

1 JOHN: DISCERNING TRUE FROM FALSE SPIRITUALITY

Part XII: True Spirituality's True Godly Love, 1 John 4:7-5:3

B. True Godly Love's Exposition Of The Unseen God

(1 John 4:12-16)

I. Introduction

- A. Jesus said that the world would recognize His followers by their love for one another, John 13:35.
- B. However, the love that the godly believer authors, embedded in righteousness, *differs* from that of the lost world's love, especially in godly love's exposition of the unseen God as is taught in 1 John 4:12-16 as follows:

II. True Godly Love's Exposition Of The Unseen God, 1 John 4:12-16.

- A. Since God is a Spirit (John 4:24a), John observed that no human being in the flesh has ever seen Him, 1 John 4:12a. God may be seen in a theophany or in an anthropomorphism where He assumes a visible form for the purpose of interacting with man, but no man has actually seen His "essential nature," B. K. C., N. T., p. 273.
- B. However, if we believers love one another with God's love, God "remains" (*meno*) in us in the sense of expressing His fellowship with us (Ibid., p. 899), and His love is permanently made complete (*teteleiomene*, perfect pass. part. of *teleioo*, "complete, accomplish," U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 821; The Analy. Grk. Lex. (Zon.), 1972, p. 402; Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 817-818) **in** us, 1 John 4:12b. In this way, like Jesus revealed the Father in His earthly life (John 1:18), believers by their true godly love for each other expressed in true spiritual fellowship with the Lord reveal the unseen God unto the world!
- C. The question then again arises as to how we know whether we "remain" (*meno* again, Ibid., U. B. S. Grk. N. T., p. 822) in God, whether we know we fellowship with Him so that we express His true love and thus manifest Him, the unseen God, unto the world (1 John 4:13a), so John adds that we know this by the [Holy] Spirit Whom He has permanently given (*dedoken*, perfect tense of *didomi*, "give, bestow," Ibid., The Analy. Grk. Lex., p. 85, 98-99) to us, 1 John 4:13b.
- D. Though John established in his Gospel at John 15:7 that such fellowship is marked by obedience to Scripture, he notes here that it is marked by the exposition of the Holy Spirit in the believer, and if the Holy Spirit exhibits "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness" and "self-control" (Gal. 5:22-23 ESV), we know we fellowship with God and truly love each other when these characteristics exist in us!
- E. When these qualities then dwell in us, we have permanently seen (*tetheametha*, perfect tense of *theaomai*, "gaze upon, see," Ibid., p. 399, 191) and do thereby testify to the world that the Unseen Father truly sent the Son to be the Savior of the world, 1 John 4:14. In other words, we have seen the unseen Father expressed in our mutual fellowship with one another, and we thus testify by expressing that love and by witnessing of it to the world in our love expression that the Unseen Father is real and that He has saved and transformed us to reflect His character, proof that He sent Christ to save us and the world! In this way, true godly love for each other becomes our great Gospel witness before the unsaved world as Jesus predicted in John 13:35!
- F. If we believers confess Jesus as the Son of God via expressing this true godly love, God "remains" (*meno* again, Ibid., U. B. S. Grk. N. T.) in us and we in God in mutual fellowship (1 John 4:15), and we thereupon permanently know (*egnokamen*, perfect tense, Ibid., The Analy. Grk. Lex., p. 113) and permanently believe (*pepisteukamen*, perfect tense, Ibid., p. 316) the love that God has **in** (*en*, Ibid., U. B. S. Grk. N. T.) **us**, 1 John 4:16a. So, by expressing our true love to one another before the world, we thereby confess Jesus to be the Son of God and witness the fact that the godly love is **assuredly** in us as we fellowship with the Lord.
- G. In the truest sense, then, since God is love as to the very core of His being (1 John 4:16b), he who fellowships (*meno* again, Ibid., U. B. S. Grk. N. T.) in God's sphere of godly love truly "remains" (*meno*, Ibid.) in spiritual fellowship with God and God "remains" (*meno*, Ibid.) in spiritual fellowship with him, 1 John 4:16c.

Lesson: *When we believers not only heed God's Word and thus fellowship with Him, but when we walk in the power of the Holy Spirit so that God's qualities of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control abound in us toward one another, evidence of God's true love, we thereby expose the character of the Unseen Father to the world like Jesus did in His earthly ministry, and we thus testify that He sent His Son to be the Savior of the world since God has saved and equipped us to express such love. We also thus find great assurance in the Lord that we truly love and truly fellowship with Him by such expressions of godly love.*

Application: *May we rely on the Holy Spirit to obey Scripture and express God's true love as authored by the Holy Spirit, assuring our hearts that we fellowship with Him and giving God's great witness to the lost and needy world!*