

# Sermon -1 John 4:20-5:2

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Three More Reasons to Love

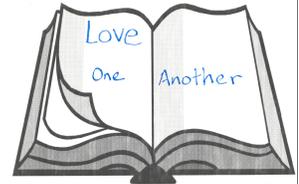


## Three More Reasons to Love

1. You See Your Brother



2. God Commands You to Love



3. You are related!



# 1. You See Your Brother



**4:20 If someone should say, "I am loving God," yet he is hating his brother, he is a liar, for the one who is not loving his brother whom he has seen, how is he able to love God, whom he has not seen?**

- Cf. 2:11 But the one who hates his brother is in the darkness and is walking in the darkness, and does not know where he is heading, because the darkness blinded his eyes.
- Cf. 4:12 "No one has seen God."  
*We can't see God, so the visible demonstration of our love to God is to love our brother.*
- Cf. 2:22 "Who is the liar but one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is antichrist"
- "not loving his brother" = "hating" = "not able to love God"

	What they SAY	What they DO	What they ARE
2:4	"I know Him"	does not keep commands	a liar
2:9	"I am in the light"	hate brother	in the darkness
4:20	"I love God"	hate brother	a liar

- Start off with blindfolding a kid and telling them to find one piece of candy hidden in the room as an illustration of how impossible it is to love God while hating your brother.
- 4:20 If someone should say, "I am loving God," yet he is hating his brother, he is a liar, for the one who is not loving his brother whom he has seen, how is he able to love God, whom he has not seen?
- This verse builds upon 4:12 "No one has seen God." Since we can't see God, the visible demonstration of our love to God is to love our brother. Love of others must absolutely follow from loving God--this is the gist of the next two verses also.
- This verse follows the pattern of 2:4 & 9. [Reference chart in slide]
- **"How is he able to love God [or, 'He is not able to love God'], whom he has not seen?"** A couple of the oldest Greek manuscripts explicitly deny it with the word "not" and the rest implicitly deny it with the rhetorical question "How," but, whether implicitly or explicitly, they all deny that someone can love God if they can't love their brother.
- It is hypocrisy to say one thing and not live consistently with it. Whoever says they love God and hates their brother is a liar, and "Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist" (2:22). John is combating the Gnostic heresy that one can attain some mystic knowledge or relationship with God without it impacting our lives in righteous living and love for others. As Westcott writes (161), "the claim to the love of God without action involve[s] not only the denial of what is known to be true, but falseness of character." He has not only told a lie, he is a "liar."
- "If there is any whom you neglect and cannot have fellowship with, why, there is no soundness in you" (Cotton 489). Is there anyone like this in your life? You don't need to necessarily hate them, a simple lack of active love is all it takes, for in this verse, the passive "does not love" is equated with active "hates." Take the time now to repent of lacking love to any such person, for you have a hindrance to fellowship with God as long as this isn't made right. Not loving our brother takes away our ability to love God; conversely, if we do love our brother, fellowship may be opened up with God too.

## 2. God Commands You to Love



**4:21 And we have this command from Him in order that the one who is loving God might also love his brother.**

- Cf. 3:23 “And this is His command, that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and that we should be loving one another, just as He commanded us.”
- The brother-hater is a liar because he claims to love God but disobeys God’s command!
- Present tense “we have” ... “the effort to obtain it can never be relaxed” (Westcott).
- The purpose of the command: “in order that” we might love our brother.

**1 John 3:15** “He that hates his brother is a murderer”

**Galatians 5:6** “...but faith which works by love is what counts.”

**1 Timothy 1:5** “the end of the commandment is love from a pure heart and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned”

**Rom. 13:10** “Love is the fullness,” or fulfillment, “of the law.”

- Antichrists and even devils “believe” (James 2:19) and “confess” (Matt. 8:29) Christ. “[A] Christian’s faith is with love, but a devil’s without love... let none of the heretics say to you, ‘We also believe,’ ... but search well the deeds of the life.” ~Augustine

“He that hateth his brother is a murderer” (1 John 3:15)... Thou dost verily not love God, if thou hate thy brother. And now I make it good by another proof. This same apostle hath said, ‘He gave us commandment that we should love one another.’ How canst thou be said to love Him whose commandment thou hatest?”

