

## **FROM WHERE DOES LOVE COME?**

1 John 4:7-8 ... "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God, and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love."

We often hear people say, "Can't we all just love one another?" Believers and unbelievers alike ask that question, which I believe is answered in today's verse, plus many teachings of Jesus and the Apostle Paul.

John writes to believers and says we are to love one another, and that "love is of God," meaning that the love we have to share with others comes from God. An unbeliever loves purely on an emotional level, or because he or she is a kind and decent person. That kind of love is created by the person, it is not a gift from God. However, once you accept Christ as Lord and Savior, God will open the floodgates of his love for you, so that you can share his love with others. John goes on to say that the evidence of your salvation is that you love others.

There is another thing to consider. Most Gospel references to loving others, concern our love toward believers. 1 John 5:2 "By this know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep his commandments." 1 John 3:14 "We know that we have passed from death (a future in hell) to life (a future in heaven), because we love the brethren (other believers)..." So, we are commanded to love other believers. Our challenge is to exercise a kind of love for unbelievers that will open the door for us to share Christ with them. We call that variety of love, compassion. You might also call it pity because a life without Christ is doomed and we should not want that for anyone.

Be careful not to exercise love for unbelievers that draws you away from Christ and into their world which is influenced by satan. We have spoken before about Christians being set apart by God from the rest of the world, plus the commandment to not be unequally yoked with unbelievers and people of other faiths. If you married an unbeliever before you became a believer, God will bless you with the patience required to await your spouse's salvation. You must love that person as Christ loves you. If you married an unbeliever after you were saved, you have an imperfect union that will be a struggle for the rest of your life. You must also love that person as Christ loves you, but you must confess your sin for marrying him or her and ask God to help you love and persevere in that imperfect relationship that you created in disobedience to God. You may feel stuck, but with God's help you can overcome and lead your spouse to Christ. You have no other Godly option.

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