

The First Epistle of John

(Week 44 – 1John 4:17-18)

- I. Review: (1John 4:11-16)
 - A. No one has seen God, but when others see God's love in us, they see His reflection in us.
 - B. The evidence of God's indwelling is stated three different ways:
 - 1. He has given us of His Spirit
 - a. Love is OF His Spirit (Galatians 5:22)
 - b. Goodness, patience, kindness, gentleness, self-control, etc. is OF His Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23)
 - c. Life is OF His Spirit (John 6:63)
 - 2. We confess that Jesus is the Son of God
 - 3. We abide in love
- II. John re-emphasizes the topic of love (Pt 3)
 - A. Of all the important matters of life, none is more important than what John mentions in verse 17...
 - B. 1John 4:17 (ESV), "*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.*"
 - 1. It is said that more than half of Americans believe in hell but less than 5% believe they may be going there.
 - 2. In this passage, John tells us how to have confidence on that day!
 - a. **Question: When we first become Christians, what was our main concern?**
 - i. Forgiveness of sins!
 - ii. Stopping the practice of certain sins!
 - b. Along with what was mentioned above, a Christian must possess an increasing desire to love others!
 - i. "*By this...*" refers back to the second half of 4:16, "*...God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.*"
 - ii. When we abide in God and His love, love is perfected, resulting in confidence at the day of judgment.
 - c. John gives the negative side of things in the next verse:
 - i. 1John 4:18 (ESV), "*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.*"
 - 1. Fear shows evidence that we have not loved others as God commands.
 - C. John makes four basic points in 1John 4:17-18
 - 1. **There will be a day of judgment and we must have biblically based confidence as you face that day.**
 - a. There is a judgment day:
 - i. Jesus spoke of it in Matthew 7:21-23; 25:31-46
 - ii. Paul told the men of Athens of it in Acts 17:31
 - iii. Paul spoke of it to Felix, the Roman governor, in Acts 24:25
 - iv. Hebrews 9:27 says "*And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment*"
 - v. This judgment is described as a lake of fire in Revelation 20:14

- b. You want to have a biblically based confidence as you face that day...
- 2. **The evidence of God's love flowing through us into others (perfect love) gives us confidence to face judgment day!**
 - a. In verse 17, John emphasizes on love being perfected with us
 - i. Perfect means "complete" or "maturity", therefore, when love is put into practice, it reaches its intended goal.
 - ii. Remember earlier, John said in 1John 3:17-18, "*But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? ¹⁸Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.*"
 - iii. In essence, 1John 4:17 is saying the same thing John said earlier in 1John 3:14, "*We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death.*"
 - b. **Question: What does John's great emphasis of love imply?**
 - i. That a Christian is to be involved in close relationships with other Christians, where there is a willingness to work through misunderstandings and hurt feelings.
 - c. Seeing sacrificial love increasing in your life gives you confidence in the day of judgment!
 - d. John explains why...
- 3. **God's love through us to others gives confidence because it shows that we are like Jesus**
 - a. 1John 4:17 says we have confidence ... "*because as he is so also are we in this world.*"
 - b. Here are questions we may ask ourselves:
 - i. "Am I at all like Jesus?"
 - ii. "Does my life display any resemblance to the love of Jesus in this world?"
 - iii. "Would others, especially those who live with me, say that they see the love of Christ in my daily behavior?"
 - c. No one loves faultlessly, love is a fruit of the Spirit, and it takes time to grow and mature.
 - d. But if there is no evidence that the fruit of love is growing in your life, you need to do some serious soul searching!
 - i. 2Corinthians 13:5 (ESV), "*Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you fail to meet the test!*"
- 4. **If we fear judgment, that is evidence that we have not loved others as God intends.**
 - a. 1John 4:18 says there is no fear in love!
 - b. What type of fear? Fear of condemnation!
 - c. If you fear judgment, you are not practicing biblical love for others.