

# 1 John 4:16-21

## Perfect Love

So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because as he is so also are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love. We love because he first loved us. If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.

## 1 John 4:16-21

When we live in God, He makes our love perfect (4:16-17)

- What does it mean to "live in God"?
  - It means that God lives in us (4:15-16)
  - It means we believe that Jesus is the Son of God (4:15)
  - It means that Jesus's words are in us (John 15:7)

When we live in God, He makes our love perfect (4:16-17)

- What is perfect love?
  - "Perfect" means "complete" or "mature"
  - Perfect love frees us from fear and leads us to love other Christians

## 1. Perfect love frees us from fear of God's judgment (4:17-18)

### Wrong ways to be fearless:

- Ignore death. Distract yourself so you never think of it.
- Deny judgment.

### Christian fearlessness:

- Acknowledge that you deserve judgment, but seek rescue in Jesus.

This is how the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

1 John 4:9-10

For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!"

Romans 8:15

## 1. Perfect love frees us from fear of God's judgment (4:17-18)

Judgment and God's love are two aspects of our spirituality that deserve more attention.

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

## 2. Perfect love causes us to love other Christians (4:19-21)

John is concerned to guard people against self-deception.

And in the hearing of all the people Jesus said to his disciples, "Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes, and love greetings in the marketplaces and the best seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at feasts, who devour widows' houses and for a pretense make long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation."

Luke 20:45-47

## 2. Perfect love causes us to love other Christians (4:19-21)

John is concerned to guard people against self-deception.

- Outward acts of worship are empty show if they are not motivated by true love for God.

Love for God always leads to love for fellow Christians, because they are our brothers and sisters in God's family.

Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.'

“Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’ Then they also will answer, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?’ Then he will answer them, saying, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’”

Matthew 25:34-45

## **2. Perfect love causes us to love other Christians (4:19-21)**

Love for God always leads to love for fellow Christians, because they are our brothers and sisters in God’s family.

- There is no option in the New Testament for “I love Jesus but I don’t love the church.”