

Personal/ Small Group Sermon Study

What Is Love?

Week of January 9, 2022 A.D.

(Note: For every question which appears in this study, always give the reasoning and/or the explanation for each of your answers.)

Read 1 John 4:7

1. Is God every person's (a) creator? (b) god? and/or (c) father? What do the "Dear friends" to whom John is writing have in common with one another? Does God command every Christian to love every person, everywhere, at all times, and always to the same degree?
2. Does love come only from God? Is love a common emotion which naturally exists in all people, at all times, and always to the same degree? Do we live in a loving world?

Read Deuteronomy 6:4-5

3. Why was this command given only to the people of Israel? What is the meaning of (a) "the Lord" and (b) "your God"? Please state what it means to love God (a) with all your heart? (b) with all your soul? and (c) with all your strength?

Read Leviticus 19:18

4. Is it "natural" for a human to (a) seek revenge? and/or (b) bear a grudge? Is it natural to "love your neighbor as yourself"?

Read John 13:34-35

5. To whom does Jesus give this command? Is obedience to this command optional or mandatory? What, if anything, makes this command different from Leviticus 19:18? Does this command apply to all Christians at all times? Must a person be a disciple of Christ in order to be a Christian?

6. Please analyze, critique, and discuss this statement: “Love is doing something helpful or kind for another person in Jesus’ name without giving any thought to the cost or the consequences to yourself.”
7. Using the definition of “love” as stated in paragraph 6 of these study notes, once again refer to and answer the questions found at paragraph 2 of these study notes.

Read 1 John 4:8-12

8. Refer to verse 8. What does it mean to “know God”? What does John mean when John says, “God is love”? Why must a person “love” if that person claims to “know God”?
9. Refer to verse 9. What does it mean “that we might live through him”? Do you live through God’s only Son? If not, why not? If so, how?
10. Refer to verse 10. Are all humans sinners? What is God’s punishment for sinners and why? How was Jesus “an atoning sacrifice for our sins”? Is the teaching of verse 10 a validation of the statement found at paragraph 6 of these study notes?
11. Is verse 11 a suggestion, a requirement, and/or a commandment for every person who claims to be a Christian? Can a person who claims to be a Christian enter heaven if he or she does not “love” all other Christians?
12. Refer to verse 12. How does this verse fit with John 14:9? How does God live in every Christian? Why does God not live in a non-Christian? How can God’s love be made complete in Christians? What does that “love (which) is made complete” look like? In your opinion, is the church in America a living example of the love of God? If not, what must the American church do in order to become that living example?

Consider: “This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands. This is love for God: to obey his commands.” 1 John 5:2-3