

Why Love Is the Greatest
(1 John 4:7-19)

Introduction:

1. The last verse of 1 Corinthians 13 ["the love chapter of the Bible"] states that love is the greatest [greater than faith and hope].
2. In our lesson we are examining the information presented in 1 John 4:7-19.
3. In these verses:
 - a. John wrote about God's love
 - b. John showed how God's children are to reciprocate His love.
4. John's message will help us understand "why love is the greatest."

Discussion:

- I. "GOD'S LOVE" IS THE FOUNDATION OF JOHN'S MESSAGE
 - A. John indicated that God is the source of love.
 1. (vs.7b) "*Love is of God.*"
 2. (vs.8b) "*God is love.*"
 - B. John continued by explaining how God demonstrated His love.
 1. (vs.9-10) God demonstrated His love by sending His Son into the world to be "*the propitiation for our sins*" (see 2:1-2).
 2. (vs.14) John and his fellow apostles saw and testified that the Father sent Jesus to be our Savior (see 1:1-2).
 - C. In laying the foundation for his message, John wrote about God's love.
 - D. Such love deserves to be reciprocated -- this leads us to the next point.
- II. GOD'S CHILDREN ARE TO RECIPROCATE HIS LOVE IN 2 WAYS
 - A. First, God's children are to reciprocate His love by loving Him (vs.15-19).
 1. Why do God's children love Him? (vs.19 -- "*because he first loved us*").
 2. Those who love God enjoy special blessings.
 - a. (vs.16) Those who love God dwell in Him and vice versa.
 - b. (vs.17) Those who love God will have boldness at the judgment.
 - c. (vs.18) Those who love God overcome fear.
 3. God's children love Him because He first loved us.
 4. There is another way in which God's children are to reciprocate His love.
 - B. The second way God's children are to reciprocate His love is by loving each other.
 1. See vs.7a, 11
 2. Special blessings are associated with loving God's children.
 - a. vs.7c
 - b. vs.12b
 3. John also touched on the spiritual condition of those who do not love God's children.
 - a. vs.8a
 - b. vs.20
 - C. John concluded his message on love in vs.21.
- III. ADDITIONAL PASSAGES FROM OTHER APOSTLES
 - A. Ephesians 5:1-2
 - B. Colossians 3:12-14
 - C. 1 Peter 1:22-23; 4:8

Conclusion:

1. We know that God loves us because He demonstrated His love.
2. God requires His children to reciprocate His love by:
 - a. loving Him
 - b. loving one another.
3. Our response to these requirements indicates whether we are God's true children.
4. After studying these passages, let us grow in our understanding of "why love is the greatest."