

## **I John 4:7-21** **Love Completely**

### **Introduction:**

John is sometimes called “the apostle of love,” no doubt because he uses the “love” more times than any other author in the Bible. John is referred to by himself as “the disciple whom Jesus loved” (John 19:26; 20:2; 21:7, 20) Nowhere does John stress the need to love more than in these verses from the fourth chapter. To John this is the final exam to prove whether or not you are truly a Christian.

True knowledge according to John can only be when we love one another. Faith without love is a dead faith. As John Calvin puts it, “Away, then, with that foolish gloss respecting unformed faith, for when anyone separates faith from love, it is the same as though he attempted to take away heat from the sun.”

### **I. Love and the Character of God – v.7-8**

#### **A. Three tests: Obedience, Love and Doctrine**

1. Love one another – v.7,11,12

#### **B. Love flows from the very nature of God –v.8 cf. John 4:24; I John 1:5**

1. John’s aim is not to teach Theology Proper
2. Trinity – v.9-11 Love is the very nature of each member of the Trinity.

### **II. Love and the Incarnation – v.9-11**

#### **A. Three aspects of the Incarnation:**

1. There is the fact that God gave His Son – v.9; II Cor. 9:15
2. The measure of God’s great love is expressed in the ultimate death of His Son – v.10; Rom. 8:31-39
3. The true measure of God’s love is expressed in Christ died for sinners – v.10; Rom. 5:6,8,10

### **III. Love and the Holy Spirit – v.12-16**

#### **A. Evidence that we have the Spirit**

1. That we confess Christ before men – v.15
2. That we have the Seal of the Spirit – Eph. 1:13; 4:30

### **IV. Love and the Judgment Day – v. 17-21**

#### **A. Love reaches its ultimate stages of perfection in heaven – v.12, 17**

1. How does God’s love become perfected in us?
2. Answer: Love grows and matures like fruits on the tree – (Joel Beeke)

#### **B. Two aspects of Mature love:**

1. Confidence in view of God’s Judgment – v.17-18 cf. 2:28 **Turn To: Acts 17:22-31** (Joel 3:14; Matt. 25:31-46; Ezek. 20:33-44; Rev. 20:11-15) Rom. 5:5
2. The reality of loving the brethren – v.19-21  
Real love has a measuring stick – agape – Divine Love, used 23 times in this chapter.