

Love that Reflects God

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1 The world grows darker by the day—over which we have *no control*; but our heart should be growing in love for others by the hour—over which we have *much control*.

2 “*God is love*” and not just occasional acts of love—but His very *nature* and *everything* He does is from divine love.

3 If we claim to *know* Him and *do* His will, then His love must motivate our acts of kindness and extending forgiveness to anyone who needs both.

4 The love of God in our heart is available on request—we just accept it by faith in Jesus, who went to the cross to pay a debt He did *not owe*, to pay a debt we *did owe*—but a debt we could never pay any other way.

5 The apostle says NKJV 1 John 4:7 *Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.*”

6 That is *more* than a noble thought—it is a **requirement** of every Christian—“*Let us love one another.*”

7 We do not create this Love, but we *receive* it from God, and then we *reflect* it for Him.

8 If God is love, then everyone who *knows* God becomes a *reflector* of that love.

9 Many *claim* to know God but do *not reflect* His love; Many *speak* of faith but do not *live* by faith; Many say it is a *new life* for them but still live the *old life*.

10 The apostle confronts that directly 1 John 4:8 “*He who does not love does not know God.*”

11 That is the challenge for every believer, because he is saying that love is *not optional* for a Christian—it is *required* as *evidence* of a changed heart.

From Dark to Different

12 Before we can understand love, we have to know where we were—in *darkness* with a nature that is prone to sin, to dislike, resent, criticize, complain, and condemn.

13 God takes us from being *spiritually dark*; Separated from Him; Self-centered; and living only for ourselves—to a much *different* attitude.

14 God did not wait until we realize our resentful and hateful attitudes, but He makes the *first* move.

15 NKJV 1 John 4:9 “*In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.*”

16 *Love moves first*; Love *pays* a debt while we are still darkness; Love *sacrifices* for a broken world of rebellious sinners—and makes a way back to Him.

17 This is what it means to go *from dark to different*. Not merely *improved*—but *transformed*; Not slightly *better*—but completely *changed*.

18 When God’s love enters *our heart*, it does not *leave us* the same. We cannot encounter the divine love of God and remain unchanged.

19 God’s love does not just *comfort*—it *converts*; It does not just *pacify*—it *sanctifies*; It does not just *forgive*—it *reforms* our attitudes.

2. Definition of Love

20 NIV 1 John 4:10 “*This is love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.*”

21 This divine love is not defined by feelings—but is defined by a cross—making a sacrifice for the object of its love—*love pays a price!*

22 Jesus did not give His life on a cross because we deserved it—He gave because *God is love*.

23 And that *love* took on human form; *Walked* with us; and *went* to the cross for us. We had a debt we could *never* pay any other way.

24 When we talk about this *kind of love*, we are not talking about mere kindness or politeness; We are talking about a deep, divine love that seeks the good of others even at an extremely high personal cost.

3. Inner Life of the Called

25 Christianity is *more* than external actions; it is *internal renovation!*

26 AV Luke 17:21 “*Behold, the kingdom of God is within you.*” It is not just what we *do*—it is who we *become!*

27 “*When you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place*” Matthew 6:6.

28 It is a secret place because love begins where no one sees. The *inner life* reveals the *true life* of a true follower of Jesus.

29 We can appear *outwardly* spiritual and still be *inwardly* resentful, judgmental, and unloving.

30 God is not looking for *performance*—but *earnestness*.

31 Love flourishes in the secret place. It begins with prayer and then sincere surrender to the will of God as we communicate with Him privately. God then pours *His love* in our heart.

32 The heart is where *change* begins—when God *reshapes* our desires; *confronts* our pride; and *reveals* our hidden motives.

33 And *that* is where we become *different*—not by *our* effort but by *His* Holy Spirit within.

4. Love or Pretense

34 Jesus continues to warn against religious hypocrisy **Matthew 6**—Giving to be *seen*; Praying to be *admired*; and Fasting to gain *attention*.

35 All of these are outward acts that may *look* righteous but lack true love for God and sincere faith in Christ.

36 Love does *not* seek attention—it seeks God; Love does *not* perform—it *prays* from honest need; Love does *not* want applause but approval from God.

37 When the love of God is in our heart, our motives are pure. We *give* because we love; We *pray* because there is a need; and We *serve* because His love inspires us to do that.

5. Battle for the Heart

38 Jesus next touches on something close to everyone's heart—money. **AV Matthew 6:21** “*Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*”

39 Most people in the world treasure their money, but this should not be so with us. The questions are: What do we *value*? What do we *pursue*? What has a *hold* on our heart? What are we passionate about?

40 Love is always directed toward something or someone. Jesus says **23** “*You cannot serve God and mammon.*” We cannot divide our love.

41 God does not *compete* for *part* of our heart—He is calling for *all* of it—it is where the struggle takes place.

42 We want *God*—but we want *control* too. We want His blessings—but we cling to our money too.

43 Divine love *calls* for total surrender—not partial—**Total**, because only when God truly has our heart can we truly *reflect* His *character*.

6. Love That Reflects God

44 The apostle concludes with a powerful statement **1 John 4:11** “*Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.*”

45 Love *within* us that *reflects* the love of God is evidence of true transformation.

46 This divine love within is *not* selective; It is *not* based on preference; and It is *not* limited to the easy-to-love people. It reflects the love *we received* but not deserving it.

47 God loved *us* when we still had sinful desires; He loved us when we still had unscriptural attitudes; and He loved us when we were still in the dark. We now love others—not because *they deserve it*, but because *we received it*.

7. Living the Love of God

48 This sequence cannot be reversed—1 God loves *us*; 2 We receive *His* love; 3 We are *transformed* by His love; 4 We *reflect* His love; then 5 We *extend* His love to others.

49 We are to value our time spent with God; We must ask Him to search your heart; We are to choose love even when it *costs* us; We *serve* without wanting to be seen; We *forgive* because *we* have been forgiven; and We *surrender* anything that *competes with God!*

50 Steadily and unmistakably—we should *notice a difference*—not because we try harder, but

because we *pray often* for God's love to *change* what *needs* changing.

51 **John 4:8** “*God is love*” and His love is revealed in Christ Jesus.

52 There is no question that **God is love**—But has *His love* has taken *hold* of our life and *changed* our heart?

53 Have we gone from **Dark to Different?**

54 Is our *inner life* aligned with our *outward living?*

55 Does the *love of God flow through us—to others?*

56 If God loved us so deeply, so completely, and so sacrificially—Then let us “*love one another as we should*” by the power of His Spirit within our heart.

57 When God's love takes root in the *hidden place*, it will be revealed in the *visible life*—a life that will prove—**God is love!**



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*Receive free Tracts email:
fcgchurch1@gmail.com

Or write to: PO Box 24283
Philadelphia, PA 19120
#3285 26 0426A