



International Bible Lesson

International Bible Study Commentary

L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.

Those Who Know God Love

1 John 4:7-12

Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God (1 John 4:7—KJV).

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God (1 John 4:7—NASB).

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God (1 John 4:7—NRSV).

In John's Gospel and Letters, John emphasized two crucial characteristics of a follower of Jesus. First, a follower of Jesus knows God. Notice: John did not say they know about God, or they know the theology of some famous person, or they know some characteristics of God. He did not say that those who know about God should use their knowledge of God to denigrate or try to ruin someone else who has a different understanding of God or the Bible. Second, those who know God love others. John clearly stated that if someone knows God it is because they are born of God, so they love like God. Because God is love, no matter how much someone may say they know theology, if they do not love others, they do not know God. The followers of Jesus love one another because God lives in them, and because God lives in them, they seek to express the love of God perfectly in all their relationships with others. The followers of Jesus do not love God and others perfectly, but they try to follow the example of Jesus as the Holy Spirit leads them and they will love one another unselfishly as they know Jesus loves them. They will want to

do what is best for everyone in all of their relationships, even if that requires self-sacrifice, whether in business, in the church, or in their home. As one example, Jesus had no selfish or self-centered motive when He loved, came, and sacrificed His life to make eternal life possible for all who would accept His freely given gift.

Thinking Further

1. What reasons did John give for the followers of Jesus to love one another?
2. What two truths did John say about a person who is born of God?
3. What did John say about a person who does not love?
4. How did God reveal His love to us and why did God do so?
5. How did John describe God's love compared to our love?

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