



Daily Verse and Comment

1 John 4:20-21

(20) If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. (21) And he has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother.

New International Version

John presents these verses as a challenge, a test, to his readers. There are many who say they "[love](#) God" or "I have fellowship with God" or "I know God," and John is saying, "Prove it by loving your brother." The proof that love is real is the action that it produces. It will *always* help the other person in the long run.

If a person really loves [God](#), he will honor his parents, he will not commit murder, nor will he fornicate, commit [adultery](#), lie, steal, or covet. In other words, he will keep God's Commandments. If a person is really becoming close to God, he will not do any of these things—and not their spiritual counterparts either.

This verse, then, offers a permanently valid test to see whether our religion is the true one or not. Do we love God? Do we love one another? The proof that we love God is that we love our brother with *agape* love, for that kind of love must have an outlet, or it will not be reciprocated back to God.

The feelings associated with *agape* love arise as a result of our fellowship with God through experiencing life's events with Him as a dominating influence on our thinking.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

To learn more, see:

[Love's Emotional Dimension](#)



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