

J.J.

PERFECT LOVE DRIVES OUT FEAR

1 John 4:7-21

1 John 4: 7 Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. 8 Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. 9 This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. 10 This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. 11 Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. 12 No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

16 And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them. 17 This is how love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment: In this world we are like Jesus. 18 There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

After a long illness, a woman died and arrived at the Gates of Heaven. While she was waiting for Saint Peter to greet her, she peeked through the Gates. She saw a beautiful banquet table. Sitting all around were her parents and all the other people she had loved and who had died before her. They saw her and began calling greetings to her -- "Hello" "How are you! We've been waiting for you!" "Good to see you." When Saint Peter came by, the woman said to him, "This is such a wonderful place! How do I get in?"

"You have to spell a word," Saint Peter told her.

"Which word?", the woman asked.

"Love."

"The woman correctly spelled "Love" and Saint Peter welcomed her into Heaven.

"About two years later, Saint Peter came to the woman and asked her to watch the Gates of Heaven for him that day.

So anyone who was at the gates, she was asking them to spell "L-O-V-E." And then she lets them enter.

While the woman was guarding the Gates of Heaven, her husband arrived.

"I'm surprised to see you," the woman said. "How have you been?"

"Oh, I've been doing pretty well since you died," her husband told her. "I married the beautiful young nurse who took care of you while you were ill. And then I won the lottery. I sold the little house you and I lived in and bought a big mansion. My wife and I traveled all around the world. "We were on vacation and I went water skiing today. I fell, the ski hit my head, and here I am. "How do I get in?"

"You have to spell a word," the woman told him.

"Which word?", her husband asked.

"Czechoslovakia."

INTRODUCTION :

By God's grace, I was asked to preach on 1 John 4:7-21 "Perfect Love Casts Out Fear"

It was from verse 18 : *But perfect love drives out fear*

For us to understand this as how the Holy Spirit through John wants us to comprehend this letter, **First, we need to understand why John wrote this letter.**

We cannot get a topic and get a verse to fit the topic. The term for that is “prooftexting” We need to preach and interpret by God’s grace and it starts with “context, context, context” **We need to know the context so that we will truly understand what is perfect love and why it casts out fear. What’s the context?**

Why did John write this letter?

1 John 5:13 I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.

He wrote this letter to assure the church if you **truly have “authentic” Christianity.**

BITING GOLD Illustration : When I was young, people were saying that one of the tests if gold was authentic is you should bite it. I never understood why? But they said that fine gold is malleable, meaning if you bite it, you can leave a dent or a mark on it.

So what is authentic Christianity? Or how do you know you are truly a Christian and IF the church is truly a Christian? Remember, he’s writing to a church...take note of that please.

John wrote it right at the start in Chapter 1

1 John 1: 1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. 2 The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us.

(Who is John talking about who was from the beginning which they have seen and touched and is the Word of life and gives eternal life? ???) JESUS CHRIST!

HERE’S THE PROOF THAT YOU ARE AN AUTHENTIC, REAL CHRISTIAN.

3 We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.

LISTEN CAREFULLY!!! the proof that you are a real Christian is that you have a relationship.. fellowship (koinonia...shared life) with GOD AND OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST!

The question is : But how do you know that we have fellowship or a relationship with Christ?

As our Lord has said, *Matthew 7:20... by their fruits you will know them.*

Example : If it’s a real apple tree, it will produce apples. If it’s a plastic apple tree, it will produce...NOTHING.

John wrote three things in this letter, the fruits that prove you have fellowship or relationship with God.

You have truth, righteousness and love in your life. It is only produced by having a relationship and fellowship with Jesus Christ. This is the theme of the entire letter. You will always see these three things : truth, righteousness and love.

THE FRUIT OF OUR FELLOWSHIP WITH CHRIST.

Remember : If you have these in your life and you can see these three in the church, it proves that we have a relationship with Christ that proves that we are truly saved!!!

1. **Truth** – you know the truth about Jesus Christ – that He is the Son of God, very God Himself who became man and is the only way to heaven. That’s why John wrote :

1 John 1: 6 If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. 7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

That’s why Jesus said in

*John 8:31 To the Jews **who had believed Him**, Jesus said, “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. 32 Then you will know the truth and **the truth will set you free.***

2. **Righteousness** – you have a changed life. You do not habitually sin or you have already rejected a sinful lifestyle e.g. Before you were an adulterer, you reject that lifestyle already or our Lord is pulling your away from that lifestyle.

*1 John 3: 5 But you know that he appeared so that he might take away our sins. **And in him is no sin. 6 No one who lives in him keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either seen him or known him.***

Again, it doesn’t mean you become sinless but you sin less and less and you do not have sinful lifestyle.

9 No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God’s seed remains in them; they cannot go on sinning, because they have been born of God. 10 This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do what is right is not God’s child, nor is anyone who does not love their brother and sister.

Illustration: (show video) Manny Pacquiao, one of the greatest boxers of all time before he became a born-again Christian was a womanizer, gambler and drunkard. But in the middle of his career, he came to know Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour and he stopped all of that saying that the “old Manny Pacquiao is gone, the new has come.”

