

3 Johns Study Series
Study #4: The Power of Perfect Love
1 John 4:1 - 21
Bible Sermon Study Notes by Cary Rodgers, pastor

1 John 4 begins with a very important message of warning that God's people MUST take heed to in order NOT to be deceived.

What warning does God give us?

1 John 4:1

1 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

Jesus told us to beware of false prophets especially in the last days.

Matthew 24:5,11, 23, 24

5 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.

11 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.

23 Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not.

24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

Every word and teaching that a person does (preacher, teacher, or prophet) must be compared to the Word of God. If they conflict with the Word of God, they are not a true prophet. The true spirit of God will NEVER compromise or conflict with the Word of God.

How do you know a true prophet from a false prophet?

Deuteronomy 13:1-5

1 If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder,

2 And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them;

3 Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the LORD your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

4 **Ye shall walk after the LORD your God, and fear (reverence) him, and keep his commandments, and obey his voice, and ye shall serve him, and cleave unto him.**

5 And that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, shall be put to death; because he hath spoken to turn you away from the LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed you out of the house of bondage, to thrust thee out of the way which the LORD thy God commanded thee to walk in. So shalt thou put the evil away from the midst of thee.

Matthew 7:15-20

15 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

16 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

17 Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

19 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

20 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

2 Peter 2:1

1 But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

GO BACK TO 1 John 4 - At the time of Christ and the New Testament church there were many false prophets who were Jews who rejected Jesus as the Messiah.

What does 1 John 4:3, 4 say concerning those prophets who rejected Jesus Christ as the fulfillment of the Messiah spoken of in the Old Testament?

1 John 4:2-3

2 Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:

3 And every **spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God**: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

What is another distinguishing factor that reveals a false prophet?

1 John 4:4-6

4 Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.

5 They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them.

6 We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.

False prophets are of the world, speak of the world, and the world will hear them.

Remember the Ten Commandments of God show us how to love God and others. The first four commandments of God shows us how to love God and the last six of God commandments show us how to love each other.

Matthew 22:37-40

37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

38 This is the first and great commandment.

39 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

40 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

Love (Greek) = agapaō [ag-ap-ah'-o]

Perhaps from ἄγαν agan (much; or compare [H5689]); **to love** (in a social or **moral sense**): - (be-) love (-ed).

What does John reveal about those who love others compared to those who do not?

1 John 4:7-8

7 Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.

8 He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

How is the love of God given to us?

1 John 4:9-10

9 In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. (John 3:16)

10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

It is God's love that brings a sinner to Jesus. That reminds me of the classic hymn "Love Lifted ME!" "When nothing else could help. Love lifted me."

Romans 5:8-10

8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

10 For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

" 'God is love,' is written upon every opening bud, upon the petals of every flower, and upon every spire of grass. Though the curse of sin has caused the earth to bring forth thorns and thistles, there are flowers upon the thistles and the thorns are hidden by roses. All things in nature testify to the tender, fatherly care of our God and to His desire to make His children happy. His prohibitions and injunctions are not intended merely to display His authority, but in all that He does He has the well-being of His children in view. He does not require them to give up anything that it would be for their best interest to retain." Ellen White, Patriarch and Prophets, p. 600

Those who are truly of God will love one another as Christ loved.

1 John 4:11-13

11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

12 No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.

13 Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.

How to practically love others: Last six commandments (Exodus 20:12 – 17) - 5) Honor thy father and mother 6) Thou shalt not kill 7) thou shalt not commit adultery 8) thou shalt not steal 9) thou shalt not bear false witness 10) Thou shalt not covet thy neighbors house....

What reveals that you dwell in God and have His Spirit?

John 15:10

10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

1 Corinthians 2:12-13

12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

Galatians 5:22-25

22 **But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,**

23 **Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.**

24 And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

Do you have personal testimony of the Love of God in your life?

1 John 4:14-17

14 And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.

15 Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.

16 And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.

17 Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.

When you dwell in Christ you will personally experience the love of God in your daily walk with Christ. Every motive that God has for all His created beings is based on LOVE. It is the foundation of who He is.

What will perfect love do with fear?

1 John 4:18

18 There is no fear (alarm or fright) in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.

You are not to be frighten by man nor your circumstances in your life. Those who live in truth do not have the spirit of fear. We are not afraid of today or tomorrow because God controls our life.

Jesus tells us NOT to be afraid, but be at peace. Peace is a gift that God's gives His people.

John 14:1-3, 27

1 **Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.**

2 **In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.**

3 **And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.**

27 **Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.**

Fear is the opposite of faith. Remember, that fear or being afraid and worried cancels out faith. Those who trust God, seek Him first and his righteous will receive the daily provisions from God promised by Him.

2 Timothy 1:7

7 For God hath **not given us the spirit of fear**; but of power, and of love, and of a **sound mind**.

Those in the world and in sin fear, worry and stress. Regardless of a persons pursuits and profession, the wicked does not have a sound mind. There is no peace with those who do not have Christ or reject Him.

Isaiah 57:20-21

20 But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.
21 There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.

The wicked try to find peace without God, but only true peace comes from Him. There is no peace in Yoga and others like it. Yoga is not just exercise moves but it is a Satanic religion and those who participate will not find true peace. Yoga is one of Satan's methods that give the participant's mind to Satan. *Yoga* is derived from the root *yuj* "to attach, join, harness, yoke". - wikipedia

Yoga is a group of physical, mental, and spiritual practices or disciplines which originated in ancient India. Yoga in Indian traditions, however, is more than physical exercise; it has a meditative and spiritual core. - wikipedia

Yoga is also atheistic in nature. It is against the true God of Heaven. Despite the claims there is no true peace in yoga. Yoga has grown in popularity in the United States. There are many professed Christian's who are now doing yoga.

Remember true peace and love can only come from God and not from within ourselves.

Our Love for Christ is made manifest because He loved us first.

1 John 4:19

19 We love him, because he first loved us.

Love is the attracting power for those who surrender their lives totally to Jesus Christ.

The Love of Jesus gives us the transformational power to overcome sin!

Ephesians 2:3-5

3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

4 But God, who is rich in mercy, **for his great love wherewith he loved us,**

5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

Titus 3:3-5

3 For we ourselves also **were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.**

4 **But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared,**

5 **Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;**

Can you hate your brother / others and still love God?

1 John 4:20-21

20 If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?

21 And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.

Remember, hate is breaking the commandments of God against others. That is true hate.

Does God's love excuse and overlook sin? NO.

Sin is enmity against God. We should HATE sin! Sin separates us from God...

Isaiah 59:1-2

1 Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear:

2 But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.

IT is the LOVE of God that reaches out to save all sinners.

The true saints of God in the last days MUST never forget that it is love of God that will sustain you during trial, tribulation, and persecution. Even though we will go through these things God and His love will strengthen you and become perfected in you.

Romans 8:35-39

35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

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