

# BIBLE BAPTIST CHURCH OF ERIE

James M. Duncan, Pastor

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## THE POWER OF LOVE

### 1 John 4:17-21

Love can cause us to do some strange things. Love of money will cause a man to work himself to death, to plot and plan, to save and begrudge others. Love of pleasure will cause us to go to great lengths, spend lots of money, and neglect responsibilities to have fun. Love has the power to cause us to make adjustments in our schedules, lifestyles, where we go, what we say, and what we do. Love has the power to make a person do almost anything.

These verses give us some facts about the power of love.

### I. LOVE'S WITNESS TO US (Vs. 17)

#### A. We Have Confidence in the Judgment. (Vs. 17a)

Of all of the important matters in life, none is more vital than the one that John mentions in **verse 17**—having confidence in the day of judgment. But we need to make sure that our confidence is based on biblical reasons, not on false hope. Since we're talking about *eternity in the lake of fire*, you need to be sure of where you stand!

John is giving his final treatment of the test of love. As we've seen, John repeats **three tests of authentic Christianity**: the *moral test* of obedience to God's commands; the *social test* of love for others; and, the *doctrinal test* of believing the truth about Jesus Christ.

*Love that comes from God gives us confidence in the day of judgment and must be expressed in love for others in obedience to God's commandment*

The word "**perfected=mature, complete**" here does not mean without any flaws as we think in our English. Rather the idea is to reach its completed development, or intended goal, or to be mature.

#### B. We Have Comfort in Jesus. (Vs. 17b)

The fact that He is in the world should comfort us as we are in the world. **John 14:16-18**. Love's witness in us brings comfort to us. We have comfort in knowing that Jesus is in the world just as we are in the world. Just as we are in the world so too is God in this world.

### II. LOVE'S WORK IN US (Vs. 18-19)

#### A. Our Love Is Overcoming. (Vs. 18)

Because we have experienced the love of God by receiving forgiveness of our sins, a home in heaven, and Jesus as our Lord, we have no fear of ever being in torment. **HAVE NO FEAR! JESUS IS HERE! Amen and Amen!**

Because of the Lord Jesus we will never face the wrath of God. We should not fear as the world fears. **Romans 8:37-39, 2 Timothy 1:7**

#### B. His Love Is Overwhelming. (Vs. 19)

To think about and meditate on the love of God is an overwhelming subject. We can never drain the vast ocean of God's love. We cannot fully comprehend and understand the love that God has for us. But we know that we love Him and each other and others in the world because He has first loved us. He took the initiative, He made the first move, He reached out, He demonstrated His love towards us.

Now we come to **Vs. 20-21** and here we see the **Proof is in the Pudding** as they used to say. We've all heard the saying, 'Actions speak louder than words.' Stick and stones will break our bones and words can and often do hurt us. As the church of Jesus Christ, we can hurt a watching and listening world by what we say and by what we do. A church body that professes one thing and yet lives another will affect a community, town, and city in a negative way. A lost world can be pushed away from God instead of brought to God because of a false profession and a filthy practice of the church.

This text gives some realizations of a person's talk and a person's walk.

### III. THE MARKS OF LYING (Vs. 20)

#### A. What They Say. (Vs. 20a)

For anyone to lie they must say something, they must open their mouths. The eye opener here is that a person can say they love God and lie about it. *Profession does not prove possession*. John is saying that genuine love for God necessarily will show itself in observable love for others. If you don't practice sacrificial, committed love for others, you are revealing that you do not really love God.

#### B. What They Show. (Vs. 20b)

The word of God is teaching us that if we love God then we will also love our brother. To flip that around when we show that we don't love our brother it is ultimately because we don't love and know God. **Hates**: (KJV: hateth) (*miséo; mis-eh'o*) this is a strong word that means 'to detest, to hate, to persecute, or to love less.'

#### C. What They See. (Vs. 20c)

### IV. THE MANDATE FOR LOVING. (Vs. 21)

For the Christian, love is not an option. We are commanded from above to love those here below.