

1 John 4 – Proof of Life and Maturity

June 25, 2015

1 John 4:7-13

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

Regeneration, by definition and design, recreates us into people who love spontaneously and instinctively, because love is now our nature, it is who we are.

Regeneration by the Holy Spirit places the desire and ability to love within. Although God's love has been deposited within us, we still must choose to exercise, cultivate and grow in God's love.

8 He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

It is impossible to receive the love of God and not be changed. To know what you've been forgiven of creates the desire to forgive others. Having received God's care causes you to care for others.

9 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.

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

The love of God that we have received is sacrificial. So also the love of God placed in our heart by the Holy Spirit gives us the desire and ability to sacrifice for others.

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

Matthew 10:8

"Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give."

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

Though no man has seen God, we see God supernaturally at work in the love we give one another.

13 Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.

The desire and the ability to love others is the definitive proof and reassurance that we have been born of God, that we know God, that we dwell in Him and He dwells in us.

The undeniable proof of regeneration is that we spontaneously and instinctively:

- seek peace, not strife, refuse to argue or debate in arrogance or selfishness
- don't have to be right or first, glad to concede to others
- are gentle, not harsh
- are patient instead of pushy or irritable
- think before we speak, considerate of the others feelings and reaction
- put others needs before our own, are more thoughtful and concerned for others than ourselves
- forgive when offended, bless when cursed, love when hated
- speak positively of others instead of criticizing or gossiping
- believe the best instead of the worst, always giving the benefit of a doubt
- rejoice with and for others instead of being jealous and envious
- seek to encourage and affirm those around us, instead of demeaning or embarrassing
- surrender our pride, our hurt, our convenience, our time, our resources for others

LOVE IS THE GOAL AND CULMINATION OF SPIRITUAL MATURITY

1 Peter 1:22

"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently."

Ephesians 4:11–12

11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

1 Timothy 1:4–7

4 Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do.

5 Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned:

6 From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling;

7 Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.

1 Corinthians 13:1–3

1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

2 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, and have not charity, I am nothing.

3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

Philippians 2:1–13

1 If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies,

2 Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

3 Let nothing be done through strife (*selfish & contentious ambition, electioneering*) or vainglory (*empty pride, vanity, vain imagination*); but in lowliness of mind (*deep sense of one's littleness, humility*) let each esteem other better (*to hold above*) than themselves.

4 Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery (*eagerly grasped, seizing*) to be equal with God:

7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.