; he is love in his inmost being. There are three other statements in the New Testament concerning what God is in substance and nature: he is 'spirit' (John 4:24), 'light' (1 John 1:5) and 'a consuming fire' (Heb. 12:29 from Deut. 4:24).

In what ways has God shown He is love? Let's go back to Genesis when He created mankind in His image and made it so man could have fellowship with Him. He didn't need us to become more complete and He didn't need to make us so we could have fellowship with Him. How about redemption?

**2 Corinthians 5:21** God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

A person who truly knows God will desire to be like Him, to display this God given love to others. To not love is to not know God. How much more serious can you get? The source of love is God, the seriousness of loving one another is tied to the essence of God. The third reason to love one another is because of:

### **THE SACRIFICE**

v. 9-10

**1 John 4:9** 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.

*"this is how God **showed** His love among us:"* "showed:" revealed (past tense). This is a word that refers to the disclosure of things formerly hidden (Gary Burge). God has already done this! It's out in the open! How did He reveal His love to us?

*"He sent his one and only Son into the world:"* God took the initiative in sending His one and only Son. This points to the uniqueness of Jesus Christ. He is God, the Son! Look at how many times the word, *"God,"* is repeated in this section we are looking at.

**1 John 4:7–12** 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. **12** No one has ever seen **God**; but if we love one another, **God** lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

What was the purpose in God sending His Son into the world?

*"that we might live through him:"* Remember, what are we without Christ? We are dead in our sins!

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

*This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us:* this is all about what God has done, how He has loved us.

*"sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins:"* "atoning sacrifice:" this is the word *propitiation* which refers to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ meeting or satisfying the just demands of the righteous and holy God. He became our substitute, dying in our place, for our sins. It is through Christ's sacrifice that we can be reconciled to God. It is the same word used in 1 John 2:2.

**1 John 2:1–2** My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. **2** He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

This is no reciprocation by God, meeting a person halfway because he has shown some desire to be right with his master. The initiative is entirely God's. He decides to manifest his love to those who do not love him and who do not want to love him, to enemies and rebels armed to the teeth against him, to a world of lost sinners. Let us acknowledge once and for all that if it were not for the fact that God is love, we would have no expectation of mercy or forgiveness, no hope and no future. The initiative in the work of man's salvation belongs entirely to the God of love (David Jackman).

The source of love is God, the seriousness of loving one another is tied to the essence of God. The sacrifice that showed this love was God sending His one and only Son to be the propitiation for our sins. This brings us to:

## **THE SIGNIFICANCE**

### **v. 11-12**

What difference does all this make? We have seen the seriousness of loving one another for the person who does not love does not know God. John now lays out the significance in relationships to others.

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

*"since God so loved us:"* The word love is in the past tense because His love was shown through Jesus Christ. His love was not a theoretical love. There is proof of what Jesus Christ has done.

*"we also ought to love one another:"* "ought:" this is a present tense. There is an obligation placed on every believer because of what Jesus Christ has done. This obligation is not one of drudgery but because of gratefulness. We should want to imitate God's love for He is the One we worship and serve. Not because, "I have to," but instead because, "I get to!" We are challenged in the Bible to love as God through Christ has loved us.

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

**John 15:13** Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.

**1 John 3:16** 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.

**Ephesians 5:1–2** Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children **2** and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

My life is not about me but about Him!

**1 John 4:12** No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

*“no one has ever seen God:”* Jesus Christ was the visible manifestation of God.

Look at Jesus’ reply after Philip asks Jesus to show them the Father.

**John 14:9** Jesus answered: “Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?”

*but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us* “love:” present tense. If we show this ongoing love it is an open, visible display of God to others.

Just think of the significance of this statement. As you and I show this type of love others get a picture of who God is and how he is love. How important is that? How awesome is that? I have heard it said of believers as it relates to unbelievers, “You may be the only Bible the unbeliever reads.” Our love for one another may be the only visible display the unbeliever has of God. Isn’t it truly amazing that God has chosen to reveal Himself through the visible love of believers?

### SO WHAT???

The coaches of the track team stress to the young people that we are a team, and we need to believe that we are in this together. We also remind them before each meet that our actions and attitudes reflect Danville Middle School and themselves. What we’ve talked about this morning goes to a much deeper level. When we love one another it is a visible display of God to both those without Jesus and those who know Him.

**John 13:34–35** “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. **35** By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

\*Am I connected to the true source of love? Do I know Jesus Christ as my Savior and Lord? It is the only way I will be able to show the type of love we’ve shared this morning. To not show this type of love shows that I don’t know God.

\*In what ways am I showing the type of love that God has in sending His one and only Son as a propitiation for my sins?

Francis Schaeffer, in his book, *The Mark of a Christian*, listed two practical ways Christians can manifest love for each other.

1) Be willing to apologize and seek forgiveness from those we have wronged.

2) Be willing to grant forgiveness. In light of the eternal forgiveness that comes through the cross, Christians should be eager to forgive the temporal offenses committed against them.

How about my willingness to sacrifice for someone else who is going through some difficult times?

\*my time

\*my resources (not just money)

\*provide a meal/ a ride

\*check up on someone you haven’t seen lately

\*when a fellow believer walks away from the Lord go to them

\*Would there be enough evidence to prove that I’m a Christ follower?

\*Take some time every day this week to thank God for His love

-that He is the source of love

-that He is love

-that He showed His love in sending His one and only Son