3. **Love** – this is the one we’ll discuss in the interest of time.

Love is one of the fruits of our fellowship with Jesus Christ.

If you SEE THESE THREE THINGS IN YOUR LIFE AND IN THE CHURCH... TRUTH, RIGHTEOUSNESS AND LOVE...YOU KNOW THAT CHURCH HAS RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS CHRIST!!! AND SO IT MEANS...WE HAVE ETERNAL LIFE.

That’s why John wrote in 1 John 4:18

*18 There is no fear in love. But **perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment.***

LISTEN : What the Word of God is saying here is you don't have to be afraid that you will be punished by God because you have a relationship with Jesus Christ!!! **That's the fear that John was talking about.**

Now let me share with you an analogy by John Piper:

Let's say you learn that nuclear missiles from another country is headed to this country and it's first target is Toronto, we will be afraid of a nuclear holocaust, right?

Note : The one dropped in Hiroshima and Nagasaki killed 129,000 people. The average nuclear missile contains 1 megaton, which is 80 times larger than the one dropped in Hiroshima... and that's only the smaller than modern nuclear weapons.

Brothers and sisters, the judgement of God on sin IS MUCH WORST THAN A NUCLEAR HOLOCAUST... Would you want your sons and daughters and parents and loved ones to be caught in a nuclear holocaust? Then why aren't we afraid that they will face the judgement of God which is much worst than a nuclear holocaust?

HOW DO WE ESCAPE THIS? THE ONLY ESCAPE IS THROUGH JESUS CHRIST!!!

That's why John wrote :

1 John 5: 11 And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. 12 Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.

That's why when we have a relationship with God means we HAVE JESUS CHRIST IN US!!!

How do we have the Son? How do we have Jesus Christ in our lives?

13 I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that He gave His One and Only Son that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life?

Now you know the context on why PERFECT LOVE DRIVES OUT FEAR...THE FEAR OF PUNISHMENT OF GOD! That's the context!

That's why we can see this in verse 17

17 This is how love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment:

In this message today by God's grace, we will quickly study three things about love based on the passage we read earlier.

THE PRODUCER OF LOVE, THE PROOF OF LOVE, THE PRODUCT OF LOVE and once we see this, by God's grace I will explain to you what PERFECT LOVE LOOKS LIKE!

I. THE PRODUCER OF PERFECT LOVE

*7 Dear friends, let us love one another, **for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God.** 8 Whoever does not love does not know God, **because God is love.***

These verses clearly shows that A true, authentic, CHRISTIAN love comes from God because He is love!

People have their own definition of love like love is love is love but These verses clearly shows that true, authentic, CHRISTIAN love comes from God because He is love! Love is love is love is not love...GOD IS LOVE.

Everyone who loves has been born of God

The Bible is very clear that if we believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, we become children of God.

*John 1: 12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: 13 who were **born**, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but **of God**.*

Illustration: When I was young whenever we have family reunion on our Father's side, I remember that whenever my titos and titas would see me, they would see me, they would say, "Uy ang guwapo ng batang ito...kaninong anak ito?" (Uy what handsome little man, whose child is this?) I remember my Tatay would proudly say something like this, "Siyempre, magandang lalaki yang dahil ang Tatay niyan ay guwapo." (Of course, he is a good looking boy because his father is handsome.)

Why am I using this story? It's because my Tatay (dad) said that I am guwapo because he is guapo.

If we are truly a real, authentic Christian, we are God's child and if God is love, **one of the things we should be known for is our love.** Why? It's because LOVE comes from Him.

That's why John further writes in verse 16

1 John 4:16 God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them.

1 John 4:19 We love because he first loved us.

FOLLOW THE LOGIC HERE: We talked earlier that if you are truly a Christian, Christ is in you. If **Christ is in you....since Christ is God and God is love, then people should see CHRIST IN US...** How do they see Christ is in us? WE ARE KNOWN AS LOVING PEOPLE.

Ask yourself? How do my brothers and sisters see me? When people see this church, is it known as a loving church? Are you known as a loving person?

II. THE PROOF OF PERFECT LOVE

9 This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. 10 This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

By God's grace, I checked how many times the word "love" was mentioned in this letter. It was mentioned **54 times.** In **Chapter 4 alone** which we are studying, it was mentioned most of the time, **31x the word love was mentioned.** Only one word was used in Greek, "agape" (noun) the verb is "agapao"

LISTEN CAREFULLY : There are several words for love in Greek “eros”, “storge”, “phileo” and of course, agape.

Eros is the physical kind of love.

Storge is the familial kind of love, the love that you feel because they are family

Phileo is the love that you feel for friends

But agape as they say is unconditional kind of love.

But it's much more. The other kind of love like eros, storge, phileo says, “I love you because I have to.”

For example, “*I love you because you're beautiful (physical). I love you because you're my son or daughter, (storge). I love you because you're my friend and you're good to me.*”

BUT AGAPE KIND OF LOVE SAYS, “*I love you because I choose to.*” It means, even if you are not good to me, even if you hate me, even if you don't love me, I still choose to love you.”

