

Now We Have the Idea
1 John 4:7-13 & 19-21

Jesus' refusal to separate love for God from love for _____ impacted his disciples deeply. He taught that if you separate the 2nd commandment from the 1st, you no longer have _____. No Apostolic writer accented the connection between love for God and love for others quite as powerfully as John in his 1st epistle.

The first 3 words of our text begin to make John's point. The words, "Dear friends," is a translation of one Greek noun we know: "_____"—"You who are loved." The 2nd word is the verb form of the same word stem, translated, "Let us love," and the object is "one another." The point he drives home is that those who are _____ by God ought to extend that same love to _____. This word, "agape," is the word for _____, non-demanding, _____ given love. The perfect example is Jesus' coming into the world—the way He lived and the way He sacrificed His life on the cross for us is our _____ for love.

Love is not something done from a _____ where your hands don't have to get dirty. Neither is love done for personal reward but for the _____ of another. Though benefits often come to the lover, it's not why you love, and true love will always _____ you dearly. In the Bible, love is close-in, costly, given free of charge.

John says that when this kind of love is given, it confirms the reality of God's _____ in us and makes God _____. As Jesus taught, "They'll know we are Christians by our love."

The reverse is also true. Whenever we fail to love, God becomes strangely _____ in our lives. John goes further. He says when you fail to love but rather show hatred toward someone, especially a brother or sister in Christ, your claim to love God may be a ____; a _____. At least, God in us becomes _____.

What Jesus wants of us is to love one another. So, when we pray, "God help me love others as much as You love me," God will say "Ah, finally! _____."