

Love Made Complete
(1 John 4:1-17)

How is God's love made complete?
(How is the goal of love accomplished?)

Love ("agape"): sacrificial love; unconditional love; seeking the best for the one loved

Complete ("teleios"): finish, complete, accomplished; "reach the goal (Luke 13:32)"; "It is finished (John 19:30)"

1. Acknowledge who Jesus Christ is and what He did.
(1 John 4:1-6)

Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. 2 This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, 3 but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world. 4 You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. 5 They are from the world and therefore speak from the viewpoint of the world, and the world listens to them. 6 We are from God, and whoever knows God listens to us; but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. This is how we recognize the Spirit of truth and the spirit of falsehood.

Incarnation is a term used by theologians to indicate that Jesus, the Son of God, took on human flesh. (John 1:14; 8:58)

2. Receive the love of God into our lives. (1 John 4:7-11)

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. 9 This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. 10 This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. 11 Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. (Ephesians 2:8-9)

Propitiation is the act of atoning for the sins of another. (Romans 5:8; John 1:12; John 3:16)

3. Share the love of God with others. (1 John 4:12-17)

12 No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us. 13 This is how we know that we live in him and he in us: He has given us of his Spirit. 14 And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. 15 If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in them and they in God. 16 And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them. 17 This is how love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment: In this world we are like Jesus. (Colossians 3:12-14; 1 Thessalonians 3:12)

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Day One – Read 1 John 4:1-6

John writes “that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh and is from God.” The Bible is clear to point out that Jesus Christ is 100% human but it also affirms that Jesus is 100% God. What has been your view of who Jesus is and why He came? Spend time looking in John’s Gospel at occurrences where Jesus showed He was 100% human (e.g. John 19:34 says Jesus bled) and 100% God (e.g. John 1:3 states that Jesus is the creator). For further study go to <http://www.gotquestions.org> and read about the incarnation and Jesus’ divinity.

Pray and ask the Spirit of God to lead you away from error in what you believe and lead you into God’s truth so that you might truly worship Jesus in “Spirit and truth.”

Day Two – Read 1 John 4:7-11

John states that “love comes from God” and that love was powerfully demonstrated in “that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.” The Bible clearly shows us that God loves us but at times we don’t understand how much God loves us. What is your understanding of God’s love for you personally? How do you do with receiving that love from Him?

Ask God to give you a greater understanding of His love for you and the ability to grasp how great His love is for you and to have a greater capacity to receive that love (Read Ephesians 3:14-21).

Day Three – Read 1 John 4:12-17

The Bible is very clear that we are “to love one another.” How do you feel you are doing with that? Does it produce guilt or regret? Spend some time thinking about the Scripture that says “God lives in them” referring to Christ followers. Does it help to know that God is living within you to give you the greater ability to show love to others? Who is someone you can love this week that maybe you haven’t been as loving to as you feel you should be?

Ask for God’s empowering to show love to others and a greater faith to trust Him to work through you to bring His love through you.