

# Bible Studies for Life: October 3

*Sure of God's Love • 1 John 4:7-13; 19-21*

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From the early 1950s through the 1970s, John W. Peterson wrote over 1,000 songs and 35 cantatas (<https://hymnary.org/>). Perhaps you've heard In the Image of God, or It Took a Miracle. He also wrote many songs about the love of God. For example, My Savior's Love, Of Love I Sing, and God is Love.

If you would like to listen to the song, God is Love, visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2vtSI36dxyc>, then read and ponder the words located directly under the video.

In the second verse, Peterson writes, "God is love! Its pages all proclaim..." The Apostle John proclaims God's love throughout the Living Epistles and the Gospel of John. Is it any wonder he is referred to as the "Apostle of Love?"

**We know we are loved because God sent Jesus (1 John 4:7-10).** In the focal passage of this study, the theme of love is addressed by John for the third and final time. Once again, we see the personal greeting of "Beloved," a term of endearment (NKJV, also 4:1).

Other translations use "Dear Friends." Either salutation, John is drawing the reader in closer, wanting them to pay close

attention to the important words he is about to share.

First, we need to remember that love is an attribute of God. It is who He is, and it is from Him. God is love. Furthermore, His love is perfect, unconditional, selfless, gracious, and merciful.

Another reason is, "Let us love one another." As believers in Christ, we must demonstrate that love. 2 Peter 1:4 tells us we have received God's nature, and love is the chief characteristic.

Believers can love as He loves because we abide in His presence and depend upon the Holy Spirit, who graciously pours His love out of our hearts for others.

Verse nine states, "In this the love of God was manifested toward us" (NKJV). At the cross, Jesus willingly sacrificed himself, taking the place of sinners upon the cross (see John 3:14-16).

"In this is love." God initiated everything. Because of His love for us, He sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins (also see 2:2). He is the greatest gift ever given!

"Behold, what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us that we should be called children of God" (1 John 3:1, NKJV).

**We must love others (1 John 4:11-13).** "Beloved, because we have received and know God's love through His Son, Jesus, then we should love one another" (v. 11). At this time, the Gnostics were teaching that they had a special revelation and had made a journey to heaven, thereby seeing God Himself. John counters with the fact that this is heresy and false teaching.

No one has seen God. How do people believe in a God they have not seen? The answer is, "if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfecting in us" (v. 13 ESV).

By this, we know. Know what? That we abide in Him because "God

has sent His indwelling Spirit into our lives to transform our capacity to love God and others” (January Bible Study, Living with Assurance, pg. 56).

Paul wrote, “because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us” (Rom. 5:5 ESV). Also, notice in verses 9-16, the Apostle John mentions life through and in Jesus six times.

**We must not hate (1 John 4:19-21).** In these three verses, John doesn’t hold back the truth about love. First, “We love because He first loved us” (v. 19). Next, if we say we love God yet hate our brother, how can we say we love God, who we cannot see?

The last verse of the chapter summarizes chapter four. “And we have this command from Him; the one who loves God must also love his brother” (v. 21 HCSB). “It is impossible to emulate our Savior in any meaningful way apart from having a deep love for God and people” (Living with Assurance, page 56).

For the past two weeks, The Billy Graham Evangelistic Association has sponsored The God Loves You Tour with Franklin Graham. The tour began in Joliet, Ill., on September 19 and made eight stops along Route 66 (<https://bgea.org>).

The final stop was San Bernardino, Ca., on October 2. The message preached: You can be sure of God’s love! Because of His great love, repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ – and many did!

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