We have looked at the two great commandments many times, so let me quote from Augustine on this:

“Who is he that believeth not that Jesus is the Christ? He that does not so live as Christ commanded. For many say, “I believe:” but faith without works saveth not. Now the work of faith is Love, as Paul the apostle saith, “And faith which worketh by love.” (Gal. 5:6)

So then, Peter saith, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God:” the devils also say, “We know who thou art, the Son of God, the Holy One of God.” This Peter said, this also the devils (Matt. 8:29 “We know who thou are, the Son of God” cf. James 2:19): the words the same, the mind not the same... a Christian’s faith is with love, but a devil’s without love. How without love? Peter said this, that he might embrace Christ; the devils said it, that Christ might depart from them... Therefore, brethren, let none of the heretics say to you, “We also believe.” For to this end have I given you an instance from the case of devils, that ye may not rejoice in the words of believing, but search well the deeds of the life.”

“But the end of the commandment is love, from a pure heart, and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned:” (1 Tim. 1:5) and “Love is the fulfillment of the law.” (Rom. 13:10)

### 3. You are related!



**5:1 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Messiah has been born (γενένηται) out of God, and everyone who is loving the One who gave birth (γεννήσαντα) is also loving the one who has been born (γεννημένον) out of Him. 2 In this we know that we are loving the children of God: when (ὅταν) we are loving God and keeping/doing His commands.**

- Christians are a family with God as our Father
- Being born again comes before believing.
- Insuperability of loving the “Son of God” and loving the “sons of God” (cf. Acts 9:4)
- Points from John Cotton’s exposition:
  1. “If you show lack of love to those who are begotten, you show lack of love to their Father who begat them.”
  2. “Look at them as children of a Father who loves them, though they walk in contrary steps... you cannot but love them for God’s love toward them.”
  3. “God requires not only that we should love our brethren, but that we should know it”

- ~~John here gives us his third reason that we love the brothers. The first (4:20) was that we SEE them, the second (4:21) was that God COMMANDS it, and the third (5:1) is that we share a common Father. If I believe in Jesus, I have been born out of God, and for that reason I love the one who gave birth to me--that is, God. (The Greek text says "the one who gave birth," not "father"--the NKJV is about the only modern version that got that one right.) God has also given birth spiritually to other Christians, and thus we are, in a sense, brothers and sisters with a common Father!~~
- Now here’s a little bit of doctrine about salvation: "believes" is in the Present tense, whereas "begotten" is in the Perfect tense. This indicates that being "born again" happens before believing happens. Once again, we see that love for God and love for others cannot be separated. 1,600 years ago, Augustine commented, “Who ‘begat’? The Father. Who ‘is begotten’? The Son. What did he say then? ‘Every one that loves the Father, loves the Son.’ ... [But in v2] he said, ‘the sons of God,’ whereas he was speaking just before of the Son of God! Because the sons of God are the Body of the Only Son of God, and when He is the Head, we the members, it is one Son of God. Therefore, he that loves the sons of God, loves the Son of God, and he that loves the Son of God, loves the Father... The love therefore cannot be separated into parts.... Dost thou not quake at the voice uttered by the Head from Heaven on behalf of His members, “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou ME?” (Acts 9:4) The persecutor of His members He called His persecutor: His lover, the lover of His members.”
- But the fact remains that there are people whom we must regard as brothers in the faith who are nevertheless difficult to love. Cotton (499ff) offers some good advice:
  1. Love them, not so much because they are so loveable, but out of respect for their Father, for “If you show lack of love to those who are begotten, you show lack of love to their Father who begat them.”
  2. Try to look at them through God’s eyes of love. “Look at them as children of a Father who loves them, though they walk in contrary steps... you cannot but love them for God’s love toward them.”
  3. “God requires not only to love our brethren, but that we should know it.”
- It is IN the loving of God and of His children that we know that we love the children of God. "The perception comes... in the very exercise of the feeling." ~Westcott
- Also, it is not "by" or "if" we love and obey, but "when."

