

# Born of God

## An Exposition of I John

### I John 3:20-4:12

#### Scriptures

<i>I John 3:20</i>	<i>John 17:20-21</i>	<i>Psalm 44:3-7</i>	<i>I Corinthians 13:2</i>
<i>I John 3:21</i>	<i>Galatians 4:6</i>	<i>Psalm 28:8-9</i>	<i>I John 4:9</i>
<i>I Timothy 1:5</i>	<i>I John 4:1</i>	<i>I John 4:5</i>	<i>I John 4:10</i>
<i>I John 3:22</i>	<i>II Corinthians 11:3</i>	<i>James 4:4</i>	<i>Romans 5:8</i>
<i>Psalm 66:18</i>	<i>Acts 2:38</i>	<i>I John 2:15</i>	<i>I John 4:11</i>
<i>I Peter 3:12</i>	<i>I John 4:2-3</i>	<i>I John 4:6</i>	<i>I John 4:12</i>
<i>I John 3:23</i>	<i>John 1:18</i>	<i>Ephesians 4:11-13</i>	
<i>I John 3:24</i>	<i>I John 4:4</i>	<i>I John 4:7</i>	
<i>John 14:23</i>	<i>I Corinthians 4:7</i>	<i>I John 4:8</i>	

*I John 3:20 For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.*

No matter how much men think they know of their sin, their knowledge is nothing compared to God's.

What God knows of us is far greater than what we know of ourselves. This is especially true in regard to what is worthy of condemnation.

Consequently, men cannot hide or indulge in sin, especially in the heart, and maintain peace and fellowship with God.

A condemning heart also does nothing to inspire greater confidence in the Lord and His ability to come to our aid; in fact, it does quite the opposite.

*Barnes' Notes on the Bible, I John 3:20*

*For if our heart condemn us—...* The general sentiment is, that if they should so live that their own hearts would condemn them for present insincerity and hypocrisy, they could have no hope of peace, for God knows all that is in the heart. In view of the past—when the heart accuses us of what we have done—we may find peace by such evidences of piety as shall allay the troubles of an agitated soul, 1 John 3:9, but we cannot have such peace if our hearts condemn us for the indulgence of secret sins, now that we profess to be Christians. If our hearts condemn us for present insincerity, and for secret sins, we can never “persuade” or soothe them by any external act of piety. In view of the consciousness of past guilt, we may find peace; we can find none if there is a present purpose to indulge in sin.

*I John 3:21 Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God.*

To properly walk with God, our love must be pure, our faith unfeigned, and our conscience free of convicting and condemning sin. The condition of the heart greatly affects men's faith and trust in God.

To properly grow and develop in faith, we must so live that our heart does not accuse us nor condemn of sin, but rather commends us for living rightly before the Lord.

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Though most do not know it, a good conscience is as critical to true piety as love and faith. Possessing these three godly characteristics is the ultimate end of God's will for the Christian.

*1 Timothy 1:5 Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned:*

If our faith and love are insincere and have no real depth, our conscience will inform us. Hence, the conscience plays a very key role in leading men's souls towards God's salvation, by exposing insincerity or impurity where it exists.

*1 John 3:22 And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.*

Here we observe the great extent that the pursuit of righteousness, a good conscience, and inward purity will produce. It is that God will answer all prayers that align themselves with His will. Teaching us that how a man lives directly affects whether or not God hears and answers his prayers.

*Barnes' Notes on the Bible, 1 John 3:22*

We can have no hope that he will hear us unless we do so live as to please him.

How foolish are men to falsely believe that they can live as they will and sin as they desire and that God will still hear them in their time of need. When the truth is, that God will not hear nor come to the aid of anyone who cherishes iniquity in the heart. Therefore, as long as men embrace sin, the Lord will not hear them.

*Psalms 66:18 If I regard iniquity in my heart, the LORD will not hear me.*

One of the fatal consequences of choosing to live a life of sin is that God refuses to hear any who do so. Sinners, therefore, should never be so presumptuous to believe that God will still hear them in their time of need, if they continue in sin.

Scripture also repeatedly confirms that a sinner's plea will not be heard without repentant prayer and acknowledgment of sin, with also no attempt to defend it or hide it from God.

Thus for God to hear men's prayers, they must keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight. Only by living this way can they be assured that what is asked of God, will be both heard and answered, when according to divine will.

God hears and has promised to come to the aid of the righteous, not those harboring sin in their hearts.

