



## CrossRoads Notes:

Turn your Bibles to 1 John 4:7-12

*Title: Foundational Love*

*Theme: Truths to Grasping God's Love*

*Series: The One Anothers in Scripture*

**Introduction:** *The Word of God gives us at least 34 passages of Scriptures to govern ourselves by as we live out the Christian life in practical ways. The church God can use has a Body of Christ who examines herself to God's Word, trusts in Jesus and walks in step with the Holy Spirit of Christ. The beloved John, being led by the Holy Spirit of Christ gives us a powerful truth to guide ourselves by as we look to the Word of God for instructions on living out "Foundational Love."*

1 John 4:7-12, "Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed His love among us: He sent His one and only Son into the world that we might live through Him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and His love is made complete in us."

The beloved John has just laid the foundation for us that indicates whether or not we are responding to God's Holy Spirit with a right heart. The truth found in this text is a powerful conclusion, God's love originates in Himself, (1 John 4:7-8) is manifested in Jesus Christ as God in the flesh and through God giving His one and only Son to pay the ultimate sacrifice. (1 John 4:9-10; John 3:16) God's love is also expressed through Christians (1 John 4:12) as they have Biblical fellowship. Westcott wrote, "It is through man that the love of God finds its fulfillment on earth." God has chosen in this dispensation to show His love through His children as they walk in obedience to Him.

Jesus said, "A new commandment I give you, that you love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." (John 13: 34-35)

**Proposition:** *I would propose to you the Christian's goal is to live in such a way that people know they are disciples of Christ.*

**Interrogative Sentence:** *Just how is that goal achieved?*

**Transitional Sentence:** *The Christian that is able to achieve the high goal of expressing Biblical love understands where true love comes from. The beloved John in writing about God's love and the love that is to be expressed by a Christian writes,*

“God is love...” (1 John 4:8,16) (1 John 4:7)

It would be inadequate to think of salvation as mere deliverance from the punishment of hell. It is best enjoyed in this lifetime by seeing Christ's salvation as freedom from the love of the flesh, freedom from love of this world and freedom from the lies of the devil.

“Source” means that spring or fountain, the beginning of a stream from which it gets the flow that feeds life to all who would drink from it. “Source” is that from which anything rises or originates. Nothing finds its beginning or existence on its own.

The Hebrew word “breathed” (*nesamah*) is understood that such breath originates with God. He can withhold that breath thereby withholding life from humanity. Without His breath there is no life. Our source of life begins and is determined by Him. God is love means that true love originates from God just as our lives originate from Him. His love does not change because true love is His nature.

One day a boy in a certain family told one of his brothers that he had to be good or their father would not love him. The boy's father overheard the conversation and spoke to the boys. He told them “That is not true, I will love you always, when you are good I will love you in a love that makes me glad. When you follow sin I shall love you in a love that grieves me. Never-the-less I will still love you.”

That is the way it is with God, He is not obligated to love us because we are good. He loves because He is love, love is who He is. True love exists because God is love, people do not enjoy true love as an reward for doing good. Just as we exist because life originates with God, true love exists because God is love.

**Transitional Sentence:** *In order for the Body of Christ to enjoy “Foundational Love” she must look to God who is the source of true love and she must understand just what His love is. God is love. (1 John 4:8-6) “Love” (agape) in regard to God's love in today's key text means that it is an expression of His willful action toward man. It involves God doing what He knows is best for man not doing or giving man what he deserves. It is God's love that allows a man to go through what he must in order to cause man to call upon God or choose to reject Christ's sacrifice made for him.*

Our key text is very clear, This is how God showed His love among us: He sent His one and only Son into the world that we might live through Him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. (1 John 4:9-10)

One person who grasped his call was Lough Fook, a Chinese Christian who was given a Holy Spirit compassion for the coolies in the South African mines. He felt led of the Lord to sell himself into slavery for five years for the opportunity to take the Gospel of Christ to the Chinese slaves working in the mines. He worked hard, suffering as a slave and he preached and shared Christ to those who worked with him. Before his five years were up Lough Fook died, but not before he saw 200 slave miners receive

Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

It must be noted that not every Christian is called to make the type or depth of sacrifice that Lough did, however, all Christians will sacrifice something so others may hear the message of Christ because the love of God is flowing through them by the Holy Spirit of Christ. This sacrifice may come through financial giving, fasting and prayer or through all sorts of ways set forth by God.

