

1 John 4:16-21 (Teaching)

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Preacher: Spencer Baumgardner

[0 : 00] I can first John chapter four in this part. I don't miss the yesterday.

I got out of the shower and the showers. I was in the shower, it occurred to me on Friday, February 10th, my 14th year, birthday slash anniversary.

I was being saved, there was a lot going on Friday and I guess that's why I skipped my minor prayer because I honestly didn't think about it. But it hit me yesterday.

I do, I thank God for it. It was a Tuesday morning, 14 years ago, February 10th was, and I recall it very vividly. I was at work, I was working on cars then, I was fixing cars, Crabtree, Gude, Pontiac.

And God had dealt with me for three days and I finally, I finally gave in to it, went to the tour room, hit my knees, and got saved right then and there. Hallelujah.

[1 : 03] And God made a change in me and I praised Him for it. I've had some people tell me that that's not possible. I've had a few people say, well, you wasn't in a church, you wasn't in an altar, there was no preacher present.

And I tell all those people the same thing, that if God could hear Jonah from the belly of a fish at the bottom of the Mediterranean Sea, He could hear me cry from a car dealership in Bristol, Virginia.

That's right. So I just kind of put those people to the side and I know what happened. I know what happened and I thank God for it. But anyway, enough testifying.

First John chapter four, we stopped in a horrible, terrible place last week. I was hoping to get through verse 16 last week and we didn't. We made it all the way to verse 15 and ran out of time.

And I guess I could have put it in the turbo and blew through verse 16. I didn't want to do that. So we ended with verse 15, the fourth chapter of first John last week and really and truly to tie all of it together, we could back plumb up to verse seven.

[2 : 15] We're not going to do that this morning. We've already covered seven through 15. But we could back all that up or back all the way up to there to get to verse 16.

I do want to read verse 15 again, though, just so we kind of, kind of sort of know where we're at. John has mentioned in these verses leading up to here that God is love.

And he's about to mention it again in the next few verses. This whole chapter kind of surrounds on that very thought that God is love.

And that if God is love and God is blowing in us and we in him, then we in turn should show the love of God. Not only the brothers and sisters in Christ, a lot of people read this, I guess specifically John may have been talking about that, the folks were to love, were to love all those around us.

Everybody we come into contact with, we should have a godly love toward them for God so loved the world. And if God so loved the world, we should also so love the world, not so much that we condone what the world does or the way that they act, we shouldn't encourage paganism or heathenism or any of those other isms out there.

[3 : 40] Just because we love doesn't mean that we agree with. And we've been through that since we've been going through the book of 1st John. You know, Missy and I love Missy, Missy loves me, but needless to say, we don't always agree.

And that happens. You know, we don't have to agree with the world to love the world. I guarantee you, God doesn't agree with the world, but yet God so loved the world.

So let's keep all that in mind. We'll read verse 15, then we'll jump into verse 16, where we should be picking up. Verse 15, whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him and he in God.

And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him.

So back to the beginning of verse 16, we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. This is important. I think that John was purposely making a distinction in this line.

[4 : 48] We have known and believed the love that God hath to us. It's not just known. You know, the world can say that they've heard of the love of God.

They can even claim that they know the love of God. But have they believed the love of God? Those which are saved, we are the ones that believe the love of God.

You back up a few verses. You see the first time John mentions that God himself is love and he mentions it again here in this very verse. But to know the love of God, or just to know of the love of God is one thing.

But to know and believe the love of God. That's a whole different area. That's a whole other plane to know it and to believe it. We can know of God.

We can know of Jesus Christ. We can know of the gospel. We can know of a hundred million different things. But that doesn't necessarily mean that we believe it.

[5 : 50] What is the best? Everybody in here should know the answer to this. What is the best display of the love of God towards sinners? It was a man named Jesus hanging on the cross, suffering and dying for your sins.

That was the best display of the love of God towards sinners. It was also on the flip side of that very same coin. It was also the greatest display of God's hatred towards sin.

It was both of those things. We must keep these things in mind. I'm not saying God hated his son. I'm not saying that God hated Christ, even though the Bible says he became sin for us.