The Lord's ears are open to the righteous, but His face is adamantly against all who purposely engage in evil.

*1 Peter 3:12 For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.*

A righteous man should never fear that God will not hear his prayer, nor come to his aid in time of need.

*1 John 3:23 And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.*

This is *His* (God's) *commandment*, that we should not only believe on the name of His Son, Jesus Christ, but also love one another, as Jesus commanded His followers to do. Though two things are mentioned, *that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ* and *love one another, as He gave us commandment*, the apostle reveals that God has combined both into one commandment.

Therefore, believing in the Son of God and love for the brethren are eternally bound. Obeying one leads to embracing the other, just as disregarding one ensures that there can be no true possession of the other.

This teaches us that whenever there is true belief in Jesus Christ, there will also be genuine and sincere love for those born of Him. Hence, whenever there is faith in the Savior, there will be a corresponding love for His brethren. This is undoubtably true regarding those created in Christ's image, who share in the same Spirit of God, and the same promised eternal life.

*Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary*, I John 3:23

Summing up of God's commandments under the Gospel dispensation in one commandment.

*this is his commandment*—singular: for faith and love are not separate commandments, but are indissolubly united. We cannot truly love one another without faith in Christ, nor can we truly believe in Him without love.

***I John 3:24 And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.***

*And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him.*

Jesus promised His followers that if He was loved and His words were kept, then He and the Father would come and live within their hearts.

Therefore, by the presence of the Spirit sent by Christ, the saved are assured and comforted that God in Christ, lives within them.

***John 14:23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.***

Whereas, in the Old Testament, God would dwell among His people, now the Son promises that both the Father and the Son will come and make their abode within them. By keeping God's commandments, we dwell in God, and as a result, He will dwell in us—a reality with much deeper implications beyond even God's promise to Israel.

Once the Holy Spirit enters a man's heart, a spiritual oneness is created between the man, the Father, and the Son. It is this oneness that Jesus possessed with the Father that He prayed could also be shared with those who believed upon Him.

***John 17:20–21 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.***

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For the true Christian, God is much more than simply around him; He is, in all respects, living within him. Hence, true Christians are not saved when they enter churches, but when the Father and Son, in the presence of the Holy Spirit, enter them.

*Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers*, John 17:21

*That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in Us; and the meaning is that the union of the Church may be of the same essential nature as that between the Father and the Son; yea, that the union of the Church may result from the union of individual members with the Father through the Son.*

*And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.*

The Christian knows that God dwells in him through the Spirit of God living within. Because of the Spirit's presence and influence, those saved by God are brought to know that they are of God and God is in them. This is due to the Spirit's presence in their heart.

A Holy Spirit which also allows believers to cry, "Abba Father," something slaves, and those still in bondage, were never allowed to do.

***Galatians 4:6 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.***

*Barnes' Notes on the Bible*, Gal. 4:6

*Abba, Father*—See the note at Romans 8:15. It is said in the Babylonian Gemara, a Jewish work, that it was not permitted slaves to use the title of Abba in addressing the master of the family to which they belonged. If so, then the language which Christians are here represented as using is the language of freemen, and denotes that they are not under the servitude of sin.

***I John 4:1 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.***

The warning here is to *believe not every spirit*. This includes every spirit or man who professes to come in God's name.

All spirits, therefore, and all who profess to come in God's name, should be tried, simply because a vast number of *false prophets are gone out* and operate in the world. Not all spirits are holy. Neither are all men who profess to speak by the Spirit of God actually of Him. The apostle seeks to make this revelation clear, because false ministries in the Christian faith abound, and men can easily be deceived by them. Thus, if a man has not the Spirit of Christ and the ability to discern the true nature of both good and evil spirits, then he can easily confuse that which is not of God as having come from Him. Hence, not only do false prophets deceive the world but they also regularly infiltrate God's true body of believers and lead them down paths contrary to divine will. Sadly, if men listen to and trust these counterfeit spirits, even the elect can be deceived.

***II Corinthians 11:3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.***

*Barnes' Notes on the Bible*, II Cor. 11:3

*But I fear ...* The mention of this seems to have suggested to him the fact that the first woman was deceived and led astray by the tempter, and that the same thing might occur in regard to the church which he was so desirous should be preserved pure. The grounds

of his fear were:

(1) That Satan had seduced the first woman, thus demonstrating that the most holy ones were in danger of being led astray by temptation; and,

(2) That special efforts were made to seduce them from the faith. The persuasive arts of the false teachers; the power of philosophy; and the attractive and corrupting influences of the world, he had reason to suppose might be employed to seduce them from simple attachment to Christ.

