

Koinonia: the King's Kingdom Culture

1 John 4:7-21

December 1, 2013

Intro: Employee/Employer dynamic... creating culture

Who determines the standards?

What role does the employee handbook serve?

What happens under a "hostile takeover?"

How's this relate to Christianity???

Read the Book of 1st John!

Review:

- A. Loose overview of 1 John's flow...
- B. Of the 3 pillars... #1 is LOVE! (1 Cor. 13:13)
- C. 1 John's emphasis on "brotherly Love" (koinonia)
 - Chapter 2:7-11 = Proof = walking in the Light
 - Chapter 3:11-24 = Proof = children of God

T/S: Today is 1st John's crescendo on "Love"

Big Idea: **Koinonia: the King's Kingdom Culture**

T/S: Christ-like love (agape) is both the ultimate test
AND the ultimate assurance of salvation.

Read: *1 Corinthians 13:1-8a*

Read: *1 John 2:7-11* = **Proof:** walk in the Light

1 John 3:11-24 = **Proof:** children of God

Preview: Today = 1 John 4:7-21

- A. Love others because God loves you (vv.7-11)
- B. Love others because God lives in you (vv.12-21)

7 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.

“Beloved” = Agape-tos (those with God’s love)

Dearly beloved... let us all love each other dearly.

Since agape/love is from God:

Those that agape/love are "born of God"

Those that agape/love "know God"

Takeaways:

- a. See the repetition: (**agape 4X**; God 3X)
- b. Continuing "culture of love..."
- c. Culture of love = COMMAND to love
- d. Christ-likeness = love
- e. Confirmation found in Christ-like love.
- f. Paraphrase v.7 = Let's love each other...
because that's what God's children do!
- g. - agape (in some form) = 32X from 4:7-5:3... (43x
in the entire letter).
- h. - agapetos = loving, pastoral tone to set
temperament... (I love you & you need to love one
another...)
- i. - agapomen = "let us love one another" (3X in
this passage)
- j. * John's thrust is Koinonia
- k. God is love's source
- l. Even "common" love comes from common grace
- m. Note: love does not bring birth... New birth brings
love.

***8 The one who does not love does not know
God, for God is love.***

Affirmation of v.7 thru the opposite perspective...

Takeaways:

- a. Repetition continues: (**agape 3X**; God 2X)
- b. Since God is love... if one does not love, one is NOT of God & does not know God.
- c. Note the Bible's simplicity and directness...
- d. From last week: "God is not ambiguous..."
- e. "Lips lie, love (lives) tell the truth." - JDP
- f. Paraphrase v.8 = If you don't DO what He IS... You're NOT His!
- g. If you don't know love, you don't know God because He IS love
- h. In essence, the Bible is telling us that if you have been born again you WILL love your brothers & sisters...
- i. **Illustration:** Loving is to Christians what swimming is to fish... loving fellow followers is as fluid as fish swimming together)
- j. "The absence of love in the life of an individual proves that he/she does not know God." - Dr. Akin
- k. "If you KNOW His love you will SHOW His love." - JDP
- l. - NOTE: "God is love... NOT love is God"
- m. * Quote: "As John makes absolutely clear in this passage, the controlling principle of the universe is not an abstract quality of 'love,' but a sovereign, living God who is the source of all love, and who Himself loves (see vv. 7,10,19)- Akin
- n. Key: Love is not God's only attribute... He is also holy, truthful, just, jealous, etc.

9 *By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him.*

We have proof & first hand experience of God's love.

When the Father sent the Son...

He showed immeasurable love...

He sent divine Love (His name is Jesus)

A core condition of Christ's coming is given here:

"so that we might LIVE THROUGH Him."

Takeaways:

- a. "True love is truly divine... and was divinely demonstrated in and thru the deity & death of Jesus the Christ." - JDP.
- b. See 1 John 1:1ff for emphatic declaration!
- c. "Christ died a *gruesome death* that we might live a *grateful life*." - JDP
- d. To live "in Him" (Colossians 2:6-7 & 1 John 2:6) and "through Him" is to live & love as Christ lived & loved.
- **Colossians 2:6-7** = *So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.*

- **1 John 2:6** = *Those who claim to be in Christ must walk (live) as Jesus walked/lived.*
- e. "Jesus hung so you and I could hug." – JDP
- f. Characteristics of living thru Christ:
 - **Romans 1:1**
 - ~ Called out, set apart, sent one
 - ~ Blessed "slave"
 - **Fruit of the Spirit** (Gal. 5:22-24)
 - ~ Love
 - ~ Joy
 - ~ Peace
 - ~ Patience
 - ~ Kindness
 - ~ Goodness
 - ~ Faithfulness
 - ~ Gentleness
 - ~ Self-Control
 - ~ **Crucifixion** (v.24)

v.24 = *"And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions & desires."*

➤ **“the King’s Koinonia kids”**

10 *In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*

Here’s an eye-to-eye, heart-to-heart clarification...

