

The Message and Meaning of Love

Scripture: 1 John 4:14–21

Series: **Doctrine & Devotion: A Study in the First Epistle of John**

Sunday, October 18, 2015



REDEEMER
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Overview

Whether we articulate it or not, we all struggle with and seek to find our purpose and meaning in life. Often, we try to find the answers by worldly means. In 1 John 4, we find our identity, purpose, and meaning in the love of God in three ways: our message, hope, and life.

Corroborating Texts

Matthew 12:36; 2 Peter 3:7; 1 John 2:28

Discussion Questions

1. What do you see as your identity and purpose in life? Do you live as one who knows this identity and purpose (as given by God) or has another worldview captured your heart? What holds you back?
2. What is our one message as Christians? [The message of salvation—see 1 John 4:14,15] What are some competing messages that at times have taken priority over this one? What can prohibit us from sharing this one message with our families, neighbors, co-workers?
3. How do we know God's love? [we know it because Jesus died for us—you may find it helpful to discuss **atonement** and **propitiation**]
4. What is our confidence on the day of judgment? [God's love for us, with us, and in us being made mature and perfected; Jesus atoning for our sins (propitiation) We do not give account for our sins but for Jesus' righteousness] While we have no fear of condemnation, we do have the fear of the Lord. Discuss what this means. [Deep reverence for God's authority. A desire to obey and hatred of sin. It is the beginning of wisdom]
5. Pastor Joe states, "We only love because God loves first. This is not just an issue of sequence but its one of enablement." What does he mean? [You can only love because God has loved you and saved you.]
6. Love is a sign, an identifying mark that someone loves God. If you love God you will love those made in his image. Who are those you struggle to love? What does this reflect about your walk with God?
7. What is love characterized by? [compassion] What allows us to move forward in compassionate love? [Seeing others, doing life on life together—truly interacting, seeing each other face to face]