That's why you see that

This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

Isn't that what Paul said in Romans

Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Christ died for us not when we were good but when we still did not know Him, when we were still rebellious or not worthy in front of Him.

The proof that you are truly a Christian, **that Christ is in us is that we can love others even if they are not loveable.**

True love IS SACRIFICIAL.

III. PRODUCT OF PERFECT LOVE

11 Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. 12 No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

It is simple. IF WE ARE A REAL CHRISTIANS, WE LOVE GOD AND THE PRODUCT OF OUR LOVE FOR GOD IS THAT WE LOVE ONE ANOTHER!!! AGAPE KIND OF LOVE... NOT BECAUSE I HAVE TO, BUT BECAUSE I WANT TO EVEN IF I'M NOT APPRECIATED, EVEN IF NO ONE NOTICES, EVEN IF PEOPLE ARE SOMETIME NOT LOVING TOWARDS ME.

Isn't that what our Lord Jesus said to us.

John 13: 34 “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. 35 By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

People will know that FCC or DCF is the Lord's disciples because of our love for one another.

This is we know that Jesus is in us, that we are real Christians, if we love other Christians even if they are not loveable.

That's why John wrote again in the same chapter.

19 We love because he first loved us. 20 Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen. 21 And he has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister.

And love is not just words, it is seen in our actions.

1 John 3:18 Let us not love in word but in deed.

Biblical Illustration: Remember our Lord Jesus Christ in John 13:1

John 13:1 It was just before the Passover Festival. Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.

Our Lord Jesus then washed his disciples feet!!! That's the job of the lowest of slaves! And remember, He also washed Judas' feet! He knows that Judas was going to betray Him and yet He washed His feet.

NOT A RITUAL There's a reason why we don't do washing of the feet during Holy Week in our church because it becomes a ritual, a show. God did not command us to make it as a ritual... GOD COMMANDED US TO BECOME A SERVANT OF OTHERS...TO SERVE ONE ANOTHER... BECAUSE THAT IS LOVE IN ACTION! We serve everyone even those who are not worthy to be served.

Matthew 23:11 The greatest among you will be your servant.

This now brings us to what does perfect love means and what does it look like?

Etymology : "perfect" teleioo, which means, done...completed...where

So what does it mean? What does perfect or complete love look like...

Adobo Illustration: All of us here are Filipinos and we know adobo. Pork adobo is delicious. But when makes it PERFECT OR COMPLETE is when we eat it with rice! Without rice, eating pork adobo is not PERFECT OR COMPLETE.

So what makes love perfect? HERE IT IS!!!

1 John 4:12 12 No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

In short, WE KNOW GOD IS LOVE...BUT HOW DO WE SEE GOD'S LOVE? WHEN WE LOVE ONE ANOTHER WE SEE GOD'S LOVE AND THAT MAKES IT COMPLETE.

That's why in verse 17

17 This is how love is made complete (teleio) among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment: In this world we are like Jesus. 18 There is no fear in love. But perfect (teleio) love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

We know we are truly a church of God, we know we are truly Christians if we love one another.

Application: This means, we can have a nice program but if there's no love or not done out love FOR OTHERS, it's not complete..it's not perfect in God's eyes! We might have a nice place or nice songs or great preachers or preaching or we have wonderful activities or Bible studies **BUT IF IT'S NOT OUT OF LOVE OR THERE'S NO LOVE, IT'S NOT PERFECT...IT'S NOT COMPLETE.**

Let me do another food illustration : If we're cooking sinigang, we might have the best pork, we might have the freshest vegetables like kangkong, tomatoes but without the "pampaasim"...IT'S NOT SINIGANG!

As Christians, as a church... ALL OF THESE THINGS THAT WE DO ARE GOOD BUT NEVER MISS THE THE MOST IMPORTANT INGREDIENT...IN EVERYTHING THAT WE DO IS OUR LOVE FOR GOD AND FOR ONE ANOTHER!!! AND THAT IS WHAT YOU CALL PERFECT LOVE.

We can see this in 1 Corinthians 13 right?

1 Corinthians 13 : 1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. 2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. 3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.

13 And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

In short brothers and sisters, we cannot call ourselves as Christians or as a church if we do not have love for God and for others.

And on the reverse side, if we do things out of love and if we love one another then that is what you call PERFECT LOVE and it assures us that we do not have to be afraid of anything BECAUSE GOD IS WITH US! **And if God is with us and for us, who can be against us?**

You remember this song ;

*We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord
We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord
And we pray that our unity will one day be restored
And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love
Yeah they'll know we are Christians by our love*

Now, where in the Scripture can you see the MOST PERFECT LOVE?

Remember, when Jesus Christ was on the cross? When He was about to give us His Spirit, what did He say? IT IS FINISHED!!! Same root word...tetelestai...teleioo!!! IT IS DONE! IT IS COMPLETE!!!

PRAY

S.G.D.