



For Further Study

Read and meditate on the passage below:

⁷ Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸ Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. (1 John 4:7-8)

John or one of his disciples wrote this letter to one or several early churches. The content of the letter seems so like the heart of the “beloved disciple” because it centers on the importance of love. Loving God through loving people is the most important way that we experience meaningful connection.

At the end of verse 8, John speaks of love and God as synonymous. “God is love.” can also be written: “Love is God.” The point here is that if we want to know what love is we should look to God, and if we want to know who God is we should love. The two go hand in hand.

Back in verse 7, John suggests that love comes from God. In a literal sense, as our Creator, God is the first cause of everything. God created us in his image out of love for us. God sustains us throughout our lives because he loves us. We could not know love apart from God. This does not mean that someone who chooses to not believe in God or to follow the way of Jesus is incapable of love. We all can choose the path of love, but genuine and sacrificial love comes from the divine spark in all of us.

So what is happening when we fail to demonstrate love? John says that we are not acting in accordance with God or our created intent. Love flows out of goodness, and when we act contrary to what is good it is not loving. So, we should regularly ask ourselves, “What would love do about this?” When we know what love would do, we can then know what God would have us to do as an expression of divine love for God, others, and ourselves.

PRACTICE:

Ask yourself, “What would love do about this?”

