

When In Doubt, Think Love

Intro: It's difficult to know the exact circumstances in which John was writing, but it is obvious to the modern reader that John is consumed with his readers understanding the significance of love in God and in all those who want to honor him. He has already discussed the subject early in his letter, but now he "dives in head first".

1. Does God Love Us? 1 John 4:7-10
 - A. "God is love" and we can't know God if we don't love.
 - B. His love was seen in sending his Son so we could know real life.
 - C. His love was seen in sending his Son as a "propitiation for our sins".

2. That love shown to us is meant to lead us to loving one another. 1 Jn. 4:11-12
 - A. Having been taught of his love and experiencing it, we can now live it.
 - B. People can't see God but if we love as He loved, they can see Him in us.
 - C. Holding back love indicates we really don't understand God's love for us.
 - D. Love should become the "family trademark".

3. How are we to be sure of God's love? 1 John 4:13-21
 - A. We received the promise gift of the Holy Spirit. Acts 2:38-39
 - B. We have the testimony of John and the other Apostles.
 - C. We have learned the truth of Jesus and have spoken it.
 - D. We have confidence in God's love.
 - E. We love our brothers.

Conclusion: Too often, love is seen as something we express to our brethren when we are in a particularly good mood. That usually happens when we have had love expressed to us in one way or another. What John is saying is that if we understand God's love that is the complete motivation needed for extending love to others.