

- Order of Service -

Call to Worship

Welcoming Prayer

- 594, *Count your blessings*
- *Doxology*
- *Congregational confession*
- 33, *Great is Thy faithfulness*
- *For all that You have done*

Announcements and Prayer requests

Greeting

Message in the Word -

John's call to Grow in Fellowship with God - #15

Perfect love casts out fear - at the Judgment seat

1 John 4:14-21

Sending prayer

There will be no Bible study this Wednesday evening to afford families the time to prepare for a day of Thanksgiving!

Happy Thanksgiving to the Lord of providence!

You may notice we don't pass an offering plate

We invite you to participate in the ministry, and the offering box in the foyer is for your gifts and offerings for the Lord's work.

- 2 Corinthians 9:7-8, Galatians 6:6 -

Grace Bible Fellowship

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- Teaching -

Eric Peterman

John's call to Grow in Fellowship with God - #15

Perfect love casts out fear - at the Judgment seat

1 John 4:14-21

- November 20th, 2022 -

John's call to Grow in Fellowship with God - #15
Perfect love casts out fear – at the Judgment seat

1 John 4:14-21

Perfect love casts our fear – Just what in the world does that mean? Is it that if we keep a general loving attitude that we'll never experience or suffer from fear in any area of our life? In other words, is this an anxiety management verse that if implemented in counseling will mitigate feelings of anxiety over day-to-day concerns?

John wonderfully focuses the reader on the goal, which for him extends tantalizingly just past this life and into the glory of the next.

Verses 15 and 16 really belong to the previous paragraph and thought.

And **verse 15** is a call to public *confession*, that is a creedal declaration of allegiance to the reality, to the facts found in **verse 14** of what the Apostles experienced and testify to: *God really did send His Son into the world to be it's only Savior!*

There are 4 make or break confessions in 1 John **Declare** (creedal declarations of allegiance to facts),

1:9, 2:23, 4:2, and 4:15. John exhorts and encourages his readers in their digesting and declaring these 4 confessions because the facts they contain distinguish the apostolic, orthodox, historical and Christological reality of Who and What Jesus the Son of God was and is, from the Jesus of the false prophets and teachers he is combatting!

The first half of v16, John shares the experience of God's love for them in the Person of the Son, Jesus, and their response of faith ("we have believed"). In the middle he re-declares the very nature of God the Father (v8b). In the last part of v16, he enjoins them to relish in the fact and experience that since they are in the Son by faith, they are in a mutual abiding fellowship with the triune God. "*here is love, vast as the ocean*" And in his gospel in ch 15 John records Jesus saying, "here is spiritual fruit-bearing".

To see and experience Jesus as presented by the apostles is to see and experience true love!

With v17 John now expands from the experience of the love of God, to include the same agape love of God that is shared among all believers and is to be perfected between believers on the mutual ground of God's love for us in the Son.

John preaches a real possibility of boldness rather than fear at the ...

...Judgment seat of Christ – the Bema, where every Christian will be evaluated for corresponding reward or loss (**v18**).

Look at **2:28**, and **3:21-22** and how boldness or confidence are joined there. Contrast that with shame and fear.

John's point in v18 is that when we see and know by experience the love of God in Christ. When we abide there, we can also flesh out and be a channel of divine, self-sacrificing love to our brother and sisters in Christ. And that other-centeredness, being the very love of Christ in us, is rewardable and cause of confidence/boldness and great expectation of approbation and joyous approval when we meet our Jesus face to face. **This is how perfect love drives out fear.**

V19 summarizes. Friends, let us find and explore every avenue to relish and enjoy and worship and obey our Lord Jesus Christ, who has loved us first, and gifted us eternal life and union with our Father and the power of His precious Spirit. And as we do that let us yield the channels of our lives to flow out and in our love for our brothers and sisters in Christ. This is what it means to be perfected by love. To be washed and awash in it's divine flow. Freely you have been given, freely give.

V20, The love of God is incompatible with lack of love, indifference or animosity towards one another. It is both-and, not either-or. To be loved by God and to respond in love as a growing believer is to also see the same love shed on your fellow believers. We are all the personal objects and focus of divine grace. Let us lift the shades from our eyes and see one another more and more this way. And as we do we find our capacity to enjoy the love of God will increase! The more we love this way, the larger and more delightful is the love of God to us. And vice versa!

V21 is John's apostolic re-statement of Jesus' words in John 15:12,

This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you.

Since you have been loved by the One so lavishly, as you consider Him, can you help but love others and sacrifice for them? This pleases the Lord and gives warm confidence and boldness in prayer, and at the Bema just around the corner of our lives. Do it!