

First John 4:7-10

The third reference to this test of love (2:7-11; 3:11-18)

- 1) The command—4:7a ⁷ *Beloved^{pl}* (cf. 3:2, 21; 4:1, 7, 11), *let us keep on loving* [pres. act. subj. ἀγαπάω] *one another* (cf. 3:11, 23; 4:21)
 - a) Why? *because* [ὅτι] *love* [ἀγάπη] *is from* [ἐκ] *God*,
 - b) Love is referred to approximately 50 times in First John
- 2) A contrasting explanation; our love is rooted in **WHO** God is—4:7b-8
 - a) Genuine Christians—4:7b *and each one who is characterized by loving* [pres. act. ptc. ἀγαπάω] (cf. 2:10; 3:14; 4:12; 5:2)
 - i) Permanent life—*has been fathered* [pf. pass. ind. γεννάω] *by* [ἐκ] *God* (cf. 3:9)
 - (1) It is in your spiritual DNA to love as the Father loves
 - ii) Ongoing intimacy with God—*and is knowing* [pres. act. ind. γινώσκω] *God*.
 - b) Pseudo-Christians—4:8 ⁸ *The one characterized by not loving* [pres. act. ptc. ἀγαπάω] (cf. 3:10, 14; 4:20)
 - i) No intimacy with God—*does not know* [aor. act. ind. γινώσκω] *God* (cf. 3:10, 14)
 - (1) Why? *because* [ὅτι] *God is love* [ἀγάπη].
 - (a) God has the essential quality of love, but He is not identical to love
- 3) The illustration; our love is rooted in **WHAT** God did—4:9-10
 - a) The fact of the incarnation is stated—⁹ *In this* [ἐν οὗτος] *the love of God* (the Father, that was previously hidden) *was made visible* [aor. pass. ind. φανερώω] *among us*,
 - b) The fact of the incarnation is explained—*that* [ὅτι] **His Son** (emphatic), *the unique one* [μονογενής], *God sent* [pf. act. ind. ἀποστέλλω] (as His authorized representative) *into the world*
 - i) Why? *in order that* [ἵνα] *we may live* [aor. act. subj. ζάω] *through* [διὰ] *Him*.
 - c) The fact of the incarnation restated—¹⁰ *In this* [ἐν οὗτος] *is love* [ἀγάπη],
 - i) Negatively—*not that* [ὅτι] **we** (emphatic) *loved* [aor. act. ind. ἀγαπάω] *God*,
 - (1) As many unbelievers claim to do.
 - (2) True love is not defined by what we do, by how we conceive of it, or by our devotion to Him, but by what God has done in sending His Son (Magill)
 - ii) Positively—*but* [ἀλλά] ... (cf. John 3:16)
 - (1) Spontaneous—*that* [ὅτι] **He** (emphatic, Father) *loved* [aor. act. ind. ἀγαπάω] *us*
 - (2) Purposeful—*and sent* [aor. act. ind. ἀποστέλλω] (as His authorized representative) *His Son as the propitiation* [ἰλασμός] *concerning* [περί] *our sins* [ἁμαρτία]. (cf. 2:2)
 - (a) Christ's costly propitiatory atonement uncaps an artesian well of selflessness in which believers find resources for sacrificial care for each other. (Yarbrough)