

The Life of Fellowship

Studies on 1 John

5. Love (2)



Teacher's Notes with answers

Introduction

As we saw in our previous study, love is the center of our relationship and fellowship with God, and if we love God then we will love one another. When we love one another it shows that God truly abides in us. Let's look further into 1 John and see what he teaches about love.

1. COMPATIBILITY OF LOVE AND FELLOWSHIP

1 John 4:13-16

- * What is the evidence in our lives that we have fellowship with God and abide in him? V12-13, 15-16
(The evidence is that we love one another, his Spirit lives in us, we confess Jesus as the Son of God and we abide in him.)



Some people don't want to go to church because somebody has hurt them. They say, "I can have fellowship with God alone at home." However, how will this affect his relationship with God? V12, 16, 20

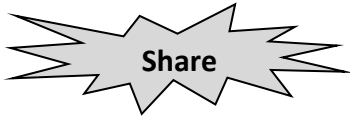
(That person's fellowship with God will be hindered as the Bible says we cannot really love God and abide in him when we do not love a brother or sister.)

2. CONFLICT OF LOVE AND FEAR

1 John 4:17-21

In 1 John 4:12 John says that if we love one another it shows that God's love is perfected or made complete in us. He then goes on to explain what this means in verses 17 to 21.

- * What do you think it means by 'God's love is perfected or made complete in us'? V12, 17
(If we show love in action to our brothers and sisters who we can see, it is an indication that we love God, who we cannot see. God's love for us is only seen in its' perfection and completeness when it is demonstrated in our lives.)
- * There are two ways we know God's love is growing in us. What are they? V17-18, 20-21
(First of all fear will go, and secondly we will love our brothers and sisters.)
- * What is the kind of fear that verses 17 and 18 speak about? Why do we not need to be afraid of these things anymore? V16
(It is the fear that we will be punished by God on judgment day.)



Many of us have different kinds of fear. If you have overcome a fear with the Lord's help, share it with others to encourage them.



Some Christians think it is easier to love God than their brothers and sisters. Is this true? Why or why not? See v12, 20

(This is not true according to the Word of God. If we cannot love our brothers and sister whom we can see, then how can we love God whom we cannot see? If we think we can, we are actually deceiving ourselves.)

Conclusion

It is easy for us to say we love God! However our love for God must be demonstrated in our love for one another. If you are holding anything against a brother or sister, ask God to forgive you. Don't allow anything to hinder your relationship with others, as that will hinder your relationship with your Heavenly Father. The more God's love fills you, the less room there is for fear in your life. As John writes, "Perfect love casts out fear."