



Just Love and Live in God, Love like Jesus, in the Power of the Holy Spirit | 1 John 4:7-21

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By Pastor Ruthie Seiders

Group Leader Notes

We are more than halfway through our current sermon series, *Just Love*, carefully orchestrated by Pastor Tim. So far, we have talked about living in the light of Christ, responding to brokenness with love, getting involved in foster care, guarding against false teachings, checking our assumptions about others and choosing love, and testing everything we hear by the truth of Scripture. Today I am going to talk about how God has demonstrated his love for us, and how he calls us to share this love with others.

Questions: How can we know what God's love is, how do we live in it, and how do we know this is all true?

Bottom Line: Live in God. Love like Jesus. In the power of the Spirit.

Memory Verse: 1 John 4:19

We love because he loved us first.

Main Scripture Reading: 1 John 4:7-21

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 Savior 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.

Teaching Points:

- *Agape* is a love that is unconditional, self-sacrificial, a love that seeks out the best for the other person
 - God is love
 - God showed his love in Jesus
 - God loved us first
 - God give us the Sprit

Group Discussion

Begin in prayer before reading and discussing the text.

1. Pastor Ruthie started the message with the story of the Bible verses inscribed engraved on the inside of her and her husband John's wedding rings. What Bible verse has personal significance to you and why?
2. Pentecost is Pastor Ruthie's favorite holy day. What happened at Pentecost?
 - What does the Holy Spirit mean to you?
 - How does the Holy Spirit manifest in your daily life? *Give specific examples.*
3. Pastor Ruthie discussed how love is translated in various languages, including how multiple words are used for different contexts. Using everyday examples, discuss how you are loved by others, and then how you demonstrate love to the people around you.
4. Read 1 John 4:13-15.
 - There is nothing you need to do to earn God's love, all you need to do is accept it. Once you have accepted it, what is your response to this free gift of love and the Spirit?
 - Read verses 7, 11, & 21.
 - Before making decisions that will impact your relationships, consider asking yourself, "*What does love require of me?*"
5. Read Matthew 28:19-20.

¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

 - Everyone in your small group is in a different place on their spiritual journey. Ask volunteers to talk about different ways you can share your faith with others.

Let's Pray