Don’t think for a second that divine love is initiated in us (or even in our love for God)... lest we get puffed up and give ourselves the credit that belongs to Christ.

Takeaways:

- a. The gospel is love’s standard...
- b. There is no better definition or description of true love than Jesus Christ’s crucifixion & resurrection
- c. Crucifixion =
 - Savior (propitiation)
 - Standard Bearer for agape/love
- d. Resurrection =
 - LORD
 - Life-giving, death-defeating
- d. **2 Corinthians 5:21** = *God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.*

VIDEO: *"See His Love"* by Kim Walker (5:27)

11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

Emphasis is being added...

God is emphatically committed to His children's love!

Note the imperative tone in the teaching...

In essence: "Since He... then WE..."

Takeaways:

- a. "To BE *like* Christ is to LOVE like Christ." -JDP.
- b. "We are here being taught-the-ought." - JDP.
- c. John/God is once again defining & defending the Church...
- d. "The Church IS koinonia."
- e. Please see... to marginalize or minimize the role, responsibility, and redeeming attribute of koinonia (the Church's supernatural love & unity) is to marginalize & redefine the very love of God - which koinonia champions through Christ." - JDP
- f. To reject the call to koinonia is to reject the authority, mandate, and model of the Messiah...
- g. Moreover, rejecting the call to koinonia means all subsequent ministry is at best man-made... for missional ministry is launched out of love for God's family.

12 *No one has seen God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us. 13* *By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit.*

The opening phrase is not the anomaly that it may appear to be... rather, it sets the context for what follows:

“If we love one another” is the implied solution to the implied challenge (no one has seen God)

When God abides in us (v.12) and we abide in Him (v.13) there will be three proofs:

- (1) KOINONIA: We will love one another
- (2) God’s love is perfected/purified in us...
- (3) God’s HOLY Spirit will be in us

Takeaways:

- a. “Koinonia reveals God.” – JDP
- b. “Koinonia rests-in God.” “
- c. “Koinonia replicates God.” “
- d. “Koinonia receives God.” “

14 *We have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.*

Emphatic declaration that Jesus is LORD & Savior!

Takeaways:

- a. If we count ourselves amongst the “we” that John is referring to, we can & should share in his mission:
 - **Testify!**
 - Share your **personal passion**
 - Declare the Son is the Savior!
 - **Minister globally! (Acts 1:8)**

15 *Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.*

The key to this verse is the word “confesses”

To biblically “confess” is to declare with the authenticity of one’s entire personhood.

Whoever truly “confesses” truly abides & is indwelt.

Takeaways:

- a. Confessing Jesus is LORD (**Romans 10:9**)
 - HEAD: know Him as Truth
 - HEART: love Him in Truth
 - HANDS: serve Him in Truth

- b. Abiding means obeying... see **John 15**
- Note: biblical "abiding" is a supernatural, 2-way "flow"
 - Thus: you cannot be abiding in God if God is not abiding in you...
- ~ See the dead branches of John 15 that "thought" they were good to go because of their physical attachment & outward appearances
- ~ Read **2 Corinthians 13:5**
- ~ Read **Matthew 7:21-27**

16 *We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.*

The assurance of God is found in the love of God!

Don't miss the repetitive emphasis here again...

"Agape/Love"	=	3X
"God"	=	4X
"abides"	=	3X
"Christians"	=	4X (we; us; the one; him)

Takeaways:

- a. "Any & all assurances we have are founded & grounded in God's agape for us." - JDP
- b. **Illustration:** When God and His children are truly unified & sharing His agape/love, it tends to make "A Messy Masterpiece..."
 - God is the bread...
 - Agape is the peanut butter base
 - Believers are the messy jelly
 - Abiding is the fluff that bonds
- c. **Illustration:** By contrast... like the builder whose house went up on the sand...
 - God is "said to be the bread"
 - Professed agape is the bologna
 - Fake believers are the turkey
 - Superficiality (vs genuine abiding) is the toothpick that you manually push through to hold things together...
- d. **Illustration:** It's like having a beautiful bowl of fresh fruit contrasted by a picturesque bowl of plastic fruit... They both look alike from a distance. In fact, some might even prefer the look and benefits of the plastic... But in the end, only the real fruit, as messy as it might get, can offer you any nourishment at all.

