

Left over from last week's study of I John 3 – Obedience

**I John 3:18-22 – Confidence and Assurance before God.** Obedient loving action is a way to gain inner peace. It shows that we are truly born again (**I John 3:18-19**). God graciously will correct us if our thoughts and actions are not in harmony with His will. He patiently reveals sin to us incrementally, in a process of gradual growth (**I John 3:20-21**). See Hebrews 12:1-11; Philippians 3:14-15; Proverbs 4:18 cp. John 16:12-15.

Obedient loving action is a way to see a productive prayer life. The evidence that we are born again is not that we merely say prayers, but that our prayers are answered. Do not think that we can earn the answer to our prayers. Rather, we must see that God will not bless hypocrisy. How can we expect God to listen to us if we are not willing to listen to Him? (**I John 3:22**). See I John 5:13-15; Psalm 66:18-20; Proverbs 15:8,29; 28:9; Isaiah 59:1-2; I Peter 3:12 cp. James 4:1-4; 5:16.

**I John 3:23-24 – Submission to Christ and a prevailing spirit of love to the brethren.** This is the evidence of an intimate and fruitful relationship with God's Spirit. We will recognize the difference, if we are grieving or quenching the Spirit (Galatians 5:16-26; Ephesians 4:17-32; I Thessalonians 5:14-24).

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### **Love (I John 4:7-21)**

We are saving I John 4:1-6 for our discussion of truth in the next section of this outline. Suffice it to say, the matter of loving the truth and loving the brethren are very closely related (I John 5:2; II John 1:1-11; III John 1:1-4; Ephesians 4:11-16,25; Philippians 1:3-11).

### **I John 4:7-8,16 – To know God is to dwell in an environment of love.**

The statement, "God is love" is profound and could take volumes to explain. When we consider other profound words that describe God (i.e. holy, sovereign, omnipotent, omnipresent, etc.), we tend to get one picture of God that is quite different than when we talk about His goodness, mercy, longsuffering, kindness and Love. The examples of stern deities of the world's religions and the earthly monarchs and sovereigns throughout history mar our understanding of the first list of descriptions of God. The passions and affections of man mar the second list of descriptions. Humanly, we can't imagine God or reconcile the two lists (I Corinthians 1:19-21; 2:14). How can a Holy God, who condemns sin, also be loving and full of compassion?

For now, let's think of a few ways that we can see how God is love.

- That God created us in His image, for fellowship and intimacy with us, is an evidence of love.
- That the whole creation is powerfully and benevolently designed to meet all our needs is evidence of love.
- That God did not wipe-out mankind and His creation, when sin entered the world, is evidence of love.
- That God would sacrifice Himself to redeem us back from sin and secure an eternal future with us is evidence of love.
- That God would endure millennia of the rebellion and sin of man to safely gather all His elect is evidence of love.
- That God's Spirit would reside with us, so that we are never lost or forsaken, is evidence of love.
- That God would forever separate all evil (Satan, demons, unbelievers) from us to give us a perfect eternal home with Him is evidence of love.

**I John 4 – Love ... *to be continued next week***