

Love: You Don't GET it, You GIVE it

1 John 4:18-21

- I. Beauty of creation (express own experience)
 - A. Harmony
 - B. Peace
- II. Dis-settling: man (give examples)
 - A. Grabbing, taking
 - B. Running scared
 - C. Full of fear, instead of “perfect love”
 - 1. Creates hole
 - 2. Try to stuff it with all sorts of things (examples
(Illustrate disharmony among parts; e.g., parts of body are in harmony – when they are not, it means sickness))
- III. How do you think God feels, looking down on disharmonious parts?
 - A. Bad enough: racial, territorial differences
 - B. But religious base of conflict – greatest pain to God (develop) (e.g., parent and children’s relationship with each other)
- IV. So what to do?
 - A. Sit in corner and sulk: no hope.
 - B. Wait for someone to fix it; blame it all on “them”.
(Read Bible quote again.)
- V. Beginning of love is loving (examples)
 - A. Give love. Response.
 - B. Sets up electrical circuit between persons and God.
- VI. Take responsibility to love (examples)
 - A. God’s response
 - B. People’s response
 - C. Own self’s nourishment

VII. Ultimate source of love is God. “Perfect love...”

- But we can set things in motion
- Is the disharmony necessary? No.
- Where does the change begin? With them? No, with self.

CONCLUSION (this can connect with ecumenical effort)

In loving, you are loved and there's no more room for fear or the need to hide from it. (You develop this ending)