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Central Congregational Church
“For the Glory of God and the Good of our Neighbors”
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The Reality of God’s Love

1 John 4:7-21

Series: Reality Check – (re)Aligning Our Lives to the Way of Jesus

Central Passages

1 John 4:7–10 (NIV) — **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.

Central Thought: The essence of God is that he is an eternal, holy fire of consuming, self-giving love – a love that is embodied fully in Christ and is imparted to us by his Spirit that we may learn to love each other as God has loved us.

❖ The Command: Love each other! (vs. 7, 21)

- Our love for one another is the primary proof of our relationship with God.

John 13:34 (ESV) — **34** A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another

Mark 12:29–31 (ESV) — **29** Jesus answered, “The most important is, ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. **30** And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ **31** The second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”

❖ The Standard: God’s initiating, sacrificial love for us in Christ. (vs. 9-11)

- We are to live and love like Jesus!

Romans 5:6–8 (ESV) — **6** For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. **7** For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— **8** but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

John 20:19–21 (ESV) — **19** On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.” **20** When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. **21** Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.”

❖ The Effect: God’s love and presence is perfected in us and shown through us. (vs. 12-16).

- Our life together in Christ is how people see God!

1 John 4:13–16 (ESV) — **13** By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because 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** Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. **16** So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. **God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.**

John 13:35 (ESV) — **35** By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”