**Transitional Sentence:** *Foundational love comes from God, His love is lived through His obedient children and there are Biblical ways of expressing the love of God to one another.* (1 Corinthians 12:7) (1 Corinthians 12:1) (1 Corinthians 14:1) (1 Corinthians 14:1)

Two truths worth grasping in this part of the message are “love” (*agape*) and “prophecy” (*propheteuo*). Scripture is clear, God has made the way for Christians to accomplish His command, “Love One Another.” He has sent the Holy Spirit to give them His power to express true love. The New American Standard Bible give us this powerful instruction “Pursue love, yet desire earnestly spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy. (1 Corinthians 14:1) “Pursue” (*dioko*) means to press hard after with diligence in order to obtain. This is the heart much like that person who so longs to accomplish a certain goal that he sacrifices certain pleasures or rights to spend the proper amount of time, energy and expense to obtain his goal. The pursuer of God’s love has the mindset of C. T. Studd who wrote, “If Jesus Christ be God and died for me, then no sacrifice can be too great for me to make for Him.”

In the pursuit of making honey we are told that honey bees must visit 56,000 clover heads consisting of 3,360,000 visits to make one just pound of honey. It has been estimated that the worker bee will fly up to eight miles looking for a nectar flow. Their persistence in accomplishing God’s design for them has enabled millions of people to enjoy one of God’s natural sweeteners. The sweetest most natural thing for mankind to enjoy is to be connected to the nectar flow of God’s love.

This will require a constant pursuing of His children so they and the world can enjoy “agape” love, the God-kind of love. Holy Spirit given gifts operated through agape love are the highest expression that a Christian can live before the eyes of everyone. By exercising Spiritual gifts selflessly and sacrificially, Christians are given the ability to discipline their minds and the will to minister to others--even those they feel are unworthy or undeserving of being loved. It is unconditional love expressed for the glory of God and Christ, exercised only through the influence of the Holy Spirit.

Christians who constantly pursue God’s love and exercise the Spiritual gifts sacrificially are able to do so because they “especially love the gift of “prophecy.” (1 Corinthians 14:1) The gift of “prophecy” (*propheteuo*) is exercised by Christians who have the Christ apportioned gift of “Prophets” (*prophetes*) having the ability to declare truths through the inspiration of God’s Holy Spirit... to tell forth God’s message, a proclaimer, one who speaks out the counsel of God with clearness, energy, and Biblical authority. These are Christians who have been taught of God by the prayerful study of God’s Word, men or women who correctly handle the Word of

truth. (Deuteronomy 18:18; Isaiah 1; Ezekiel 2; 1 Corinthians 14:3)

Christians who express lives that demonstrate God's work in them are Christians who desire the Holy Spirit given gift of prophecy. They make every effort to be where this gift is being exercised by a pastor, teacher, evangelist, prophet or apostle. They understand that these are not necessarily offices, but gifts apportioned by Jesus Christ so the children of God may be built up, prepared for works of service, so the Body of Christ may have unity, become mature, have great knowledge of the Son of God and attain the full measure of the fullness of Christ. (Ephesians 4:7-13)

**Transitional Sentence:** *Christians who grasp the love of God serve the Lord Jesus sacrificially so others can enjoy the "Foundational Love" of God.* They also celebrate regularly as an expression of God's love toward one another. In the book of Jude in verse 12 we read that Christians had love feasts.

These "love feasts" (*agapai*) were public banquets instituted by the early Christian church and often connected with the celebration of the Lord's Supper. The provisions were contributed by the more wealthy individuals and were made common to all Christians, whether rich or poor. Portions of the food that was left over was sent to the sick and absent members. These love feasts were intended as an exhibition of that mutual love which is required by the Christian faith..." (Zodates; The Complete Word Study Dictionary of the New Testament) These meals are referred to by some verses in the New Testament and are mentioned as a common ministry to the Body of Christ in postcanonical literature, which are writings found about the times of the early church. They are recorded as being a very special part of New Testament history. (New Bible Dictionary; History of Christian Agape, J.H. Kelly; F.F Bruce; The Moody Handbook of Theology; Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary) Christian history shows forth that Christians can most certainly celebrate their faith in Christ over a common meal.

The modern day church made the same mistake as the early New Testament church, they turned the love feasts into a dead religious observance and sinful flesh took over. However, when guided by the Holy Spirit these meals done with a right heart are birthing life back into this part of love expression for the Body of Christ.

**In Closing:** The church that grasps "Foundational Love" understands key truths enabling Christians to live out life expressions saying, "God is doing a work among them." She looks to God because He is the only source of true love. She understands the sacrifice made by Christ and at all costs makes a way for the Gospel of Christ to get around the world. She has a Body of believers who exercise their Holy Spirit gifts through sacrificial love. She is a church that eagerly desires to be exposed to the proclaiming and teaching of God's Word and she celebrates as the Lord leads.