Bible Study on HE WENT FIRST — 1 John 4:7-21
For Sunday January 1, 2022

1 John 4:7-21 (ESV)

God Is Love

7 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows
God. 8 Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. 9 In this the love of God was made
manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. 10 In this is
love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.
11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. 12 No one has ever seen God; 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. 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. 17 By this is love
perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because as he is so also are we in
this world. 18 There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and
whoever fears has not been perfected in love. 19 We love because he first loved us. 20 If anyone says, "I love
God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love
God whom he has not seen. 21 And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love
his brother.

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1. The word love or some form of it occurs no fewer than 27 times in these verses. What is the connection between human love and God's love?

2. John makes the statement twice that "God is love" (verses 8 and 16). How has God made this love tangible for us (verses 9-11)?

3. What is our love—or lack of love—evidence of and why (verses 13-21)?

4. John says that we should not look to the day of judgement with fear. How does love drive out fear (verses 16-18)?

5. “We love, because he first loved us” is one of the most well-known verses in this letter. How has experiencing God’s love given you the motivation and ability to love God and others?

6. Verses 20-21 warns against claiming to love God and in turn hating our brothers and sisters in Christ. It is true that some Christians have been wounded more by those in the church than outside the church. At times, why is church a place where people show little love to each other?

7. This week, how can you show love to others even when there are tensions or problems?