



## Grace Notes

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### 1 John 4:12-21

<sup>12</sup>No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.

<sup>13</sup>By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. <sup>14</sup>And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. <sup>15</sup>Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. <sup>16</sup>So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. <sup>17</sup>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. <sup>18</sup>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. <sup>19</sup>We love because he first loved us. <sup>20</sup>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. <sup>21</sup>And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.

*Heavenly Father, as You have loved us through Your Son, give us Your Spirit that this same love might be seen in us. Though Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.*

### Love Made Visible

Many of you know that I have had eye trouble for years. I was born with a condition called keratoconus, which is a corneal irregularity. It is similar to stigmatism, only worse. I have had corneal transplants in both eyes. I wear contact lenses and need to keep an eye on several things that are the result of those surgeries. I cannot tell you the number of times I have sat in the patient's chair at the eye doctor. Often, they will put a die in my eyes so that they can see things better. I know that there are also some scans that a person might get that requires putting dies in the blood. Dies or stains are used to make the invisible, visible.

Modern science has discovered that certain dies can make, otherwise invisible things visible. In this passage it says *no one has ever seen God*. God is invisible. So, how do we see or know that the invisible is present? John tells us in this passage, that it is love that makes God known. *If we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us*. We cannot see God, but we can see and experience love. God abides in those who love. How can we know that? John says, *By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit*. The Spirit does two things for us. He creates faith within us. It is by faith that we believe in God and trust His word. The Spirit also produces fruit by that faith. This fruit is summarized as loving God above all things and loving our neighbor as ourselves. God abides in us by faith and where God abides, there is love.

As John states, *Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us*. It is by Spirit wrought faith that we know God loves us and that God is love. If God abides in us, love abides in us, because God is love. We cannot see God, but we can see love.

God's love is perfected in us when we believe in Jesus, the love of God incarnate. It was God's love for us that moved Him to sacrifice His only Son that we might be saved. With God's love in us we are the evidenced of His love in the world. John writes, *as he is so also are we in this world*. God's presence in this world is to be evident by our love for one another. We are motivated to love one another because God has loved us. *We love because he first loved us*.

The point that John is making is that we cannot love God without loving our brother. Likewise if God is present in our lives we will love our brother. He says, *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. And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother*. We cannot see God, but we can see our brother in need. Our brother cannot see God either, but he can see God's love in us. This is our calling, to make God known to the world, by loving one another.

### Please pray for:

- The love of God to work in us so that we might love one another.
- Those who struggle to love certain people in their lives, that they be inspired by God's Spirit.
- Mothers as they labor in love for their children and children that they might honor and love their mothers.
- Relief from the coronavirus pandemic.