I understand that. But God hated sin. That was the best display of God's hatred towards sin. It was the best display of God's love towards sinners, God's love toward the world.

We have known and we have believed that love that God showed us and the death of his only begotten son. And last I think that John purposely made that distinction that we have known and believed the love that God hath to us.

[6 : 59] And that verse continues, God is love and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God. In him. So, and I mentioned that briefly just a little while ago, but God is love.

You love because God is love. God is the origin of love. He's the beginning of love. And it's not a love that just started when God created the world.

God is eternal and everything about God is eternal. So God has always been love. And even when what we know as the universe now was a nothing but darkness, even before God called light into existence, there was still love because God is love.

God is immortal. God is eternal. He is everlasting and everything about him, his love, his long suffering, his patience, his mercy, his grace, everything about God is eternal, including his wrath and his fury and his vengeance and everything else on the more negative side of that coin.

But everything about God is eternal and everything about God is and will be everlasting. We need to remember that. And he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him.

[8 : 16] Notice both of these times we see the word dwelleth here. What is that? When we see the TH at the end of these old English words, more often than not, that's a perfect tense.

It's a present perfect tense. He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God. He that continually dwells in love continually dwells in God.

It's perpetual. There's no end to it. And God in him, I praise God for that, that not only am I continually dwelling in God, but God is continually and perpetually and unendingly dwelling inside of me.

But it's only those that have that have known and believed the love of God that can say this, that can say that we are eternally dwelling in God and God is eternally dwelling in us.

I know I've heard it a couple of times since going through 1 John about people that think that you can be saved and lost 50 or 100 times in the course of a 24 hour period.

[9 : 23] And that's just crazy. It's people that literally think that the times throughout the day that they sin, they're not dwelling in God, nor is God dwelling in them.

And there are people out there that believe this. Folks, this is, once again, it's perfect tense. It's a present perfect tense. We're talking about it is continual. God has not left me in 14 years and two days now.

God has not left me and God's not going to leave me. God has taken up in a boat in my heart. He has taken up in a boat in my body and if you're here and you're born again, he's taken up in a boat in your body.

And that a boat is eternal from what I understand in the scriptures and for what I understand just in this one verse here, but as well as other scriptures that we could point out.

We won't for time sake this morning, but he the 12th in love, 12th in God and God in him. Verse 17, herein is our love made perfect that we may have boldness in the day of judgment because as he is, so are we in this world.

[10 : 31] This is a difficult verse. It's not difficult. It's not difficult as far as explaining it goes. I tell you what makes it difficult is the tenses that are involved in this verse.

He says herein is our love made perfect. That word is puts this in the present tense. Well, folks, ain't nothing about me perfect and they're not about you perfect yet yet John contradicts that statement.

See me herein is our love made perfect that we may have boldness in the day of judgment. Herein is our love made perfect. What love are we talking about?

The love that was brought up in the very first previous to this that we just read and just went through. It's the love of God. Herein is our love made perfect though.

It is the love of God, but this love of God, it dwells in us and we and he dwells in us and we dwell in him. But it's the love of God that we're talking about here.

[11 : 35] Herein is our love made perfect that we may have boldness in the day of judgment. So we've gone from present to future tense here, but he says this is the reason why this is what John's saying here.

This is the reason why our love is made perfect so that we can have boldness in the day of judgment. Now folks, there's people out there right now and I could name some of them off the top of my head.

I won't. There's people out there right now that think that come judgment day or when they die or whatever the case is, they're going to strut into the throne room of God literally, kick back in a chair, prop their feet up on an ottoman and basically say, what's up God?

Folks, that ain't going to happen. It won't happen with me being a saved individual and it won't happen with anybody out there in the world that is a lost individual. But that's the kind of boldness that people think we're talking about.

No folks, it's boldness, it's confidence. It's confidence. It's confidence for me to know that regardless of what happens throughout the course of my day, whether it's simple or not, it is confidence for me to know that regardless of anything that goes on, I am a child of the King.

[12 : 50] I'm a child of God. That's the boldness that I can have. Now there's folks out there and we've gone over it before, we'll go over it briefly again. There's folks out there that say God loves me.

