

## Sermon Handout

### Love and Fear

#### I John 4:11-21

### I. The Nature of God in John's Writings

- a. God is Spirit Jn 4:24 (not carnal, not of creation)
- b. God is Light Jn 1:4-5, 9, 18; I Jn 1:5
  - i. Light brings life to the earth Gen 1:3-4; Jn 8:12
  - ii. Light introduces knowledge of God Jn 1:5, 7; II Cor 4:6
  - iii. God's light is moral & spiritual Prov 4:19; Eph 4:17-18; Jn 3:19
- c. God is Love I Jn 4:7-8
  - i. An element of God's essential self v. 8, 16
  - ii. His love is attached to action v. 9; 3:16; Jn 3:16-17
  - iii. His love motivates & directs our actions v. 7, 11, 21; Gal 5:13-14

### II. God, The Faith and Love vv. 11-13

- a. The Christian's calling is to emulate our Lord
  - i. In holiness I Pet 1:14-21; Lev 11:44-45
  - ii. In mercy Lk 6:36; Ps 86:5; Micah 7:18; 6:8
  - iii. In love v. 11; 19-21
- b. Love is inseparable from life in Christ vv. 11-13
  - i. We have a moral responsibility to love our brothers v. 11  
(In the same way as God has loved us *cf.* v. 10)  
Note the absence of reciprocity in v. 11.
  - ii. Through love to others, God's love is developed in us v. 12
  - iii. His Spirit enables us to love as He loves v. 13

### III. Love versus Fear vv. 14-19

- a. God's love brings the lost to himself vv. 14-15 *cf.* II Cor 4:3-5
- b. Salvation entails being wrapped in God's love v. 16-17
  - i. The "perfecting" of God's love is our love for the brethren v. 12
  - ii. No experience of God's love apart from brotherly love vv. 12, 20
- c. Fear of condemnation vv. 17-18 *see* 2:28-29
  - i. Perfection of our love emboldens us to face the judgment v. 17
  - ii. In this sense, perfected love drives out fear of judgment v. 18
- d. True love is initiated by God, not from the heart of man v. 19 *cf.* v. 10
- e. True love is love of God and love for the brethren v. 21; Mt 22:37-40