



# + YOU

Winter 2024  
A Name Like No Other

**Sermon Title: God is Love**

**To be used with Session 3: The Love Expressed in God's Name**

**Scripture: 1 John 4:7-12**

**Connection with the Study:** To complement the study, "The Love Expressed in God's Name," this study will help listeners understand that God's name expresses more than the idea of an eternal being. As believers, we know that His name expresses His nature, that which is His very makeup. At His core, God is love. God is the only one in the universe who is perfectly loving because He is love. God is the source of all love. Love comes from God; therefore, we can fully depend upon His love and, being made His children, we can fully love one another and others. We are new creatures, full of the Holy Spirit, imitators of Christ, and loved by God, who is love Himself. His name expresses His essence. God is love.

**Introduction:** There was a boy who was forever breaking the rules and always getting into trouble at school. His father could not understand why. Despite his good upbringing, the father just couldn't figure out why the boy wouldn't mind. One day when his son was upstairs playing around with his baseball and ended up breaking one of his bedroom windows. The father headed upstairs and took off his belt. The boy knew what was coming so he voluntarily bent over and kneeled next to his bed, but the father said, "Son, here, take this belt" which his son did.

The father insisted that the boy beat him repeatedly as hard as he could, and that he was taking the punishment for his son. The son cried, but relented, following his father's directions. "When Jesus went to the cross for us," the father said, "He took the worst punishment ever inflicted. He took the punishment He didn't deserve to save those who didn't deserve saving." This is who God is. God is love.<sup>1</sup>

### **Love proves our salvation (1 John 4:7-8)**

Since God is love, those who love others are proving the validity of their salvation. Love is the proof of truly knowing God. Conversely, one who is unloving proves he does not know God. In a world where words, including love, are being redefined, we must realize that true love has the other person's best interest at heart. Actions of true love involve self-sacrifice and self-denial for the sake of someone else. There is no selfishness in love.

We must comprehend that God's very essence is love, therefore He is the very source of love. We must also embrace the fact that we are new creatures after salvation, having been reconciled to God and inheriting the nature of God through Jesus Christ. Our love proves our salvation. How many Christians seem grumpy, and even hateful? How many congregations have quarrels and

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from <https://churchtechtoday.com/3-great-sermon-illustrations-on-gods-love/>, accessed 9/12/2023.

struggles which display anything but love? We are without excuse, being of God and knowing God is love.

### **God proved His love through Jesus' sacrifice (1 John 4:9-10)**

By sending Jesus so we can live through Him, God proved His love for us. In no way was God required to do this. He is complete and without insecurity. He did not need to send Jesus rescue us so He might receive affection. God sent Jesus to be the propitiation for our sins, to turn God's wrath toward sin away from us and toward Jesus as the sacrifice for our transgressions against Him. This immense action proves God's love for us. While we were yet sinners, Jesus died for us and took the penalty for our sins.

It is the greatest act of love in the universe! We deserved the death penalty, but Jesus took it, exchanging His innocence for our guilt that we may be allowed into God's perfect presence without blemish. Jesus took our guilt so we could be found guiltless.

### **Our love proves God's love before others (1 John 4:11-12)**

Since God loves us so much, we are also to love one another. God's name and nature are perfect love. Our love proves we belong to God.

Our love for one another proves God's love. Our love is in response to His love. A Christian, being filled by God's love, must live a lifestyle of love for God and others. God's love is unconditional. We did nothing to earn it. Our love must be the same. We are commanded to love one another. Verse 12 declares that no one has physically seen God but that our love proves His love lives in us and our love for one another displays God's love. Others should see God through our love. His love is proven by our love. We are responsible for showing God's essence—His love—to a world of unbelievers. Have you ever considered that your display of love is someone else's perception of God?

**Conclusion:** A Christian who does not love is an anomaly. God is love. Our love proves our salvation. God proved His love through Jesus's sacrifice. Our love proves God's love before others. A person who has been truly saved by the blood of Jesus Christ displays God's love by loving others. If a tree does not produce sweet apples but produces bitter fruit, it is not an apple tree. If we observe our lives and do not see the fruit of being children of God, we must repent and ask God to help us either rediscover our first love or become a true child of God. God is love. His children display love. How is your fruit? Spend time asking God to help you inspect the fruit of your life. Ask Him to lead you to understand how your life either affirms or denies your claim to be a Christian. Commit to following Him more legitimately by proving your love for God by loving others.

*Dr. Kevin Garrett is a husband, father, and grandfather, and serves as pastor at First Baptist Church of Atmore, Alabama. His book about assimilation, [You Belong Here](#), helps churches move people from guests to family. You can find him at [www.kevingarrett.org](http://www.kevingarrett.org).*