

Love

1Jonn 4:7-12

The story of the missionary Adoniram Judson - 1788 - 1850

- Letter written to the parents of Ann Hasseltine asking for her hand in marriage:

I have now to ask, whether you can consent to part with your daughter early next spring, to see her no more in this world; whether you can consent to her departure, and her subjection to the hardships and sufferings of a missionary life; whether you can consent to her exposure to the dangers of the ocean; to the fatal influence of the southern climate of India; to every kind of want and distress; to degradation, insult, persecution, and perhaps a violent death. Can you consent to all this, for the sake of him who left his heavenly home, and died for her and for you; for the sake of perishing, immortal souls; for the sake of Zion, and the glory of God? Can you consent to all this, in hope of soon meeting your daughter in the world of glory, with the crown of righteousness, brightened with the acclamations of praise which shall redound to her Saviour from heathens saved, through her means, from eternal woe and despair.

Only the supernatural love of God would propel Christians throughout history to give their lives to love others in such profound ways?

I) Love emptied of meaning

Verse 7 ... Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. 8 Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.

- love used 12 times in this passage

Four of the Eight Types of love

- 1) Phileo: the love of a friend - best friends - most common word in Greek
- 2) Starga: the love of a parent
- 3) Eros: erotic or romantic love
- 4) Agape: the love of commitment - New Testament infuses it with deep theological meaning

II) Love became visible and defined through the incarnation

Verse 9 ... the love of God was made **manifest** among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him.

- manifestation of love occurred when Christ came in the flesh

- love in the trinity

- **John 17:21** "that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me."

III) Love initiates

10 In this is love, not that we have loved God **but that he loved us...**

Romans 5:6 For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— 8 but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Luke 7:36-48 Forgiven much loves much

- verse 47 ... Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven—for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little.”

IV) Love sacrifices

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

- propitiation: made love visible by appeasing wrath

- John 3:16 “so loved ... he gave” - 3:17 ... not to be condemned but saved
God's love is perfect - love is untainted

V) Love in practice

12 No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.

Our imperfect love

- The argument of the text is that you cannot fully define love by watching humanity.
- with the best of intentions we hurt one another

- John 17:18 As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world.
- incapable of receiving it you can't give it out

Two practical ways to love:

1) committed prayerfulness

- praying for you enemies - have you ever struggled to pray for those who have really hurt you
- prayer is a deep heart level communing with God
- Heb 10:22 let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

2) Practice hospitality

- biblical hospitality (not Joana Gaines) is presence
- the garden was a hospitable place
- **Revelation 3:20** - we have received hospitality

- pray and ask for the Holy Spirit to bring someone to your mind that you can demonstrate love