

1 John 4:13-21 There is no fear in Love

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Before we open up God's word this morning let's begin with a word of prayer.

In Isaiah 55 it says the following with regard to God's word.

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Isaiah 55:8-11

8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD.

9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

10 "For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,

11 so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

God's word has a purpose and he will ensure that it will accomplish exactly that which he has determined that it should achieve.

From this passage we can see that God's word is likened to rain and snow coming down from heaven that waters the earth and in turn produces growth and food.

It also has this same effect in our lives in that it waters us and gives us spiritual food by which we grow in our walk with Jesus.

For man shall not live on bread alone, but every **word** that proceeds out of the mouth of God as it says in Matthew 4:4

Let's now turn to 1 John and pick up from where we left off last week.

1 John 4:13-21

13 By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.

14 And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Saviour of the world.

15 Whoever **confesses** that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.

16 So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

17 By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have **confidence** for the day of judgment, because as he is so also are we in this world.

18 There is **no fear in love**, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love.

19 We love because he first loved us.

20 If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen.

21 And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.

1 John 4:13-21

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14 And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Saviour of the world.

From these two verses we see what we call the doctrine of the trinity, which is simply that God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The three or the TRI are in UNITY giving us the theological term trinity.

Nowhere in the New Testament does it say this explicitly and you will not find the word trinity mentioned, but this passage and many more show implicitly that God is manifested as three persons and yet is one.

It is a mystery and our little brains struggle to understand it, but it is what the word says and therefore we believe it.

But added to this there is an inner witness that it is true, because he has given us of his spirit. The Holy Spirit is living in and with our own spirit and is progressively making us more holy and more like Jesus.

We don't have to try and become more holy, we simply need to live with Jesus every day, to rest in his presence and his love for us and as we do that our lives are continually being transformed so that they become deeper, more meaningful and more glorifying to God.

15 Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.

There is something that we need to know about confession. Our words are incredibly powerful and we need to be aware of how and when we use them.

2 Peter 3:5

For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the **word** of God,

The whole of creation was spoken in existence by the **word** of God.

Proverbs 15:1

A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh **word** stirs up anger.

With our words we can diffuse tense and difficult situations by using soft words. There is power in the words we confess.

And Romans 10:8-11 says the following

Romans 10:8-11

8 But what does it say? "The **word** is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the **word** of faith that we proclaim);

9 because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

10 For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

11 For the Scripture says, "Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame."

From this passage and verse 15 in 1 John 4 we see that we need to confess with our mouths that Jesus is Lord. We can't just think it; we need to speak it out also.

Can I encourage you, if you personally believe in your heart that God raised Jesus from the dead and that he is you Lord then begin confessing this with your mouth.

Begin by doing it in private if you've never done it before, but then don't be afraid to confess it in public also as the occasion would arise.

The scripture that we just read says that everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame. The world wants to make us embarrassed and ashamed about Jesus, but he says that we will never be put to shame.

16 So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

17 By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because as he is so also are we in this world.

Verses 16 & 17 show once again that we know we live in God when we see ourselves living lives that are loving and self sacrificing, not always wanting things our own way but willing to put ourselves out for others.

Are we willing to be discomforted so that we can bring comfort to others?

Are we willing to walk the extra mile so that someone else doesn't have to?

This love of God is completely opposite to worldly love which is; give me something first and then I'll give you something in return.

God's love gives first - way before it ever gets. While we were yet sinners Jesus died for us it says in Romans 5:8

As we see God's love work out in our lives more and more - the word that we just read says that this love becomes perfected in us and it brings us great confidence on the day of judgement.

We don't need to fear God's judgement. We will have boldness, a confidence that comes to us because God first loved us and we simply responded to his love and have kept responding to his love. He will not turn us away and no one will snatch out of his hands as Jesus in John 10:28

John 10:28

I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.

18 There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love.

There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear.

- Are you a fearful person?
- Do you often wonder what people think about you?
- Are you living in the shadow of an older brother, a younger sister, a very successful parent and are you afraid you will never reach their expectations or their standards?
- Are scared of authority figures always expecting to be told off for something you may have done or may not have done?
- Do you have an unhealthy fear of God in that you think he is always looking over your shoulder waiting for you to mess up so he can punish you?
- Do you have an unhealthy relationship with your mum or dad?
- Do they love you and want the absolute best for you?

Often our attitude toward God as father is based upon our relationship with our own earthly fathers.

We can often find ourselves living dysfunctional lives because we have either been mistreated as a young person or we have an unhealthy fear of authority.

The other extreme is that we rebel and we lack respect for authority for the same reasons but with the opposite effect.

Both are wrong and only the love of God and drive that fear and imbalance out of our lives.

As we submit to the love that Jesus has for us - he perfects his love in us and casts out the unhealthy imbalanced fear that can dominate our lives so that we have no peace and cannot maintain healthy relationships with him or others.

19 We love because he first loved us.

Have you ever experienced being loved by someone before you ever made any attempt to secure that love?

Have you ever been surprised by love?

Most of us live with a love deficit and we desperately try to protect what little we have so that we don't lose it and then seek to get more of it by trying to manipulate love from others.

If that's you then let God set you free from this prison and allow the revelation to sink in that we love because he first loved us. We begin in God with an unlimited supply of his love and when we give it away he pours more and more back in.

We can never out love God. It's impossible.

20 If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen.

21 And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.

And this is the test of God's love in us. We love people whom we can see and often that's exactly the problem, it's easier to love God who we haven't seen rather than someone who we can see but for whatever reason dislike.

Perfect love casts out fear and in Jesus we have that perfect love living inside of us.

Can I please ask you to take God's word to heart this morning? Don't lose what he has said to you this morning. Don't lose what he says to you during the week.

Pray these revelations into your lives. Allow Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit to continually transform your lives for his Glory and your joy.

Let's pray.