He ain't going to send me to hell. Oh, dang, what the Bible teaches. The Bible teaches God is holy and just and righteous and he must punish sin and he punished sin on a cross on Golgotha's hill 2000 plus years ago.

He punished Jesus Christ there for your sin and for mine and we can either accept that punishment as our redemption or we can spend the rest of eternity paying for our own sin.

I'll accept what Jesus did for me. I accept what he done on Calvary's cross. I don't want to pay for my sin and I'm not going to pay for my sin. Jesus Christ took not only my sin, he took my shame.

He took every negative thing in my life, every negative thing about me. He took that upon himself and I will take that as opposed to me paying for it for the rest of eternity.

[14 : 00] That's believing the love of God. What we read in the previous version is that's knowing and believing the love of God. So here in is our love made perfect.

This isn't a perfect love. We think of perfection, it's talking about it's been brought to maturity, it's been brought to completion and it's been brought to completion in me and if you're born again, it's been brought to completion in you.

There's nothing more to be done. I'm not saying that we can just sit down like the Thessalonians did that Paul wrote two letters to and do nothing just waiting on the return of Christ.

Yes, we'll have works in our life but the love has been brought to completion and because of that love that God has shown us, we can have confidence in the day of judgment.

We can have confidence that when God, that when we stand before God, he will claim us as one of his own. He won't see me, he'll see the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

[14 : 59] I praise God that he will not see me. I praise God that he will see Jesus Christ because when I got saved, my sin was washed away, my sin, my past, present and future tense was all washed away and when I stand before God, he won't see my unrighteousness, he won't see my evil words, he won't see my sin, he will see the righteousness of his only begotten Son.

That's why I can stand in boldness in front of God. It's not boldness as far as howlingness or cockiness, it's confidence that I have been saved and I have that confidence that I've been saved.

I told you off, it was 14 years ago and I know that there was a change made when that happened. I have confidence in that change because I couldn't have done it myself.

It had to have been of God and it was of God because I came to him in faith and I came to him in repentance and he saved my unworthy soul.

Therefore, I can stand in boldness in front of God. Not in cockiness, not in holliness, not to be, not in being brood or anything along those lines, certainly not in pride.

[16 : 13] But it's because I know what happens because I know I got saved and the love of God divides in me and I abide in God because as he is, so are we in this world.

The last part of this verse, this is where it gets a little trick because as he is, as who is, as Jesus Christ is because as he is, what tense is that?

That's present tense as he currently is. How is Jesus Christ currently? What's Jesus Christ currently doing? He's sitting at the right hand of glory. He's sitting at the right hand of the Father doing what?

Making intercession for the saints, making intercession for all those that have repented and come to him in faith. This is how he is. It says, so are we in this world.

This is present tense as well. Well, folks, I ain't at the right hand of the Father and I'm certainly not making intercession. I believe in intercession in prayer. That's a whole different story. So what's John getting at?

[17 : 17] Because as he is, so are we in this world. Jesus Christ, remember the context that we're talking about here, what we talked about just before we got to this line in this verse, it was standing before God in boldness and confidence.

Jesus Christ was able to stand before the Father and say, I've accomplished your work. I've accomplished what you say to do. I've accomplished redemption for mankind, for all who would trust and believe in me.

I've accomplished that. That's how he is right now. And the Father accepted that. The Father accepted his work. So as he is, so are we.

We're in that same boat. Not that we accomplished redemption for mankind. Not that we've saved anybody, but in the boldness that Jesus crossed and the confidence that he could go, that he could ascend back to heaven and ascend back to the Father and stand before the Father and say, I've done everything that you sent me to do.

We can have that same confidence. That's what John is getting at. There's people that'll take this scripture and they'll make all kinds of weird things about it. Folks, if you keep it in the context of what we're talking about, the boldness that we stand in, the confidence that we can have standing before God, it's not too awful hard to either explain nor to understand as he is confident before the Father.

[18 : 52] Or, besides the Father, however you rather phrase that, we can have that same confidence. And we should have that same confidence. If you've been born again, folks, you should have confidence in the day of judgment.