The Christian doctrine, which leads to the new birth and eternal life, is a very simple one. It is a call to repent for sin, believe in the Son of God, and be baptized by Him with the Holy Spirit.

***Acts 2:38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.***

In contrast to this, false prophets and teachers stress what God will do for men, while at the same time completely and practically ignoring what men need to do to be saved by God.

In all false religion, man is the real object. He is at the center, and what is taught is what he first desires to hear. Because of the unsaved's carnal appetites, they will accumulate and gather many false teachers, enabling them to put on a cloak of true religion, while privately continuing to live in their lusts.

***I John 4:2-3 Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: <sup>3</sup>And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.***

A great debate arose among the Jews and early Christians as to the true nature of Jesus Christ. Was He actually born of God, in the flesh, and God's promised Messiah? The debate was not about mere doctrines of faith, but the genuineness of their Author. A man's opinion, view, and belief in Jesus Christ will ultimately determine his final destiny.

There is only One Who sits and reigns over all the sons of men, and this One is God's promised Christ.

To be *antichrist* is to be against God's true Christ. Thus, he who rejects the Son, rejects not only the Savior of this world, but the Ruler of the next.

***John 1:18 No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.***

Because Jesus, God's only begotten Son, revealed God to the world, it is impossible to reject Him and not also reject God.

To reject therefore Christ's rule and the power God has given to Him is to reject the divine rule and authority of God Himself.

*Benson Commentary, John 1:18*

... neither Moses, nor any of the Old Testament prophets, were so well qualified to make God and his will known to mankind, as our Lord Jesus Christ was. They never saw, nor

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perfectly knew the Divine Being, and his eternal counsels, and therefore could not make a full discovery thereof to men. The only person who ever enjoyed this privilege was the only-begotten Son of God, *the Word*, which was in the beginning with him, or, as it is here expressed, was, and is, *in the bosom of the Father*: that is, always was, and is the object of his tenderest, yea, of his infinite affection, complacency, and delight, and the intimate partner of his counsels. And this circumstance recommends Christ's holy religion to us unspeakably before any others; that it was founded by one that had seen God, or that had clear and perfect knowledge of him, and of his mind and will, which no other person ever had, or could have.

***I John 4:4 Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.***

The ones who have been *overcome* are those listed as *antichrist* in the previous verse. It is tempting to believe, because of the vast number of sinners who reject God, that the people of God are inferior to the forces of the world around them, but this is not true. Christ lives within His people; therefore, through Him, they have been made more than conquerors.

Because Christ lives in His people, they have overcome all evil spirits operating and functioning in this world.

*Benson Commentary, I John 4:4*

*Because greater is he that is in you*—Namely, the Spirit of Christ; *than he*—The spirit of antichrist; *that is in the world*—The Son of God, who stands at the head of that interest in which you are embarked, and who aids you by the mighty communications of his Spirit, is infinitely too strong for Satan, the great head of the apostacy, and for all his confederates. Thus, the issue of the divine government will be, that truth and virtue shall be finally victorious over error and wickedness, because God, the Patron of truth and virtue, possesseth far greater power and wisdom than the evil spirits who promote error and wickedness.

*Barnes' Notes on the Bible, I John 4:4*

*Because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world*—God, who dwells in your hearts, and by whose strength and grace alone you have been enabled to achieve this victory, is more mighty than Satan, who rules in the hearts of the people of this world, and whose seductive arts are seen in the efforts of these false teachers. The apostle meant to say that it was by no power of their own that they achieved this victory, but it was to be traced solely to the fact that God dwelt among them, and had preserved them by his grace.

The Christian is not made victorious by his own power. This could never be the case, since this would always lead to greater trust and confidence in self.

Consequently, that which causes God's new sons to overcome the world lies in the strength of their Savior. This is also a reality that every true Christian can attest to through personal experience: because of God's presence in their lives, things that should have overcome and defeated them, in the end, neither did, nor could.

A treasure, a very precious treasure, lives in the people of God. This treasure, is the Holy Spirit, which allows God to unleash His power in and for the Christian.

***I Corinthians 4:7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.***

The excellency of the power found in the saint is of God and therefore vastly superior to any opposing evil power assembled against Him. All victory is the Lord's, and due to God's own spiritual power, His people are made to become victorious.

