



## First John: The Word of Life Word of Perfect Love

***If It's Not of Love—It's Not of God***  
John demonstrates in this passage that even if we sometimes feel offended or defensive, we don't have to act like it. Instead we can be like Christ who loved us when we did not deserve love.

### A. The Love **TEST** 1 Jn 4:7-8

1. **Let us love one another:** The dominant statement here is God is love (4:8). The test of 'authentic' Christianity is love. However, God is love—but love is NOT God.

### B. The Love **FORMULA** 1 Jn 4:9-12

1. **Love is first received:** [:9-10] God loved us first—we must receive that love by receiving Christ as savior.
2. **Love is then given away:** [:11] The love that we receive is NOT meant for us to keep—if we do—we will never know the fullness of God's love.
3. **Love is then perfected:** [:12] No one has seen God—but if we love one another God will be seen in us.
  - a. **Like verses love:**
    - **Liking or disliking** involves our reaction to someone. We like or dislike what they say, do or are. Like or dislike involves judgment on our part.
    - **Love** is NOT what I judge or take into my soul—but it is what I give away. God has **not** called us to like or dislike—He has called us to give away love.

### C. The Love **CONFESSION** 1 Jn 4:13-16

**The only way the FORMULA of love will work is if we abide in GOD.**

1. **Our confession:** Vs. :15 is referring to our confession of faith in receiving Christ as our personal Savior.
2. **His gift:** The Holy Spirit here is a 'witness' of our abiding in Him. Jesus told the disciples that He would ask the Father and the Father would send 'another' Counselor [comforter] to be with them Jn 14:16-17.
3. **The Spirit and love:** "Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart..."  
1 Pet 1:22 *The Holy Spirit 'counsels' me in loving others.*

### D. The Love **COMMANDMENT** 1 Jn 4:17-21

1. **The command to love:** Vs. :21 is a clear command from God that if we say we love God—then we MUST love our brother.
2. **When I follow this command...**
  - a. **I have confidence on the day of judgment** [:17]
  - b. **Fear does not rule over my life** [:18] Instead—I can rule over fear because I am not holding back love as a form of punishing someone else. [Torment here is the word for 'punishment']. See also 2 Tim 1:7
  - c. **I demonstrate authentic faith:** [:20] I have committed to be BOTH a hearer of the Word and a doer of the Word.  
Jam 1:22

### 1 John 4:7-21 (NKJV)

:7 Beloved, let us love one another, for **love is of God**; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.

:8 He who does not love does not know God, **for God is love.**

:9 **In this** the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.

:10 **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.

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

:12 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.

: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 the Son as Savior of the world.

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

:16 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.

:17 Love has been perfected among us **in this**: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world.

:18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love.

:19 We love Him because He first loved us.

:20 If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen?

:21 And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.