

Studies in Christianity Christian Living #11

S#1.

God is love

S#2.

Text : **I John 4: 7-21 ; Rom. 5: 6-11**

A. Our study of the basic elements of Christianity is progressing.

S#3.

1. We observed that the Christian in such a new creature he said to be born again.
2. However, being a babe in Christ must be a temporary state; he must develop.
3. Part of that development is to reach the point that the Christian lives to serve God.
4. Christian maturity does not just happen; it is a result of diet and exercise.

S#4.

- a. **I Pet. 2: 2** – like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation,
- b. **Heb. 5: 13** – For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant. **14** But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.

S#5.

5. Christian maturity creates within one a new heart which desires to walk with God.
6. In order to walk with God one must develop commonness with God.
7. Commonness with God springs forth from knowledge of God from His revelation.

B. No man can fully comprehend God, but there are elements of his character that He wants for us to emulate.

S#6.

1. God is infinite in all His attributes, but man has limits and inconsistencies.
 - a. We cannot be totally just because our emotions get in the way.
 - b. We cannot be totally holy because we dwell in weak flesh.
2. We cannot comprehend the power of God.
 - a. We cannot create or destroy matter ... only change it, rearrange it
 - b. God can speak matter into and out of existence.
3. Man cannot comprehend a being that is omnipresent.
 - a. How can a being be in every city at the same time all of the time ?
 - b. How can God hear all of the prayers and thoughts in every corner of the globe ?
4. Who can comprehend a God that dwells outside the scope of time ?
 - a. **Exod. 3:14** ... “I am has sent me.” God is eternally existent – no beginning or end.
 - b. It blows my mind that God sees ALL time at once .. *the first and last days are NOW*

C. Though we are incapable of complete comprehension, our goal is to reconfigure our lives to conform to what we do understand about God.

S#7.

1. Though we cannot comprehend absolute holiness, we strive to be holy.
2. We strive to be as just as we can be.

D. This lesson will explore one attribute of God that all Christians are required to have some success in emulating.

1. **I John 4: 7** – Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. **8** The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love

S#8.

2. **I John 4: 16** – We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

S#9.

3. The essential essence of God is love; we are created in God's image; and God requires that we reflect that aspect of our similitude in our lives.

E. This lesson will examine :

S#10.

1. Our understanding of the love that God presents in the bible.
2. The love of the Father for the Son.
3. God's love for mankind.

I. Love as presented in the scriptures.

S#11.

A. Love is an over uses and often misused term in the today's culture.

S#12.

1. I love peanut butter and Jelly, my dog, my
2. We say we love our parents, our children, and our spouse.
3. All these are properly different terms.

S#13.

B. People who commit immoral acts (*fornication, adultery*) call it “making love.”

1. When raging hormones cause lustful feels, people say they are “in love.”
2. Things which are prone to cause such feels are said to be “erotic.”
3. It comes from the Greek word “eros” which refers to feelings of passion.
4. “Eros” is not used in the bible, but other words for love appear frequently.

C. There is a word for love between members of one's family.

S#14.

1. Christians are instructed to have this familial love for each other.
Rom. 12:10 – Be devoted to one another in brotherly love;
give preference to one another in honor;

2. “devoted” philóstorgos, philio and storgé (cherishing one's kindred, especially parents or children); fond of natural relatives, i.e. fraternal towards fellow Christian: — kindly affectioned.

D. There is a love between friends which involves a feeling of closeness.

S#15.

1. **I Cor. 16: 22** – If anyone does not love the Lord, he is to be accursed.
2. “Love” *phileō* ... to approve of, to like, to treat affectionately or kindly, to welcome, to befriend

E. The most common word for love in the N.T. is the word that is always used in reference to God's love.

S#16.

