



1 John 4:7-12

(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.

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If we are going to be like Him, these verses are important to us because they tell us much about Him and our responsibilities. First, love is of God—He is its Source. This love the apostles write about comes from God and is not normally a part of man's nature. It is *agape* love. Human love apart from God is at its best a mere pale and vague reflection of what God is eternally.

Next, John says "God is love." Sublime as this is, some have misunderstood it because it can be misleading. God is not just an abstraction like love. He is a living, dynamic, and powerful Being whose personality has multiple facets. He cannot be boxed, wrapped, and presented as merely being one attribute.

John's statement literally reads, "The God is love." The Greeks used an emphatic form of writing, and here the emphasis is on the word "God." The syntax means the two words "God" and "love" are not interchangeable. "Love" describes God's nature. A good paraphrase would read, "God, as to His nature, is love." God is a loving God!

This does not mean that loving is one of God's activities, but that every activity of God is loving. If He creates, He creates in love. If He rules, He rules in love. If He judges, He judges in love. Everything He does expresses His nature. God and His nature are manifested by what He does. By love God is revealed and known.

The Berean: Daily Verse and Commentary for 1 John 4:7-12 (<http://www.theberean.org>)

The very existence of life in others besides Himself is an act of love. His love is revealed in His providence and care of His creation. Since we are not robots, free-moral agency is an act of His love. God, by a deliberate act of self-limitation, endowed us to respond with mind and emotion. We are not animals. [God's love](#) is the explanation for redemption and our [hope](#) of [eternal life](#). Out of love, God has given us something to *live* for. Life is not just a matter of going through the paces. We do not live our lives in vain.

God made humanity in His image and likeness ([Genesis 1:26](#)). But the Bible says, "God is Spirit," and "God is love." Man, though, is flesh, and the Bible describes us as carnal, self-centered, and deceitful. In practical fact, this means that man cannot be what he is meant to be until he loves as God loves. Only then will he truly be in the [image of God](#) because he will have the same nature as God. So, to achieve his potential, a person must love, but he must love with the love of God.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

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