Verse 18, there is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath torment. He that feareth has not made perfect in love.

This is a strong statement that John's making. There is no fear in love. That's not too bad. There is no fear. But what were we just talking about in the previous verse? Keep this in context.

We were talking about judgment day. We were talking about standing before God in confidence. Come the day of judgment. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out all fear.

What were we also talking about in the previous verse? Where it says, hearing is our love made perfect. We're talking about complete love. It's been brought to completion.

[19 : 55] So he says, there is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out all fear. What is perfect love? That's the love of God. It's been completed in us as saved individuals.

God has completely shown his love toward us in saving our souls. So perfect love casteth out all fear.

This verse gets tricky. This one's a difficult one to explain to people. It's not... Let me rephrase that.

It's difficult to get people to get what it's saying. It's not so difficult to understand. It's difficult for people to accept what it says. Because fear hath torment.

He that feareth is not made perfect in love. Folks, that's the Bible. That's what the Bible says. Fear hath torment. What torment?

[20 : 53] Every time I think about judgment, the first thing that pops in my head is hell. Hell is a place of torment. Hell is a place of God's wrath.

Everything about God is eternal. It's forever. Now, once this thing is completely wrapped up, and once as far as I understand it, the Scripture goes, and once the millennial reign of Christ has come and gone, and Satan is loosed for a season, and Jesus finally defeats Satan with the sword of his mouth, after all these things have happened, and everybody's gathered in heaven that's going to be there.

And the marriage supper and the land takes place, and all these other wonderful things we read about in Scripture. Once that happens, what use is the wrath of God?

If we're in a place, all of us who are saved are in a place of eternal love, eternal peace, eternal solitude, the wrath of God is eternal.

It's got to go on. The wrath of God will be in hell. God's fury will be in hell. There'll be no use for it on earth. There'll be no use for it certainly in heaven, but it's eternal.

[22 : 13] It can't just be extinguished. It's got to go on. That's what I think about when I think of torment. I think of judgment, I think of hell. People are bold enough to say, God won't send me to hell.

God loves me. Jesus Christ. There's 12 times the word Gehenna is brought up in the New Testament, the Greek word for hell.

12 times. 11 of those 12 times, it was from the very lips of Jesus Christ. He was talking about hell. He said, don't tell me it's not serious. And don't tell me that Jesus didn't mean it.

Don't tell me God's not serious about sin and judgment and fury and torment. That's the suffering that will go on. That's people paying for their own sins throughout eternity.

That's what I was talking about just a little while ago. So when John says, because fear hath torment, he that feareth is not made perfect in love. There's only one way you can read this in the proper context, in the context of the previous verse and this verse right here.

[23 : 23] He said, he that feareth is not made perfect in love. He that feareth what? He that feareth that torment. He that feareth that judgment. I don't fear the judgment of God.

I know I fear God. Don't you get me wrong? I fear God with a reverent fear. Yes, and every one of us should, but I don't fear the judgment of God because Christ has already taken that judgment for me and I know that.

We're talking about people that fear the judgment of God. We're talking about them when he says, because fear hath torment, if someone's fearing the judgment of God, John is saying here in the words of Scripture, which is forever settled in heaven.

He's saying because fear hath torment, he that feareth is not made perfect in love. The love of God has not been brought to completion in that person.

There may be one of these people that have heard all of the love of God. They may have been to Bible school. They may have been to Sunday school. They may have been in church all their lives. They may be 80 years old and have heard about the love of God for 80 years or 90 years or 60 years, whatever the case is.

[24 : 39] But the love of God has not been brought to completion in that person if they still fear the judgment of God. John here is saying if you fear the judgment of God, you're not saved.

That's what this is getting at. He says, because fear hath torment, if we fear the judgment, we're fearing the torment of God.

He that feareth is not made perfect in love. It has not been brought to maturity. The love of God has not had its work in that person's heart and that person's soul like the love of God has had in my own or any other saved individual that is out there.

That's what John is saying here. And there's a lot of people that do not want to grasp that. They don't want to accept that. They're unsaved that they fear the judgment of God. Folks, that's the words of the Bible.

