

Transforming Love

Proclamation Life Groups; Week of Sunday, May 16, 2021; Richie Pendred

Sermon Theme: The Father's initiating love through the good news of the gospel impels the people of God to joyfully respond in love to the Lord our God and to one another, as we are perfected in His love, until He returns in glory!

I. Initiated by God – Read 1 John 4:7-10

- A. As you read through the book of 1 John, what are all the different ways that John commands believers to love one another? As you read 1 John 4:7-12 specifically, how do these verses connect to Ephesians 4-6 (i.e. Ephesians 4:15-16; 4:29-32; 5:1-2; 5:20-21)?
- B. When John says, “love one another” in verse 7, who is his intended audience? What are the two reasons given for loving one another and what does it mean that “love is from God”?
- C. As you think about verse 10, how would you explain the fact that we didn't love God, but that He loved us? How do you define propitiation and why is it absolutely necessary for life (verse 9)?
- D. If God's love for us is the motivation for our love for one another, what are some practical things that you can do to keep the good news of the gospel and Christ's finished work on the cross front and central in your life? What are some ways that you can daily preach the gospel to yourself?

II. Compels God's People – Read 1 John 4:11

- A. Verse 11 says that if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. So the gospel transforms the way we love one another? What are some ways that this plays out in the Christian life? Would you say your heart for God's people reflects God's heart for His people? Why or why not?
- B. Throughout the book of John, he commands God's people to put sin to death, love God, and love one another. Why do you think he reiterates these commands over and over again, including in verse 7 and verse 11? Do you personally think that you need those constant reminders?
- C. According to John, it's clear that the gospel compels believers to love. In what areas of life have you seen God transform the way you love your brothers and sisters in Christ at Proclamation? How has God's love for you shaped the way you love others?

III. Perfected in God's People – Read 1 John 4:12

- A. What is the correlation between John's statement that “no one has ever seen God” and the reality that God now abides in believers? What do you think it means that “love is perfected in us”?
- B. If you were to evaluate your own heart, what motivates you to love others? What would be some of the competing motivations (i.e. fear of man, desire for affection, manipulation to get something) to “love” others? How do you think you should deal with those competing motivations?
- C. What are some ways that you would like to excel still more in loving people inside and outside our congregation? How has our study in Ephesians been particularly helpful to you in this regard?