

Pacific Coast Church
May 19, 1996
First John 4:19-5:13
Pastor Mike

96-20

Do I Really Love God?

Three Loves that Authenticate My Love for God

1 John 4:19-5:13 ----> 19) We love because he first loved us. 20) If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. 21) And he has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother. 5:1) Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well. 2) This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands. 3) This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, 4) for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. 5) Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God. 6) This is the one who came by water and blood--Jesus Christ. He did not come by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. 7) For there are three that testify: 8) the Spirit, the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement. 9) We accept man's testimony, but God's testimony is greater because it is the testimony of God, which he has given about his Son. 10) Anyone who believes in the Son of God has this testimony in his heart. Anyone who does not believe God has made him out to be a liar, because he has not believed the testimony God has given about his Son. 11) And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. 12) He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. 13) I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life. (NIV)

1. Evaluate Your Love For Your _____ (4:19-5:1)

A. *If You Don't Love His _____ You Don't Really Love Him*

B. *Practical Help in Building this Love*

2. Evaluate Your Love For Your _____ (5:2-4)

A. *If You Don't Love His _____ You Don't Really Love Him*

B. *Practical Help in Building this Love*

3. Evaluate Your Love For Your _____ (5:5-13)

A. *If You Don't Love His _____ You Don't Really Love Him*

B. *Practical Help in Building this Love*

Discussion Questions

These questions are provided to further your application of Sunday's message and to prepare you for PCC's small group discussions.

1. Our passage this week focuses on the presence and quality of an individual's love for God. It seems self-evident that our ultimate and highest form of love is appropriate for the supreme Person in the universe. It is with this kind of love that most of us have little experience. We most often find ourselves dabbling in some inferior feeling and expression of love. Consider for a moment the *highest* quality love that we humans are capable of possessing and expressing. What is that love like? Describe it as best you can.
2. Our verses lead us to apply tests to our "love for God" to see just how genuine it really is. Before the tests are applied, our passage begins with a familiar statement: "I love God". Assuming that at the outset of your study in this text you would be inclined to say the same, how would you describe this love? Generally speaking, what do you think is the quality of your love for God?

How would you rate it from 1 to 10?

(10 = the best a human is capable of; 1 = barely even considered love.)

Why didn't you rate this a number or two higher?

3. The first test that reveals the quality of our love for God is the love we have (or don't have) for our spiritual brothers and sisters. How are you doing in this area? Are there some spiritual siblings that are challenging to love at this point in your life?

While pondering this area of your life, what did this reveal about your love for God—especially in light of how much God loves the Christians that you don't get along with too well?

How do you plan on improving your love for other Christians?

4. The second test urges us to evaluate our relationship with God's commands. Assuming that you have some regular intake from God's word, how do you feel about the many commands that you read in the Bible? How "burdensome" are they for you? Which are the most burdensome?

While pondering this area of your life, what does this reveal about your love for God—especially in light of these commands simply reflecting the nature and character of God Himself?

How do you plan on improving your quest for personal holiness?

5. The final test in our passage leads us to consider our relationship with truth. This is not just the directives in the Bible that relate to our behavior but all sorts of facts that declare the truth of God. How is your relationship with truth of God's word? How attractive is the Bible to you at this point in your life?

How do you plan on improving your love for the Bible?