

## PERFECT LOVE - 1 John 4:7-21

By way of introduction and setting our minds in the proper perspective to embrace this text, let me take you way, **way back to the sixth day of creation**. “On the sixth day of creation, God said, ‘**Let us make man in Our own image,**’” **Genesis 1:26**.

**Now since God is the eternal spirit, being made in God’s image is not physical. It has to do with the immaterial part of us. The root of the Hebrew word for image, tselem, seems to mean to carve out. Let us carve out man, let us shape man to Our image, literally. In other words, let’s replicate ourselves in man.**

Let’s shape him and form him to be reflective of us. Man, then was created in an exalted fashion. Man was created to be like God.

*And what does that mean primarily?*

**Primarily that means man was created for inter-personal relationships.** The Trinity was always a Trinity, is always a Trinity, will always be a Trinity. God by nature exists in fellowship and relationship within the Trinity. Let’s make man, God said, with a capacity for relationship, because as

**1 Corinthians 11:7** says, “**Man is the image and glory of God.**” This is not true of anything else in the creation. No other creature that God made did He make in His image. In the entire time/space universe this is true only of humanity.

*When you talk about man created in the image of God and what makes up relationships, you talk about self-consciousness, which only man possesses. Man has the capacity to understand himself. Man has the capacity to think abstractly, because that’s necessary in relationships, to appreciate beauty, to feel emotion, to be morally conscious, to reason, to acquire wisdom. All of that so as to have the ability to personally connect, personally relate to other people and specially to relate to God, to be able to love others and to love God.*

*The core then of the image of God can be summed up with the word's personal relationship.*

**Man is made with a capacity to love, to love others and to love God.** And within the frame of that love there is fellowship, care, sharing of thoughts and attitudes and experiences that makes love the richest of all human experiences. The

image of God then is the capacity for personal relationships which come down to giving and receiving love.

***God Himself has never existed in a single lonely solitary fashion. He has never existed in isolation; He has never existed in some cut off form. He's always existed in the fullness of a family-like reality: Father, Son, Holy Spirit.***

The Father has never been without the Son, the Son never without the Father, neither ever without the Spirit, the Spirit never without either. The amazing mystery of the origin of the imago dei, the human personality is the Trinitarian essence or substance or reality of God. And God so designed that He would develop man not only to be able to relate to his fellow man but to be able to relate to Him. This still resides in the human heart, all these millennia after creation. We still long to love and be loved in all human relationships as well as the relationship with God.

***In fact, as you probably are aware, the human heart cries for love more than anything else.***

1 John 4:7-21

<sup>7</sup> Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.

<sup>8</sup> He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

<sup>9</sup> In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

<sup>10</sup> Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

<sup>11</sup> Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

<sup>12</sup> No man hath seen God at any time. **If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.**

<sup>13</sup> **Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.**

<sup>14</sup> And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.

<sup>15</sup> **Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.**

<sup>16</sup> **And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that delleth in love delleth in God, and God in him.**

<sup>17</sup> **Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.**

<sup>18</sup> **There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.**

<sup>19</sup> **We love him, because he first loved us.**

<sup>20</sup> **If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?**

<sup>21</sup> **And this commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God love his brother also.**

**John says, “These things I write unto you that your joy may be full,” (1 John 1:4)**

And understanding the last section of 1 John 4 certainly contributes to our joy.

It’s a section about perfect love.

## **WHAT THE BIBLE HAS TO SAY ABOUT LOVE**

**Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God;** and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. I John 4:7–8

**Paul Said-** I Corinthians 13:1–8a, 13

**Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.**

**And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.**

**And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.**

**Love suffers long:** The **definition** of **long suffering** is someone who had to endure something unpleasant for a **long period of time**, but who was patient throughout.

**and is kind;** (Kindness is me treating friendship positively at challenging times)

**love does not envy;** (a feeling of discontented or resentful longing aroused by someone else's possessions, qualities, or luck.)

**love does not parade itself,** (never boastful)

is not puffed up; (feeling self-important; arrogant; pompous)

**does not behave rudely,** (offensively impolite or ill-mannered. Basic or crude behavior)

**does not seek its own,** (is a reference to 'selfishness' or 'self-gain'. It is 'selfishness' and 'self-interest' that generates or provokes, the irritability or touchiness which can cause resentment.)

**is not provoked,** (incited to anger or resentment: thinks no evil;

**does not rejoice in iniquity,** (Love takes no pleasure in evil)

**but rejoices in the truth;**(rejoices whenever truth wins out)

**bears all things,** (If you love someone, you will be loyal to him no matter what the cost)

**believes all things,** (You will always believe in him,)

**hopes all things,** (always expect the best of him)

**endures all things.** (and always stand your ground in defending him)

**Love never fails.** (love goes on forever)

**And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.**

In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us. **I John 4:10–12**

**As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love.** If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. **John 15:9–10**

**He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me.** And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him. **John 14:21**

This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. These things I command you, that you love one another. **John 15:12–14, 17**

“And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.” This is the first commandment. And the second, like it, is this: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” There is no other commandment greater than these. And to love Him with all the heart, with all the understanding, with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself, is more than all the whole burnt offerings and sacrifices. **Mark 12:30–31, 33**

And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him. And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also. **I John 4:16, 21**

The LORD has appeared of old to me, saying: “Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love; Therefore, with lovingkindness I have drawn you.” **Jeremiah 31:3**

For the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God. **John 16:27**

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. **Romans 5:8**

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. **John 3:16**

For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. **Romans 8:38–39**

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another. **John 13:34–35**