

1 John 4 v7 - 21

⁷ 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.

¹³ This is how we know that we live in him and he in us: He has given us of his Spirit. ¹⁴ And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Saviour of the world. ¹⁵ If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in them and they in God. ¹⁶ And so we know and rely on the love God has for us.

God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them. ¹⁷ This is how love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment: In this world we are like Jesus. ¹⁸ There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

¹⁹ We love because he first loved us. ²⁰ Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen. ²¹ And he has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister.

WHY should we love God's Family?

- It's a **Command** (v21)
- **Measure** of the condition of our faith (v8, v20)
- **Confidence** of our salvation (v17)
- **Victory** over fear (v18)
- **Reflection** of what God has done (v10-12) and the witness to others (John 13 v37)
- **Promise** of God's love living in us (v12, v16)

HOW we love one another?

- **Faith** (v15, 16)
- **Holy Spirit** (v13)
- **Grace** (v11, 19)

Practical ways to show love

1. Words of affirmation
2. Acts of service
3. Gifts
4. Quality time
5. Touch (make sure it's appropriate!)

(Gary Chapman: "The 5 love languages")

Factors: relational closeness

1. Direct contact
2. Continuity of contact
3. Common purpose
4. Multiple contexts
5. Parity of power

(Mark Green cites the Cambridge Think Tank)

"a world of difference between **friendliness** and **friendship**" (Mark Greene)

Being a true friend

- **Be there**
- **Be aware**
- **Care**
- **Share**

(Guy's advice !)

Resolving conflict, healing relationships

- Love, forgiveness & unity are a command. Talk & sort it!
- Separate the person from the problem & remember they are a Child of God
- Take the plank out of your own eye, humble yourself at the cross
- Remember Jesus is coming back for His 'bride'. It's our duty to ensure the church is in great condition!