That's exactly what John is getting at in this verse. If we take it in context and we can take it out of context and go 15 different ways with it. But in the context that it's written in, he is saying if you fear the judgment of God, it's because you're not saved.

[25 : 51] It's because perfect love. Love that's been brought to that completion. It casteth out all fear, fear of what? The judgment that was brought up in the previous verse.

Keep it in context when you're reading it and it'll help. We love him because he first loved us. This is one of them. This is one of the most simple and one of the best statements in all the New Testament.

And it's humbling. It's very humbling. We love him because he first loved us. We don't love just because that's the way God made us.

We don't love because of this or that. We love God because love itself. Remember twice in the verses leading up to this in the fourth chapter of 1 John. Twice John says, God is love and we love him because love itself.

God first loved us. We need to keep that in mind. It would do us well as Christians to remember that we don't love God. We don't love our neighbor.

[26 : 55] We don't love anything spiritual, anything holy, anything righteous. We don't love any of these things just because that's what God wanted us.

We love them because God first loved us. And remember what we talked about in the previous two verses. Before this, God's love has been brought to maturity inside of us.

It has worked in us. It has been shown us and we have known and believed that love of God. We love him because he first loved us.

If I had depended on my love to God to get saved, and if you had depended on your love to God to get saved, that's meeting here this morning would be pointless.

Because none of us would be saved. I didn't love God before I got saved. In fact, I hated God. You all in here?

[27 : 56] Most of you all could probably say the same thing. I hated God. I hated the church. I hated the Bible. I hated churchy people. I hated Christians. I hated gospel music.

I hated it all. I couldn't stand it. But when I got saved, all that changed. Because the love of God was brought to completion.

And I knew of the love of God, and I believed in the love of God. It was brought to completion in my life.

And I come to love it because God first loved me. God first, in his love, came to where I was, and he saved my soul. In his love.

And because he done that, because of the love of God now, I love God. Now, not only love God, but I love godly things. And I love godly people. And I love godly music.

[28 : 55] I love everything that is godly. Here, that's truly godly. I love it. But it's all because God first loved me. Hallelujah. If a man say, I love God and hate his brother, he is a liar.

Boy, John just cut and dry there. If a man say, I love God and hate his brother, he is a liar. Once again, that's not the words of Spencer.

And that's not Spencer interpreting scripture. That's what scripture says. If a man says he loves God, and yet he hates his brother, he's a liar.

Period. End of discussion. There's no way around it. And it makes perfect sense. This is just the first line of this verse. If a man says he loves God and hates his brother, he's a liar.

And so, I mean, how could John come out and say that this blows out of the water all these people that say you're not being very loving. You're not acting like the Bible says to act.

[29 : 58] You're not acting like Jesus is what a lot of people will say. Well, folks, the Bible right here says if you claim to love God, but you hate your brother, you're a liar.

Folks, that's why I can confidently call out sin. I don't strike anyone. I don't strike anyone. But to go through a list of sin and say if you're a liar, if you're a thief, if you're an adulterer, if you're a drunkard, or if you're a sorcerer, or any of these other things that we see in the scriptures, if you're a fornicator, if you're any of these things, then you're only a way to hell.

That's just confidence in what the Scripture says. But I don't strike if I, if someone was in here right now and was a known prostitute, and I purposely singled them out right in front of everyone, didn't address anyone else's sin, but addressed that one.

That's striking. That's striking an individual. That's a dangerous offense. That's a serious offense as far as Scripture is concerned and as far as God is concerned.

But John here says if a man says I love God and hate his brother, he's a liar. What's the difference? Why can't you, why can't I say I love so and so?

[31 : 22] I just kind of lock this other one a whole lot. I don't know if I love him or not. Or I just absolutely despise this person. Whatever the case is. The best way this can be explained is if someone claims to love the unseen God, if someone swears up and down, I love God and I want to serve God.

Who's unseen? How can they claim to love and serve this God but not be willing to do so for their brother?

Who they do see. It's a whole lot easier to serve someone if you see them. It is. I mean, even as a Christian, I'll stand here and tell you that.