1. **I John 4: 8** – The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love
2. “Love” agape ... unconditional love, benevolence, charity, value another above self
3. Scholar defined as : “*The engagement of the mind and the will in behalf of another.*”
4. “Agape” love does not require an emotional connection. **It is of the will.**
 - a. **Matt. 5: 43** – You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' ⁴⁴ "But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵ so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.
 - b. Thus, the Christian's relationship with God is dependent upon his developing the ability to love people he does not like and for whom he may have distain.

II. God's love is typified in His love for His Son, Jesus.

S#18.

A. God the Father loved God the Son before time began.

S#19.

1. In His “pastoral” prayer Jesus asked :
John 17:24 – Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, so that they may see My glory which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.
2. The disciples had only seen Jesus in His humbled state.
3. God also want Jesus to be lifted up in the eyes of the disciples. **S#20.**
Matt. 17: 5 – While he was still speaking, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold, a voice out of the cloud said, " This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him!"

B. The special love God had for Jesus was based on His obedience to His task. **S#21.**

1. **John 8: 29** – And the one who sent me is with me—he has not deserted me.
For I always do what pleases him.
2. **John 15: 10** – If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.

III. God has a special unconditional love for all mankind.**S#22.****A. Because God IS love so He cannot act from an unloving motive.****B. God loves His people with an everlasting love.****S#23.**

1. **Jer. 31: 3** – The Lord appeared to him from afar, saying, "I have loved you with an everlasting love; Therefore I have drawn you with lovingkindness.
2. We never have to worry that God will get angry with us and stop loving us.

C. God loves us even when we are wicked.

1. Though he loves them, God looks with extreme disfavor upon the wicked.

Psa. 5: 4 – For You are not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness; No evil dwells with You. **5** The boastful shall not stand before Your eyes; You hate all who do iniquity. (Hate = scorn) **Pas. 11:5**

S#24.

2. God requires that we love our enemies, He does likewise.

Rom. 5: 10 – For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

S#25**D. One can never be so wicked that God stops loving him/her.**

1. *"After all I've done, God could never love me."*

2. Jesus died because people were wicked and for people who were wicked.

Rom. 5: 6 – For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. **7** For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. **8** But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

S#26.

3. Jesus prayer for those who crucified Him.

Luke 23: 33 – When they came to the place called The Skull, there they crucified Him ... **34** But Jesus was saying, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing."

S#27.

4. Jesus/ God forgave thousands of those who crucified Him.

Acts 2: 38 – Peter said to them, " Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

S#28.**CONCLUSION :****A. So how do we respond to one whose very essence seeks our welfare ?**

1. We respond by reciprocating His love.

I John 4: 19 – We love, because He first loved us.

S#29.

2. We respond by obeying His command.

John 14: 15 – If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.

3. Jesus told Peter a way to prove his love for Him.

John 21:15 – ... Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Tend My lambs."

B. Have you proven your love ?

1. God proved his love for us.

John 3: 16 – For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, **S#30.** that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

2. Jesus proved His love for us.

Rom. 5: 8 – But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us

C. Sincere love will manifest itself in positive ways.

1. Lust seeks gratification ... *"If you love me you will ..."*

2. Love is demonstrated in positive ways.

- a. God gave His Son.

- b. Jesus gave His life.

- c. Paul gave up his career.

Phil. 3:8 – More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, **S#31.**

D. What has love for God cost me ?

S#32.

1. Has my walk with God been a quest to receive or a demonstration of devotion ?
2. Ask ... what is my level of commitment to God ?

INVITATION :

S#33. ... Communion slide

Lesson Text :**I John 4: 7-21**

7 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. **8** The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love. **9** By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. **10** In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. **11** Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. **12** No one has seen God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us. **13** By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. **14** We have seen and testify that the Father has sent the 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. **16** We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. **17** By this, love is perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in 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, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love. **19** We love, because He first loved us. **20** If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one 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, that the one who loves God should love his brother also.

Romans 5: 6-11

6 For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. **7** For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. **8** But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. **9** Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. **10** For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. **11** And not only this, but we also exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.