# Review on Assurance

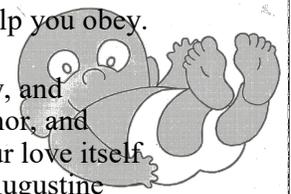
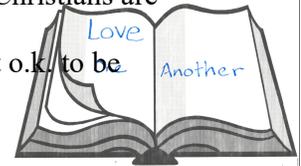


Verse	WHAT we know	HOW we know it
2:3	We have come to know Him	If we keep His commands
3:10	Children of God from those of devil	If practice righteousness & love
3:16	Love	He laid down His life for us
3:19	That we are of the truth	If we love in deed and in truth
4:2	The spirit of God	If it confesses Jesus Christ
3:24 & 4:13	That we abide in Him and He in us	Because He has given us His Spirit
5:2	That we love the children of God	If love God & keep His commands

- Several times now, in this book, John has given us proofs by which we can know something is true, using the phrase, "in this we know." Apparently, these are important things to test in ourselves:

# Applications

- Can you back up your claim to be a Christian by practicing love?
  - Is there any brother you neglect and cannot have fellowship with?
  - Whom do you see?
- Are you paying attention to Christian teachers who are not characterized by love?
  - It is not o.k. to be uncharitable to certain people because famous Christians are uncharitable to them.
  - Imitating popular Christian icons is not obedience to God, it's not o.k. to be careless where they are careless.
- Are you living a lifestyle of obedience to God by loving brothers?
  - Extend love to the un-loveable out of respect for their Father.
  - Ask God to help you look at them through His eyes of love and help you obey.
- Do you KNOW that you are loving the children of God?
- “What does God enjoin? ‘Love me. You love money; you seek money, and perchance not find it: whoever seeks me, I am with him. You love honor, and perchance not attain it: who ever loved me, and did not attain? ... Your love itself makes me present to you.’ What sweeter than this love, brethren?” ~Augustine



## 1Jn 4:20-5:1 Greek edition & English translation by N.W.

4:20 εἴ τις εἶπῃ ὅτι ἀγαπῶ τὸν Θεόν, καὶ τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ μισῇ, ψεύστης ἐστίν· ὁ γὰρ μὴ ἀγαπῶν τὸν ἀδελφὸν ὃν ἑώρακε, τὸν Θεὸν ὃν οὐχ ἑώρακε πῶς<sup>/ou=x,B+6,UBS</sup> δύναται ἀγαπᾶν;

4:20 If someone should say, "I am loving God," yet he is hating his brother, he is a liar, for how is the one who is not loving his brother (whom he has seen) able to love God, whom he has not seen?

4:21 καὶ ταύτην τὴν ἐντολὴν ἔχομεν ἀπ' αὐτοῦ, ἵνα ὁ ἀγαπῶν τὸν Θεὸν ἀγαπᾷ καὶ τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ.

4:21 And we have this command from Him in order that the one who is loving God might also love his brother.

5:1 Πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ Χριστὸς, ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ γεγέννηται, καὶ πᾶς ὁ ἀγαπῶν τὸν γεν-νήσαντα ἀγαπᾷ καὶ<sup>-B,048,33</sup> τὸν γεγεννημένον ἐξ αὐτοῦ.

5:1 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Mes-siah has been born out of God, and every-one who is loving the One who gave birth is also loving the one who has been born out of Him.

5:2 ἐν τούτῳ γινώσκομεν ὅτι ἀγαπῶμεν τὰ τέκνα τοῦ Θεοῦ, ὅταν τὸν Θεὸν ἀγαπῶμεν καὶ τὰς ἐντολὰς αὐτοῦ ποιῶμεν<sup>B,Vg,UBS/</sup> τηρῶμεν<sup>Sim,Maj,T.R.</sup>.

5:2 In this we know that we are loving the children of God: when we are loving God and keeping His commands.