

Limitless (Part 4) Limitless Love

(1 John 4)

Introduction: We are concluding our sermon series I have entitled “Limitless,” where we have been learning to break off the limits we have placed on ourselves in the past and looking ahead at our great potential. We have seen in this new year, we can have *limitless faith, wisdom, and grace*. And today I want us to see how we can have limitless love in Christ.

Love—just think about that word. Do we really even know what it means? Did you know, there are hundreds of references to love in the Bible? It is certainly the most remarkable book of love in the world. It records the greatest love story ever written—God's unconditional love for us that sent His Son to die on the cross (John 3:16; 1 John 4:10). *In fact, the Bible is actually God's love letter to man. The Apostle John (whose letter we are reading from today), is the expert on love in the Bible. He points out four things we need to know.*

I. **Limitless love's source: (vv. 7-8)**

A. The source of limitless love is God - *This is the third of three expressions in John's writings that help us understand the nature of God:*

1. **He has told us, "God is spirit"** (John 4:24).
2. **He has told us "God is light"** (1 John 1:5); and now...
3. **He tells us "God is love."** John tells us our God is a God of love.

B. **Limitless love is found in knowing God.**

1. **Love is the indicator** – (v.7)
 - a. Since love comes from God, one who loves (in the Christian sense of that term) has been born of God (cf. 2:29; 3:9; 5:1,4,18) and he knows God. (see 2:3-5).
 - b. Since God is love, intimate acquaintance with Him will produce love. Like light (1:5), love is central to the character and nature of God, and one who is intimately acquainted with God walks in His light (1:7).
2. **Love is the thermometer** that can take your spiritual temperature. You see love can prove two things about you:

C. Having limitless love proves you are in the family of God (v.7) (*remember John has warning these believers about false teachers and prophets...*)

1. **One surefire mark that a man is a child of God is love.** God's children are loving children. *II Peter 1:4 that we "became partakers of the divine nature."*
2. When we were born physically, we took on our father's nature and acted naturally. But when we were born spiritually, we took on God's nature and acted supernaturally.

D. Having limitless love proves you are in fellowship with God (v.8)

1. The word “*know*” in verse 8 has a much deeper meaning than simply intellectual understanding.
2. It is not so much a mental knowledge of the head as it is an intimate knowledge of the heart.

II. **Limitless love seen: (vv.9-11)**

1. The word “*manifested*” in verse 9 literally means “to come out in the open,” or, “to make a public display.”
2. The cross is God's flashing neon sign that God loves you. (Rom. 5:8) The cross is also the definition of love. You see, love has very special characteristics that make it true love.

A. True love is sacrificial love – (Jn. 3:16; Eph. 5:25)

B. True love is selfless love (v. 9) God sent Jesus into the world, not for what it would do for him, but for what it would do for us. Real love is always a love that seeks to meet the need of somebody else.

C. True love is a satisfying love (v.10) *The word propitiation is a very strange word it literally means "satisfaction." Even though God is love, we are also told in I John 1:5 that "God is light." So at the cross the light of God's holiness met the love of God's forgiveness and gave to us who want it the life of salvation.*

D. True love is a sharing love (v.10) *Notice that Jesus Christ was "sent" into this world.*

III. **Limitless love's substance: (vv. 12-16)**

The kind of love that we are speaking about is marked not so much by natural as by supernatural characteristics. (Here John points out...)

A. Love's provision (vv. 12-13) The kind of love that we are speaking of is a holy, heavenly love. This kind of love is not natural; it is a supernatural quality; John says that God has given us “*of His Holy Spirit.*” (Rom. 5:5)

B. Love's profession (vv. 14-15) John is not changing topics here, as he moves to a discussion of the deity and person of Jesus. Because a man who is full of the Holy Spirit will love God. (I Cor. 12:3) If Jesus is not Lord in your heart, then God's love is not in your heart.

C. Love's possession (v.16) If God's love is in you, then you possess God and God possesses you.

IV. Limitless love's success: (vv. 17-21) A man cannot have a love for God nor the love of God within him and not be affected.

A. Limitless love brings us confidence (vv. 17-19)

B. It builds compassion (vv. 20-21) (See I Jn. 1:6; 2:4) Here he says “*if a man lives in dis-fellowship, but claims to love God, he is a liar.*”

His argument is very simple. It is humanly impossible to love a God you have not seen, if you cannot love a brother who is standing right in front of you.

The Bible says there are these three: faith, hope, and love, but the greatest of these is love. The one who is born of God and knows God, can know and show the limitless of love of God. Show me a church where there is love, and I will show you a church that is a power in the community. *Jesus said, "By this shall all men know that you are my disciples if you have love one for another."* Is that us this morning?