

Showing God's Love

In his first epistle, John gives an extended treatment about love in chapter 4.

The passage of **1 John 4:7-21** in particular form a chiasm that emphasizes the truth that people cannot *see* God and his love, but *we can show them love the way He does*.

A (7-8a) Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, **and whoever loves** has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God,

B (8b) because **God is love**.

C (9a) In this **the love of God was made manifest among us,**

D (9b-10) that God **sent his only Son** into the world, so that we might live through him. ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and **sent his Son** to be the propitiation for our sins.

E (11) Beloved, if **God so loved us**, we also ought to **love one another**.

Emphasized point of the chiasm



F (12a) **No one has ever seen God;**

E' (12b) if we **love one another**, God abides in us and **his love** is perfected in us.

D' (13-15) By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because 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 Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.

C' (16a) So we have come to know and to believe **the love that God has for us**.

B' (16b) **God is love;**

A' (16c-21) and **whoever abides in love** abides in God, and God abides in him. ¹⁷ 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. ¹⁸ 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. ¹⁹ We love because he first loved us. ²⁰ If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. ²¹ And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.