


Gospel of Grace
FELLOWSHIP

1 John 4:11-13
Love Received and Shared
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The Obligation for Love

1 John 4:11 (NASB)
Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

- When sinners receive divine love they are obligated to show love to other rescued sinners
- Logic: "If (as is the case) . . . Then we ought . . ."

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God's Unseen Being

1 John 4:12a (NASB)
No one has seen God at any time.

- Moses and Isaiah saw theophanies
- This introduces a thought that will be finished in verse 20
- Jesus reveals the Father (John 6:46; 1:18)

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Christian Love Perfected

1 John 4:12b (NASB)
if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us.

- John defined God’s love in 1Jn 3:16, 4:9, 4:10
- “Perfected” means “achieving love’s intended goal” (mutual love of Christians)

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Mutual Abiding

1 John 4:13 (NASB)
By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit.

- The Holy Spirit has been given to all Christians at regeneration
- Various evidences for abiding in God reinforce one another

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“By This We Know”

- We keep His commandments (1Jn 2:3)
- We keep His word (1Jn 2:5)
- It is the last hour, so antichrists (1Jn 2:18)
- We know love, His laid down life (1Jn 3:16)
- Love in deed and truth (1Jn 3:19, 20)

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“By This We Know”

- By the Spirit, of the truth (1Jn 3:24)
- Confesses Jesus come in the flesh (1Jn 4:2)
- Spirit of truth and error; who listens to us? (1Jn 4:6)
- By reception of the Spirit we know we abide (1Jn 4:13)
- Love God and keep His commandments (1Jn 5:2)

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Implications and Applications

- The unseen Creator revealed Himself in Christ
- Mystical experience cannot define love
- We must love other Christians
- We the forgiven must love the Forgiver

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The Incarnate Word Narrates God

John 1:18 (NASB)

No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.

- The revelation of the eternal Logos is the ultimate revelation of God Himself
- We have not seen God in His entire essence and being, but Christ was seen in the flesh

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Important Considerations

- We do not know God by sight but by faith in His objective revelation in Christ
- “Only begotten” is used by John to describe Jesus as the unique One
- John applies *monogene_s* to the Incarnation
- Only Christ pre-existed as the eternal, Creator God, the 2nd person of the Trinity

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Love Is Perfected in Christ

Colossians 2:2 (HCSB)

I want their hearts to be encouraged and joined together in love, so that they may have all the riches of assured understanding and have the knowledge of God’s mystery—Christ.

- Christ is the source of all spiritual benefit
- The mystery of God is Christ, not mysterious, romantic feelings of love

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The Debt of Love

Romans 13:8 (LEB)

Owe nothing to anyone, except to love one another, for the one who loves someone else has fulfilled the law.

- Our debt to government: pay taxes (vs 7)
- Our debt to Christians: mutual love
- Loving self and loving money are vices

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**Love Is a Response to
Forgiveness**

Luke 7:47, 48 (NASB)

“For this reason I tell you, her sins—which were many—have been forgiven, for she loved much. But the one to whom little is forgiven loves little.” And he said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.”

- Some Pharisees were offended by her lavish love for Christ!

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