***Psalm 44:3–7 For they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them: but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, because thou hadst a favour unto them. Thou art my King, O God: command deliverances for Jacob. Through thee will we push down our enemies: through thy name will we tread them under that rise up against us. For I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me. But thou hast saved us from our enemies, and hast put them to shame that hated us.***

The believer's strength lies not in his own power, but in God. Even though God's hand is often invisible, the deliverance He provides for the saved, proves that He stands and supports all who are His own.

The Lord is, indeed, the Deliverer and Redeemer of His people.

***Psalm 28:8–9 The LORD is their strength, and he is the saving strength of his anointed. Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance: feed them also, and lift them up for ever.***

*Benson Commentary, Ps. 28:8*

*The Lord is their strength*—That is, the strength of his people, mentioned in the next verse. *He is the saving strength*—Hebrews ישועות מעון, *the strength of the preservations, deliverances, or salvations; of his anointed*—Of me, whom he hath anointed to be king, and whom therefore he will defend. He signifies that it was by God's strength alone that his victories, deliverances, and preservations were wrought.

***I John 4:5 They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them.***

One of the great characteristics of antichrists is that this world is their true home.

*Barnes' Notes on the Bible, I John 4:5*

*They are of the world*—This was one of the marks by which those who had the spirit of antichrist might be known. They belonged not to the church of God, but to the world. They had its spirit; they acted on its principles; they lived for it.

Antichrists are, at their core, worldly. They are of the world, they speak of the world, and those who hear them are likewise of the world as well.

Whomever a man listens to, or enjoys the company of, reveals whom he really is. If it is the world, then he is of it; if it is God, then he is of Him. By this simple criterion, the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest.

Consider also, if any have made themselves friends with this world, they have by choice, become God's enemy.

***James 4:4 Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.***

When a man is a friend of anything, especially that which is evil and rebellious toward the Lord, he reveals a kinship with it. This friendship with the world provides evidence that all antichrists are worthy of divine judgment. Because of their choosing and loving the world more than its Creator, they are promised to suffer the same fate as it.

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*Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers, Jas. 4:4*

*Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?—i.e., the state of being an enemy to God, not one of simpler enmity with Him. There cannot be a passive condition to the faith of Christ: "he that is not with Me is against Me" (Matthew 12:30). Renunciation of the world, in the Christian promise, is not forsaking it when tired and clogged with its delights, but the earliest severance from it; to break this vow, or not to have made it, is to belong to the foes of God, and not merely to be out of covenant with Him. The forces of good and evil divide the land so sharply that there is no debatable ground, nor even halting-place between.*

The Christian's call through Jesus Christ is to separate himself from the world.

***I John 2:15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.***

No man can serve two masters, just as no man can love an evil and sinful world that rejects divine rule and at the very same time, hold any true affection for a Holy God.

***I John 4:6 We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.***

By determining who hears the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error are made visible.

No man can turn a deaf ear to the truth and still be of God, which means that those who are truly of the Lord will always hear the gospel of His Son when it is presented to them.

The primary means by which the gospel is spread and proclaimed, is through those gift ministries that the Son of God has placed in His church.

***Ephesians 4:11–13 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:***

*Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers, Eph. 4:11*

*He gave.*—In the original "He" is emphatic—He and He alone, as the ascended Head of humanity. The word "gave," instead of the more obvious word *set*, or *appointed* (used in 1 Corinthians 12:28), is, of course, suggested by Ephesians 4:8. They who are ministers of His gifts are themselves gifts from Him to the Church.

It is Christ's will that He be more fully known to His church. His divine and supernatural gifts, in the form of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers, assist in this purpose.

*Barnes' Notes on the Bible, I John 4:6*

*Know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error*—We can distinguish those who embrace the truth from those who do not. Whatever pretensions they might set up for piety, it was clear that if they did not embrace the doctrines taught by the true apostles of God, they could not be regarded as his friends; that is, as true Christians. It may be added that the same test is applicable now. They who do not receive the plain doctrines laid down in the word of God, whatever pretensions they may make to piety, or whatever zeal they may evince in the cause which they have espoused, can have no well-founded claims to



the name Christian. One of the clearest evidences of true piety is a readiness to receive all that God has taught. Compare Matthew 18:1–3; Mark 10:15; James 1:19–21.

Whether a man will hear the true gospel of Jesus Christ or not, reveals what spirit is influencing him. By this, we can know who is led by the Spirit of truth and who has been deceived by the spirit of error.

