



December 11th, 2022 • 1 John 4:9-10
Advent: Message #3 • by Pastor Marcus Johnson



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The Love of God & the Sending of His Son

1. The Love of God (v9)

- God showed His love by sending His *only Son into the world (**one & only, unique one*)
- God sent His only Son into the world so that we might live through Him

2. This is Love (v10):

- not that we loved God but that He loved us
- God loved us by sending His Son to be the *propitiation for our sins (**a sacrifice that appeases God’s wrath & turns it to favor*)

3. Beloved, let us love one another:

- for love is from God – and being born of God & knowing God causes us to love (v7)
- because God so loved us – so we ought to love one another (v11)

An Outline of 1 John

Adapted from *Letters of John* by Gary M. Burge (NIVAC)

Prologue: for our joy to be made complete (1:1-4)

God is Light – and we should walk accordingly (1:5 – 3:10)

God is Love – and we should walk accordingly (3:11 – 5:12)

Conclusion: confidence/victorious living for those who believe in/know Christ (5:13-21)

Some Themes in 1 John

God’s Revelation & Love: “God is revealed as the Father of Jesus Christ (1:2-3; 2:22-24; 4:14). God is light and in him there is no darkness (1:5). God is love (4:8,16b), and this love was revealed in the sending of his Son as the atoning sacrifice for our sins (4:9-10). God lavishes his love upon believers by making them his children (3:1)” (NIVZSB).

Three Basics of the Christian Life: “In 1 John the author calls readers back to the three basics of Christian life: true doctrine, obedient living, and fervent devotion. Because “God is light” (1:5), Christ’s followers overcome evildoers who seek to subvert them. The one who lives in and among them—God’s Son—is greater than the spirit of “the antichrist” now in the world (4:3-4). To believe in the name of the Son of God is to know the assurance of eternal life (5:13)” (ESVSB).

The Author of 1 – 3 John & His Purpose for Writing

Early church fathers all attributed the Apostle John’s authorship to 1 John, and the Greek style of this letter and its message reflect that of the Gospel of John. The author is an eyewitness of the Incarnation and writes with apostolic authority, both of which point to the Apostle John (possibly writing around 85 to 95 A.D. from Ephesus). In 2 & 3 John, the author identifies himself as “the Elder.” This probably refers to his role as an Elder or Bishop over the church/people he is writing to.

1 John, unlike the other Epistles (NT letters), does not address its recipients. It appears to be written like a sermon, as a circular letter to be read by multiple churches (perhaps like Ephesians). 1 John was possibly written to believers living in/around Ephesus (perhaps the 7 churches in Revelation). John writes to build believers up in the joy of their faith & expose false teachers among them (1:4; 2:20ff; 4:1ff), and is confronting false teachers who were denying the Incarnation (4:2f). The centrality of Jesus Christ as the God-Man is foundational to the Christian faith and it was under attack, as these false teachers were denying that Jesus was a man. This false teaching confronted in 1 John seems to be an early form of (or similar to) a heresy that would rise up later on in the 2nd and 3rd centuries called Gnosticism. “Gnosticism is a term used to designate a variety of beliefs, fundamental to which was a dualistic view of reality. The spiritual world was regarded as good, while the material world, including human bodies, was regarded as evil” (NIVZSB).

2 John is addressed to “the elect Lady and her children” which probably refers to a church. John might be addressing the same false teachers, and instructs the church not to welcome them, but rather to love one another and guard/grow their faith in Christ. 3 John is addressed to a friend named Gaius. In those days, evangelists & missionaries would travel to various churches, and Gaius was one who provided hospitality for them. John writes to encourage Gaius in the faith (so he & fellow believers would continue walking in the faith & the truth) and to warn against the selfish-ambition & divisiveness of a trouble maker named Diotrephes (who is lording his agenda over the believers, refusing to welcome visiting brothers & expelling those who do).

Sources: *1 – 3 John* by Robert W. Yarbrough (ECNT); *ESV Study Bible*; *NIV Zondervan Study Bible*