

Love Lifted Me # 14

1 John 4: 11-16

John 13:34-35 – A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. ^[35] By this shall all *men* know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. There can be no doubt that Jesus loved us. His great love was proven as He bore our sin and endured the judgment we deserved as He hung on the cross. He commands us in these verses to love one another as He has loved us. Our love for one another defines us as followers of Christ.

John admonishes us again and again in this epistle to love one another. Our text this evening offers again this continual challenge. Now I would agree this is easy preaching, but it is often hard practicing. Our love for others is to be in line with the love Jesus had for us, a deep and sacrificial love. I will admit I am incapable of offering such love within myself. This is a tall order for any of us to properly carry out. In fact, we cannot within ourselves.

As I read this passage, I realized again the enormity of God's love for us and the varied benefit of His love in our lives. His love enables us to love. Were it not for His great love, we could never hope to love as He would have us too! I thought of the old hymn we have sung many times: *Love Lifted Me*. This passage conveys that very thought. God's love lifted us in order that we could be pardoned from sin and live according to His will, including loving others. I want to examine the [conclusions](#) John reveals concerning love as we consider: [Love Lifted Me](#).

I. The Evidence of Love (11-12) – Here John reveals the way our love is known and displayed before others. We find that:

A. Love is Portrayed (11) – [Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another](#). We have broken this chapter down into segments for ease of teaching, but it must be considered in its context. [If God so loved us...](#)referring to His great love in sending His Son as the propitiation for our sin, [...we ought also to love one another](#). God set the great example. Christ proved His great love on the cross. There should be no question as to whether we express and display God's love to others. In fact, it is expected of us! This speaks of "*an obligation to perform a specific duty.*"

- Do we possess and portray such love? Is our love for God and others all it should be?

B. Love is Profound (12a) – [No man hath seen God at any time](#). John gives a simple truth that none would discredit. None of us has seen God at any time. We cannot describe Him expect for the

portrait we discover in Scripture. There are many directions one could take with this statement, but again it is imperative that we keep it in context. John simply reveals that although we have never seen God, we have experienced His very essence through love. Our knowledge of God is not limited to physical sight, but revealed greatly through the love He has shown us.

- I had never thought of it in this light, but that spoke profoundly to me. The love of God is profound. Through His love we experience Him. He reveals Himself to us through love. One cannot know God apart from experiencing His great love! The deeper our love relationship grows with Him, the more we learn of Him.

C. Love is Perfected (12b) – [If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.](#)

Again, possessing genuine love for one another is a mark of one's salvation. If we genuinely possess that love for others, we are assured that God dwells in us. Genuine love is a by-product of our salvation.

- I am glad the Spirit inspired John to give us that last statement: [His love is perfected in us.](#) This speaks of "*being mature, complete, reaching an intended goal.*" Have you ever struggled with love? Does it seem some are easier to love than others? Surely we all have dealt with these issues. I know I have. This gives me hope and comfort. As I grow and mature in the Lord, walking in fellowship with Him, His great love is being perfected in me. He helps me love as He loves. He helps me overlook the faults and failures of others, bringing me to a place where I can love as He loves. I certainly have not arrived, but I rejoice His love is being perfected in me even today.

II. The Experience of Love (13-14) – Here John speaks of the experience of love we share with God and the great benefit it has for us. Through this experience we find:

A. Love Instills our Comforter (13) – [Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.](#) This attribute sets believers apart from all others. We do not simply offer worship to an object. The Object of our worship inhabits us. When we are saved and experience the great love of God, we are indwelt with the Spirit.

- This brings great comfort and enormous benefit to our lives. We experience the love of God mightily through His Spirit. The Spirit guides our lives in truth. He directs our worship to the Lord. He lifts our prayers to the throne when we are so distraught and discouraged we cannot pray. Many are the benefits of the indwelling Spirit. God, in His great love, ordained the Spirit to dwell within all believers as our guide and stay. [John 16:13 – Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come,](#)

he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.*

B. Love Enables our Confidence (13) – *Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.* Again we find encouragement and confidence regarding our relationship with the Lord. It is possible to have assurance of salvation. We can know that God dwells in us through His Spirit.

- Many struggle with assurance regarding their salvation. I did for some time as well. As long as we question our salvation we can never have real peace and enjoy victory. Sensing the presence and leading of the Spirit within is proof one's salvation. If there is never any guidance or conviction, it is likely the Spirit is not there. If you experience the leadership of the Spirit, you can know that you dwell in the Lord. I am not advocating that God has ordained all that people claim to be led of Him to do, but it is possible to know if the Spirit abides within!

C. Love Emboldens our Confession (14) – *And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.* John reveals the redeemed of the Lord will say so. Those who have experienced the love of God, and are filled with the Spirit, have understood and testify of Christ being sent of the Father as Savior of the world. Our witness will vary from time to time and will differ from the ways of others, but the message will come forth and be consistent. It will be impossible to continually refrain from sharing our faith. At some point we will be compelled to share what Christ has done for us and what we have received in Him.

III. The Expression of Love (15-16) – In these verses John deals with how God's love is expressed. We find it is:

A. Expressed in Loving Favor (15) – *Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.* There is the aspect of our obligation to confess Christ as the Son of God that cannot be denied. I think we all agree this should be part of every believer's life. This is essential to salvation. As I look at this verse I am drawn to the fact that God would dwell in us and make a way for us to dwell in Him. His gracious, loving favor has been extended to those who are unworthy and His great love has been expressed for all to see by looking to Calvary.

- Life will have its share of difficulty. There will be valleys to walk through and steep hills to climb. However, regardless what comes my way or I am forced to endure, I know I am loved of God and accepted within the family because of the sacrifice of my Lord.

B. Expressed in Lasting Faith (16a) – *And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us.*

John no doubt had experienced times of great adversity. He had been challenged concerning his faith in Christ. He likely dealt with doubt and discouragement, but his faith endured. The enabling of such faith was certainly contributed to by the love God has shown to him. In times of confusion and doubt, he could not deny the gracious love of God.

- There will be times when our faith is tested. There will likely be times when we are tempted to throw in the towel and quit. Many have given in to such temptation, but not all. Some have endured. I am convinced the great love of God has been a major factor in the faith of many. When we are discouraged and feel alone or forsaken, we must remember the great love we have been given. God didn't send His Son to die for our sin in order to forsake us in the journey. If Christ loved us enough to die for our sin, He loves us enough to see us through the journey. We trials come, embrace the love of God.

C. Expressed in Living Fellowship (16b) – *God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God,*

and God in him. I hope you understand that the saved are in God and He is in us. When we are born again in Christ, we are filled with His great love and indwelt with the Spirit. Being in Christ is the safest and securest place one could ever be. That is not to say we will never sin or even disappoint our Lord, but we are in Him. That fellowship will never be broken. We have been placed within the family of God and there isn't a force anywhere that can remove us! Our fellowship can be strained and hindered through sin, but it will never be broken! *John 10:28-29 – And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. [29] My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.*

Conclusion: Aren't you thankful for the love of God? I am amazed that He would extend such love to those who are undeserving, but I am thankful He does. Where would any of us be were it not for His great love?

That loves fills us and ought to motivate us to serve the Lord and others. Our love isn't all it should be, but the Lord continues to perfect it in us! What a Savior we serve. He loved us when we were unlovable and He continues to love us as we journey through life.

I pray you have experienced this great love of God. His love is offered freely, but it must be received. Do you know Christ as your Savior? Have you experienced the love of God in salvation? If not, I urge you to respond to the leadership of the Holy Spirit.