



May 3, 2026
Series: Week 4
Pastor Ken

www.lebefree.org (NS-1)

Big Feelings – Bigger God!

The Tension

John can leave us wondering where we stand with God by striking fear into the hearts of people who exhibit sinful patterns and declaring that authentic followers of Jesus will exhibit supernatural love.

- Authentic followers of Jesus are defined by their love – Love is righteousness in action. John 14:15

This is the message you have heard from the beginning: We should love one another. 1 John 3:11

The life of every follower of Jesus should be defined by a love that can't be humanly explained. John 13:34

- **The Tension:** Does the way I'm living and loving qualify me as one who's been "born into God's family?"

What Love Looks Like

We know what real love is because Jesus gave up His life for us. So we also ought to give up our lives for our brothers and sisters. 1 John 3:16

Jesus suffered a physical death for us and His soul was crushed when His Father forsook Him. Mt. 27:14

Consider: To what degree does the immensity of Jesus' love for you shape how you feel about yourself?

- We aren't going to be very good at loving others until we're able to truly receive God's love. (NS-2)

Dear children, let's not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions. 1 John 3:18

Consider: What would it look like for you to give up your life for the person across the room?

- Personal sacrifice - Releasing resources - Giving up personal preferences - Put others first. Phil. 2:5-8

While John's defining of the good guys and the bad guys may leave us doubting our standing with God, his primary purpose for this letter is to help Christians know they are truly Children of God.

Big Feelings – Bigger God!

Even if we feel guilty, God is greater than our feelings, and He knows everything. 1 John 3:20

Reasons we may struggle to actually receive God's love: (1.) The ongoing activity of our sinful nature (2.) Our acts of sin cause us to feel disconnected from God. (3.) Satan keeps bringing up past failures and sins (4.) When we repeat the same sins, Satan seeks to make those sins define you (5.) False teaching that communicates that you must attain a certain level of righteousness to get saved or to remain saved. (NS-3)

The Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32) Overwhelmed by his sin, he felt the relationship with his father would never be the same - Then he saw his father lovingly running toward him. (NS-4)

- Our Father in heaven is more anxious to deliver compassion and mercy to us than our own hearts are.

"... and He knows everything." - If the One who sits on the throne of the highest court, the One who knows our failures and imperfections better than we do says we're OK, then we're OK! (NS-5)

Consider: What's been keeping you from actually receiving the love of your Father in heaven?

Practical Next Steps to truly receiving God's love: (1.) Tell Satan, Not Here - Not Now. You're a defeated foe. You have no right taking up space in my head. (1 John 3:8; Col. 2:15;) (2.) Warfare prayers based on the powerful Truth found in God's Word -> I'm God's child. (3:1) God has forgiven me. (1:9) God will never stop loving me.

(Rom. 8:31-39) (3.) Pause to remember times in your life that can only be explained by God. (4.) Share God's love. Build strong relationships with people who can share His love with you. (NS-6)

As we get better at truly receiving God's Love, it transforms how we relate to Him: (1.) Our intimacy with Him grows. (2.) We feel more confident in talking to Him about everything. 1 John 3:21-24

Next Steps –

1. Watch any sermon series and work through our helpful sermon guides at www.lebefree.org
2. Further Study - Loving Like Jesus: John 10:11-18; 15:12-13; 1 Cor. 8:9; Phil. 2:3-8; 1 Peter 2:21-25
3. Which of these five reasons do you most relate to? Share this with a friend or your Life Group.
4. Read the story of the Prodigal Son. (Luke 15:11-32) Ask God to help you see your Father in heaven actually running toward you. Ask Him to help you truly receive what you know to be true.
5. Further Study - God knows you better than anyone: Psalm 103:13-18; 139:1-6; 13-18; Heb. 4:12-13
6. Take time to study through these four practical steps to receiving God's love and begin to implement regular rhythms in your life that help you receive His love in transforming ways.

Key Passages – (NLT)

1 John 3:11-24

This is the message you have heard from the beginning: We should love one another. ¹²We must not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and killed his brother. And why did he kill him? Because Cain had been doing what was evil, and his brother had been doing what was righteous. ¹³So don't be surprised, dear brothers and sisters, if the world hates you. ¹⁴If we love our brothers and sisters who are believers, it proves that we have passed from death to life. But a person who has no love is still dead. ¹⁵Anyone who hates another brother or sister is really a murderer at heart. And you know that murderers don't have eternal life within them. ¹⁶We know what real love is because Jesus gave up His life for us. So we also ought to give up our lives for our brothers and sisters. ¹⁷If someone has enough money to live well and sees a brother or sister in need but shows no compassion—how can God's love be in that person? ¹⁸Dear children, let's not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions. ¹⁹Our actions will show that we belong to the truth, so we will be confident when we stand before God. ²⁰Even if we feel guilty, God is greater than our feelings, and He knows everything. ²¹Dear friends, if we don't feel guilty, we can come to God with bold confidence. ²²And we will receive from Him whatever we ask because we obey Him and do the things that please Him. ²³And this is His commandment: We must believe in the name of His Son, Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as He commanded us. ²⁴Those who obey God's commandments remain in fellowship with Him, and He with them. And we know He lives in us because the Spirit He gave us lives in us.

John 14:15

“If you love me, obey my commandments.”

John 13:34

So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other.

Luke 15:17-20

“When he finally came to his senses, he said to himself, ‘At home even the hired servants have food enough to spare, and here I am dying of hunger! ¹⁸I will go home to my father and say, ‘Father, I have sinned against both heaven and you, ¹⁹and I am no longer worthy of being called your son. Please take me on as a hired servant.’” ²⁰“So he returned home to his father. And while he was still a long way off, his father saw him coming. Filled with love and compassion, he ran to his son, embraced him, and kissed him.

See your Father in heaven running toward you with open arms!