17 By this, love is perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because as He is, so also are we in this world.

By living in love and loving in life, we grow in the grace that is God's love.

Those that live & love like Christ are confident.

Loving is evidence of the Christian's ambassadorship

Takeaways:

- a. Loving is the best way to get ready for Judgment Day...
- b. Loving purifies the soul & shares the Savior
- c. When you abide & obey, living & loving like Christ, you won't cower at the thought of Judgment Day... Instead, you will confidently look forward to coming to Christ.
- d. True Christians are true Ambassadors of Christ...
 - If you represent the King well, you will look forward to seeing Him again
 - If you have denied the King, embezzled from Him, and/or taken advantage of His mercies & grace, you will fear coming into His presence.

18 *There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love.*

The introductory phrase of v.18 ("there is no fear in love") is not diminishing the Scripture's truth ("fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom"); but rather, the "fear" referred to here is specifically connected to the fear a lost person should have heading into Judgment Day.

Takeaways:

- a. Agape forces out fear.
- b. Agape prevents punishment.
- c. Therefore.... Wherever a pattern of fear persists, punishment awaits.
- d. Both consequences (fear & punishment) come in the absence of Christ-like love.
- e. Just in case there are some who would say: "I'm not fearful... therefore, I must be saved." Instead, friends, if you are not truly saved, I pray you will rightly apply God's Word and remember: "the fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom."
 - Biblical fear ushers in repentance
 - Repentance & Faith are essentials for salvations...
 - Hence, biblical fear is an instrument of God's amazing grace

19 *We love, because He first loved us.*

Friends, we are the manufacturers of nothing... but the distributors of much. - JDP

Man cannot create without the ingredients given by God...

There is no greater demonstration of this truth than when one looks into love.

Romans 5:8 says it all: ("While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us")

Takeaways:

- a. If we truly love, it is ONLY because we have been loved...
- b. There is NO room for arrogance within biblical love...
- c. "Arrogance disproves agape." - JDP
- d. "Pride positions the proud in a perverted prominence before God." - JDP
- e. PRINCIPLE: "Any good *you give*... *GOD GAVE you* as a gift of grace." - JDP
- f. **Illustration:** One might be quick to think that this would be akin to the relationship between Michelangelo and person who gave him his paint, brushes, etc. But in reality, the better parallel is to align with the one who gave Michelangelo his imagination & passion... NOTHING would come out of one who was not first gifted by God.

20 *If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen.*

"Love is the litmus test of life." – JDP

"Liars seldom love & lovers seldom lie." – JDP

Note: John is again pointing out the reality of the "darkness," "liars," "antichrists," "children of the devil," and "false spirits" that claim Christ but do NOT truly champion Christ.

Takeaways:

- a. Beware the "talkers" that are not walkers!
- b. **PRINCIPLE:** You cannot truly hate the children/bride and love the father/husband.
- c. **Illustration:** John is in essence saying:
 - You cannot claim to have mastered calculus... if you can't first...
 - Do kindergarten calculations
- d. **BEWARE...** God's Word again makes clear that the liars will look loving and the hating hypocrites will look holy! - JDP

21 *And this commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also.*

The last verse of the chapter summarizes the overarching thought of chapter 4...

Takeaways:

- a. "Koinonia is a command." - JDP
 - See Matthew 28:18-20
 - See John 17:21
 - See John 2:3-6
 - See James 2:14-17
 - See Acts 2:42-47
- b. "Koinonia IS the embodiment of BE-ing" – JDP
- c. "Where there is true vertical love, first coming down & then going up, there will be a holy horizontal love supernaturally shared amongst the saints." – JDP

VIDEO: *Living Thanksgiving 2013*

- d. Note: "When God says you should... He empowers the 'could' – no excuses!" – JDP
- e. "Jesus *died* sharing *His* love... so that you and I could *live sharing His* love." – JDP
- f. "I will build MY Church and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it." – Jesus
- g. Amen!

Let's Pray!