It's a whole lot easier. Why? Because you see that person, that person sees you. You have a physical relationship with that person.

They can see your mannerisms. They can see your facial expressions. They can see everything about you. Listen, God can see all that too.

[32 : 34] And God can see even deeper than that. God knows our heart. I might walk around with a smile on my face that'd be feeling absolutely depressed in this world. God knows my heart, though.

He knows how I'm really feeling. Somebody else out here, though, they might see me wearing that smile. I'm going to say, well, Spencer just has to go lucky today. And that's their impression of it. But it all boils down to if we cannot love and serve our brother, if we hate our brother, how in the world can we claim to love and serve the one whom we cannot see?

It's an impossibility. It's a physical impossibility and certainly a spiritual impossibility for us to do that. The man said, I love God and hate his brother.

He is a Lord for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen. How can he love God whom he hath not seen? And that's what we kind of just went over there.

How can he love God whom he hath not seen if he can't love his brother whom he hath seen? Now, people will take this and they'll say, well, it's just talking about the church because John's addressing them as a brother.

[33 : 50] What's the commandments? What's the commandments? Let's get on into that. Verse 21, In this commandment, have we from him that he who loveth God loveth his brother also?

So what specifically is John talking about? Is he talking about a brother or a sister in Christ here? No, because that wasn't the commandment of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ said to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, all thy mind, all thy strength and all thy soul and love thy neighbor as thyself.

That's the commandment. He didn't say you were a saved neighbor. He didn't say you were a neighbor that's not white, or not black, or not homosexual, or not a drug addict, or not an alcoholic.

He said love thy neighbor regardless of who they are, regardless of where they've been. And folks, I'll stand here and tell you that it's a whole lot easier to love some neighbors than it is others.

And y'all can say the same thing to me. It is. But regardless, that neighbor, I don't care if they're a pedophile, I don't care if they're a murderer, I don't care if they're a rapist.

[35 : 08] That neighbor has a soul, and that soul's going to spend all of eternity somewhere. And the love of God that has been brought to completion in us, the love of God has been brought to maturity in us, it's been completed.

The Bible says it is, and all those who are saved, love should drive us to that person, to that soul, and tell them the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ.

That regardless of their sin, regardless of how wicked they've been, they can still be saved. If they come to Christ in faith and repentance, this is the commandment we have from Him from whom, whom we've been talking about all these verses.

Jesus Christ, the commandment we have from Him is that He who loathed God loathed His brother also. Jesus said in the Gospel of John chapter 15 verse 13, greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. And we've been over that since going through 1 John, that laying down his life, I guess it might be your physical life. Would you die for your labor?

[36 : 25] I mean, would you physically die for a murderer? Would you physically die for a rapist? I can't stand here and confidently tell you that I would.

I don't think any of us in here would. I'd like to think that I would, because I know where I'm going. And their lifestyle, their sins, their, their attitude, their unrepanence, pretty much tells me that they're going the opposite direction that I am.

So should I be willing to lay down my life? Now, granted, Jesus says lay down his life for his friends, but would I be willing to physically lay down my life for a stranger, for a neighbor whom I don't know anything but the sin that they've committed?

And knowing where I'm going and knowing the direction that they're headed in, yes, I should, I should be able to do that. Would I though? I can't tell you for certain, but I can tell you one that did.

Jesus Christ, he knew every black rotten filthy, disgusting sin that anybody would ever commit, and he still laid down his life. And that's what should drive us with the gospel message toward these people.

[37 : 37] Not to belittle them and not to berate them. Y'all remember, heathens know nothing but how to be a heathen, and pagans know nothing about anything except for how to be a pagan.

And you remember, you were in their shoes at one time before God gloriously saved your soul with the blood of his precious son. You were in those same shoes. So before we go looking down our pharistetical noses at the rest of the world, you remember this last verse that we read.

This is the commandment we have from him, that he who loveth God loveth his brother also. Yes, we love our brothers and sisters in Christ. But the commandment of the crossbook was to love God and to love more man.

That brings us to the end of that chapter. Anybody got any questions or comments? Anything at all?

God bless you all. I appreciate you.