***I John 4:7 Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.***

The apostle places great importance on love because of its direct relationship to God. *Love is of God* reveals that all love has its source in Him. From Him flows all the love experienced and expressed in creation.

Love, therefore, is the primary test to determine whom God has saved and made His true sons and those He has not.

There is no such thing as a true Christian who lacks divine love. As any who lack divine love cannot hold any true knowledge of God, nor be born of Him. Because God is love, He only births children who will manifest His love to the world.

Nothing also gives a man more godly confidence that he is of the truth than when God's love abounds in his heart. By this, he is assured that he is born of God and has accurately come to know Him.

*Barnes' Notes on the Bible, I John 4:7*

*And everyone that loveth, is born of God*—Is a regenerated man. That is, everyone who has true love to Christians as such, or true brotherly love, is a true Christian. This cannot mean that everyone that loves his wife and children, his classmate, his partner in business, or his friend—his house, or his farms, or his horses, or his hounds, is a child of God; it must be understood as referring to the point under discussion. A man may have a great deal of natural affection toward his kindred; a great deal of benevolence in his character toward the poor and needy, and still he may have none of the love to which John refers. He may have no real love to God, to the Saviour, or to the children of God as such; and it would be absurd for such a one to argue because he loves his wife and children that therefore he loves God, or is born again.

***I John 4:8 He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.***

*Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary, I John 4:8*

*knoweth not*—Greek aorist: not only knoweth not now, but never knew, has not once for all known God.

Love is that heavenly standard that reveals who in this world actually knows the Lord and who does not—who is born again of the Christ Spirit and who is not.

Thus, neither religious attendance nor biblical study provides men a true knowledge of the Lord, absent divine love dwelling within them.

A man could live his entire life, give every possession he ever possessed to the poor, manifest the gift of prophecy, and even perform miracles and wonders in Christ's name, yet without love, he will be both judged and accounted as nothing.

***I Corinthians 13:2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.***

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Love determines a man's true worth, and if a man does not have this divine quality both in his heart and in his life, his life will be deemed as having no true meaning.

***I John 4:9 In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.***

Nothing is more precious than life, and nothing reveals divine generosity and goodness more than when eternal life is imparted to the sinner. By this act of compassion, grace, and mercy, the nature of God is made known to the world. Thus, whenever a man or woman is born again through receiving the Holy Spirit and spiritual regeneration occurs, then God's love is again manifested in the world.

***I John 4:10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.***

It is one thing to possess love for those who love us or have done something to merit good being done towards them. It is quite another thing when God's love and the gift of salvation are given to sinners who previously had no real affection for God.

***Romans 5:8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.***

The timing of when God sent Jesus Christ to die for sin, ultimately reveals the undeniable goodness that dwells in Him, since long before men loved God, He loved man.

Many a man also has wondered why God would absolve him of sin. The answer lies in divine goodness and spiritual generosity. Hence, men are saved, forgiven of sin, and made righteous before God, simply because God is love. There is no other reason for God's act of grace beyond the reality that He is love, and He wishes to manifest this love both for, and towards the world.

***I John 4:11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.***

Once we have been made partakers of divine love, then it should be very easy to share it with others. Freely we have received, and just as freely we should give. None therefore should share the love of God more than those who have been saved by Him.

Because God's love was freely given to us, we should likewise freely love all those around us.

***I John 4:12 No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.***

*Barnes' Notes on the Bible, I John 4:12*

*If we love one another, God dwelleth in us*—Though we cannot see him, yet there is a way by which we may be assured that he is near us, and that he even dwells in us. That way is by the exercise of love.

No man is more assured that God dwells within him than he whose love resembles God's perfect love. It is also only when men love, that it is clearly made known to them that God dwells within.

*Matthew Poole's Commentary, I John 4:12*

The essence of God is to our eyes invisible, incomprehensible to our minds; but by yielding ourselves to the power of his love, so as to be transformed by it, and habituated to the

exercise of mutual love, we come to know him by the most pleasant and most apprehensible effects, experiencing his indwelling, vital, operative presence and influences, whereby he is daily perfecting this his own likeness and image in us. This is the most desirable way of knowing God, when, though we cannot behold him at a distance, we may feelingly apprehend him nigh us, and in us.

Love is meant to increase in the believer, and as it does, faith in God's existence grows. Therefore, by manifesting divine love, we will learn not only that God lives, but that He lives in us.